

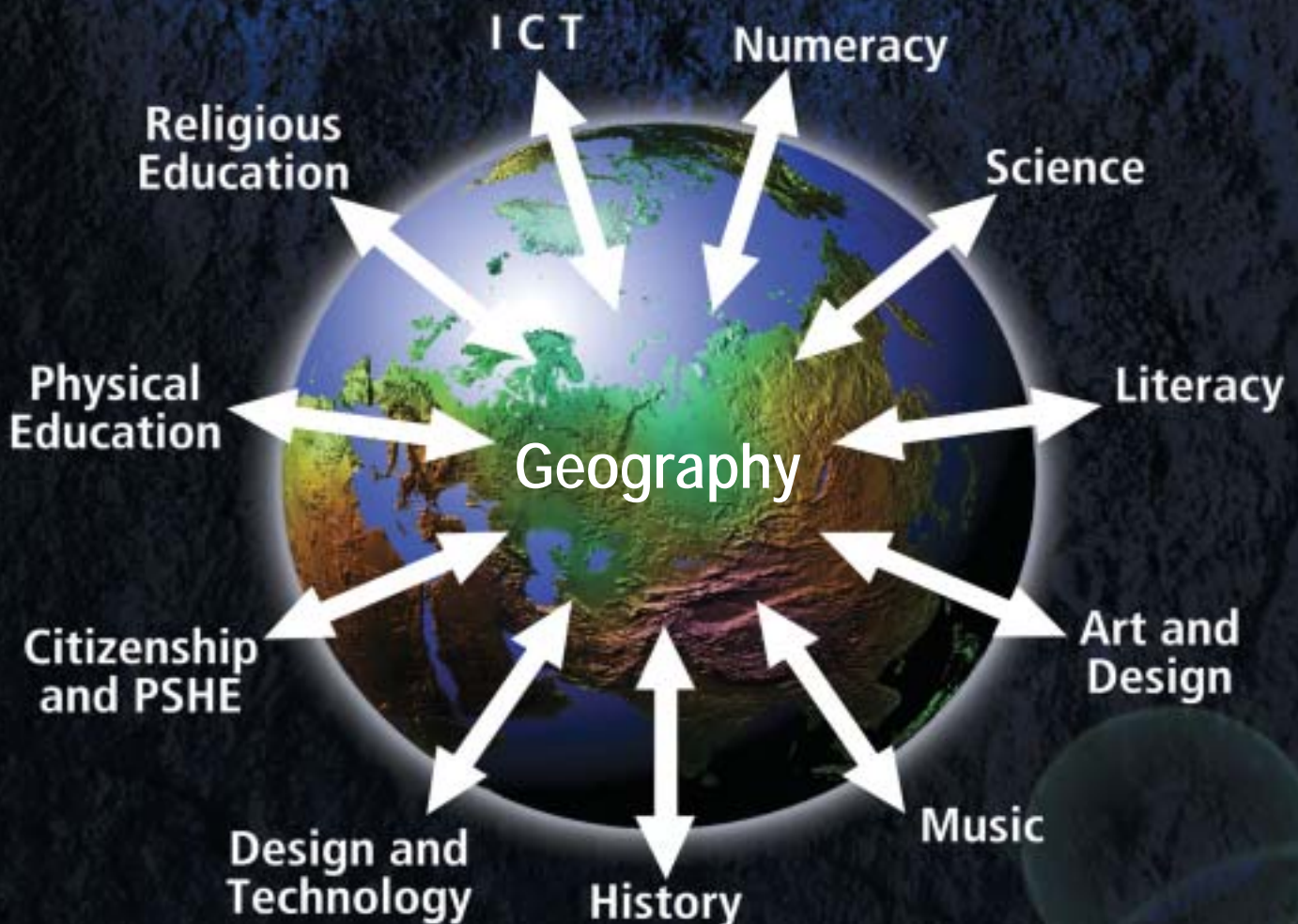


# Finding time for things that matter: geography in primary schools

**Children's education from the earliest age involves geographical experiences.**

Geography uses a distinctive range of skills and teaching techniques. The best work involves practical enquiries and first hand investigations. Fieldwork in the school building, school grounds, local streets and further afield is essential. Children should be encouraged to consider issues and share their ideas in maps, charts and diagrams. There are ample opportunities for developing ICT capability and creative and critical thinking skills.

**'Global warming, the spread of deserts, water shortages, the migration of peoples, the battles over resources such as oil and issues of world trade and debt (and world conflicts) ... All this is part of modern geography.'** Paul Brown Education Guardian 30 Nov 2001



# What can geography primary aged children

A geographical perspective offers children unique opp

## Life skills

Developing the ability to make sense of information

- map reading and way finding
- communicating findings in drawings, charts and diagrams
- recording and analysing information using ICT
- discussing solutions to issues and problems
- critical and creative thinking

## World knowledge

Developing an awareness of distant places and environments

- learning about major rivers, mountains and cities
- recognising how people from all over the world are linked through travel and economics
- building an understanding of other people and cultures
- recognising the need for a just and equitable society

## Finding Time for Geography

Geography provides a natural context for active citizenship and for developing and applying ICT skills. The national curriculum headings – places, patterns, processes, change, sustainable development - help make links to other subjects.

Geography enriches the curriculum. Assemblies can focus on countries and events overseas. Local museums usually contain artefacts from around the world. There may be artists and musicians from abroad living in your area who are willing to share their skills with the children. Don't forget the special events such as Geography Action Week (usually in early October) and Europe Day (9 May) that have a geographical focus.

For guidance, when revising curriculum maps to ensure sufficient time is allocated to Foundation Subjects like geography, schools are advised to refer to QCA Circular 153 July 2002 'Designing and timetabling the primary curriculum – a practical guide for Key Stage 1 and 2'



# do for n?

## ortunities for learning.

### Understanding people and places

Developing spatial understanding and awareness at a range of scales

- fieldwork and active exploration of the locality
- landscape, settlements and human activity
- environmental issues and local Agenda 21
- global citizenship and multicultural understanding



I can say how to get to my house from school.

I can give people directions.

I know where I live on a map.

I know why places are changing.

I like looking after the plants in our wildlife corner.

I like playing in the class Travel Agency.

I know why there is a Pelican crossing at the end of the road.

I understand why my sandcastle was washed away by the tide.

I understand why we need to save energy.

I don't like the litter on the pavement.

I can communicate with a friend who lives in another country.

I am interested in the future of our area.

I collect glass bottles and aluminium tins for recycling.

I think everyone in the world is a citizen.

I like reading stories about other people and places.

I know how to record weather.

# Primary geography at the core

## *Using maps and plans*

Children should be able to locate themselves in their surroundings and find their way from one place to another

## *Fieldwork and enquiry*

Practical enquiries and investigations are central to geography which is best learnt 'through the soles of the feet'

## *Investigating issues*

Some of the best work in geography comes when children investigