

ASHBROOK SCHOOL

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES POLICY STATEMENT

SCHOOL AIM: "Everyone matters; everyone is important"

CO-ORDINATOR: Mrs B Allen

LINK GOVERNOR: Mrs A Tilston

AIM:

In light of Every Child Matters our aim is to create an environment where we enable our children to achieve the best possible physical, personal and educational outcomes.

SUMMARY:

Environmental studies is concerned with providing children with opportunities to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills required to engage effectively with environmental activities and issues, including those of sustainable development.

LEARNING INTENTIONS:

- To arouse children's awareness, enjoyment of, and curiosity about the environment
- To develop an informed concern about the environment now, and in the future
- To encourage sensitive use of the environment now, and in the future
- To encourage active participation in resolving environmental problems

ORGANISATION:

Environmental Studies is taught through a combination of approaches using a differentiated curriculum in order to meet the needs of all children throughout the school. As well as fulfilling the statutory requirements, particularly within Science and Geography National Curriculum, Ashbrook School has developed work in Environmental Studies beyond statutory obligations, notably in fieldwork within the school grounds, in awareness raising through school assemblies, and whole school activities.

MANAGEMENT:

Schemes of work have been planned around the seasons, making full use of the school grounds and the local environment. The skills and knowledge gained are, therefore, further practised and enhanced and appropriate values and attitudes are developed and encouraged through the children's time in school.

The Environmental Studies Co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with other subject co-ordinators in order to promote the use of Environmental Studies with other curriculum areas.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

A large proportion of the work undertaken by the children is through observation and discussion. A number of strategies can be used to extend the children's learning:

- Compare and contrast work related to the seasons
- Gather evidence from observations
- Raise and answer questions

Opportunities may involve the following activities:

- Creative
- Practical problem solving
- Role-play and imaginative

Learning experiences may be:

- Individual
- With a partner
- Within a group or class
- Whole school

Fieldwork to take place:

- Around the school grounds
- In the local area
- At a site away from school eg: Emberton Village and park

Education out of the classroom Day will:

- Take place once a year, usually during the summer term
- Enable the children to partake in a wide range of activities
- Involve help from parents and governors

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS:

Links are to be found between Environmental Studies and many other subjects, notably Science and Geography. Some links are through statutory requirements as in Science and Geography, but many are through opportunities which arise in other subjects:

Science	Life Processes and Living Things, Materials and their Properties, Physical Processes (Light and Sound), The Earth and Beyond, Experimental and Investigative Science
Geography	Investigating Places, Land Use, Maps and Plans, Directions, Routes, Human Activities and the Effects on the Land, The Quality of the Environment, Weather, Collecting and Analysing Evidence, Sustainable Development, Stewardship and Conservation
English	Raising and answering questions, sharing ideas and insights, opinions, discussions, argument, research, reporting, predicting outcomes, creative writing, poetry, stories, drama and letter writing
History	Chronology, the historical aspects of natural and man-made features, human influences on the environment, the evolution of an area, everyday life of people in the past
Art	Observational representation using a range of media, shape, form and space, texture, line, shade and tone, patterns and colour in the environment
DT	Working with natural and reclaimed materials, designing and making environmental products eg: bird table, bench, designs for improving the environment
IT	Word processing, data handling, CD Roms, using a range of software with an Environmental topic
PSHE	Points of view, caring
Maths	Data collection, recording and analysis, number, practical maths, probability, measuring, shape, sorting and classifying, using and applying maths, patterns, position and movement, symmetry
Music	Songs, composing from a stimulus, listening to music written from an Environmental stimulus, sounds in the environment
PE	Outdoor and adventurous activities
RE	God as the Creator, the world as a precious gift to humanity

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION:

To ensure continuity and progression, the Environmental Studies planned for each year group builds upon the previous year's work, thereby developing children's skills, knowledge and experiences.

Planning for Environmental Studies occurs at three levels:

- Long term - Yearly planning
- Medium term - half termly planning
- Short term - weekly planning and daily planning

DIFFERENTIATION: (see also Special Needs Policy)

Our aim is to meet the needs of each individual child and to involve them as far as possible in determining their next target and organisation of their pace of work.

Some children will be able to pursue more demanding work at higher levels and should be encouraged to do so. Some children will benefit from work at a lower level in order to help them consolidate particular skills. The development of each child is different and, therefore, children will need to approach learning from a variety of different perspectives.

In our planning we need to consider:

- under-achieving children who lack confidence in their own ability have limited recording methods and poor communication skills
- children who may need support and who may take longer than others to reach certain targets
- children who are able to attain high levels of performance in Environmental Studies skills

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/SPECIAL NEEDS/INCLUSION:

All pupils will have access to Environmental Studies on an equal basis, irrespective of gender, race or religion, and at an appropriate level. As far as possible, any child with a specific disability will be provided with the same opportunities as his or her peers.

A broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum will be provided in order for each child to achieve their potential as far as their capability allows.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING:

No formal assessment is required, although Environmental Studies may be indirectly included in the yearly Record of Achievement under the headings of other subjects such as Science (Life Processes and Living Things), Geography (Places and Environmental Change), Art (drawing and painting), Music (composing and singing), etc. This record is given to parents, and a copy is kept in school. We meet with parents formally at Parent Consultations in the Spring and Summer Terms, and informally in the Autumn Term, and when there is a specific need to discuss a child's progress.

At the end of Year 2 reports are passed on to the receiving Junior School and transfer discussions are held with teachers.

OPERACY

- Thinking is an important human life skill which, like literacy and numeracy, has to be learned and practised to be effective.
- We use "thinking tools" to help with this process. These tools help us to generate often completely new ideas in all areas of the curriculum which may not have been considered before.
- Once the thinker has acquired the skills and techniques they can control and direct their thinking at will.

STAFFING AND RESOURCES:

Class teachers are responsible for delivering Environmental Studies within their class. There is a nominated member of staff who has responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum, and who is supported by a Link Governor. (Role of Environmental Studies Co-ordinator - see Appendix 1). A list of resource details is identified in Appendix (2).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

The Curriculum Manager and the Environmental Studies Co-ordinator are responsible for ensuring the appropriate policy statements and curriculum maps are drawn up and revised in line with the School Improvement Plan. The Curriculum Manager and the Environmental Studies Co-ordinator are jointly responsible for the planning, teaching, learning, monitoring and evaluating throughout the school.

VISITS AND VISITORS:

Visitors may be invited to school as experts in a particular area, and are used not only for specialist knowledge, but to encourage the children to see the relevance of the subject to life outside school. Use is also made of visits to other areas.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Teachers should be aware of the School's Health and Safety Policy when taking pupils outside the school building.

DATE WRITTEN

This policy was rewritten in Spring Term 2006 and will be regularly reviewed in line with the ever changing learning climate. This policy is fundamental to the success of Ashbrook School and will be actively shared with all stakeholders.

Appendix 1

ROLE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CO-ORDINATOR

To be responsible to the Headteacher, in liaison with the Curriculum Manager, for the co-ordination of the work in the specified curriculum area by undertaking the following:

- 1 Act as consultant in the specified curriculum area with other members of staff.
 - 1.1 Foster the necessary integration of curriculum planning and delivery throughout the school in consultation with colleagues
 - 1.2 Advise and support colleagues in aspects of their work:
 - individual children's needs
 - teaching/learning strategies - in conjunction with the Special Needs Co-ordinator, if appropriate
 - classroom management
 - planning, assessment and record keeping
 - use of resources
 - through planning support and observation
 - 1.3 Identify and advise on current and future needs and contribute to whole school planning
 - 1.4 Organise and purchase relevant teaching resources from within annual budget.
 - 1.5 Convene and chair relevant staff meetings in liaison with the Headteacher/Curriculum Manager by:
 - drawing up an agenda/timetable
 - preparing background/discussion papers
 - organising necessary equipment and material
 - organising guest speakers/advisors' input
 - noting decisions made/actions to be taken
 - ensuring appropriate follow up
 - 1.6 Refer colleagues, where necessary to external agencies for advice/support eg: Resource Centres, Library, Museums
 - 1.7 Inform newly qualified teachers, new members of staff and supply teachers about arrangements for the curriculum area

- 2 Take major responsibility for the development of the curriculum area.
 - 2.1 Keep abreast of current thinking by attending relevant courses/meetings, reading and research and share significant developments with other colleagues.
 - 2.2 Draw up and develop policy statements, guidelines and schemes of work as appropriate in consultation with the Headteacher and Curriculum Manager by:
 - preparing draft/discussion papers
 - chairing staff meetings
 - organising working groups, where appropriate
 - researching material and gathering information
 - attending INSET
 - feeding back progress to colleagues/governors
 - 2.3 Organise, manage and maintain resources in consultation with other colleagues.
 - 2.4 Monitor the effectiveness of work in order to improve the quality and continuity of work throughout the school.
 - 2.5 Liaise with colleagues with like responsibilities in the liaison group, and participate in National and local initiatives as and when appropriate.
- 3 Make a significant contribution to relevant school based in-service training, in liaison with the INSET co-ordinator and Curriculum Manager.
 - 3.1 Identify needs/intended outcomes
 - 3.2 Plan appropriate programme, involving advisory service and outside agencies as and when appropriate.
 - 3.3 Take responsibility for the overall organisation of the initiative.
 - 3.4 Devise means of effectively evaluating the outcomes.
 - 3.5 Formulate plan for further action, as appropriate.

This job description may be amended at any time after discussion with the relevant member of staff and the Headteacher.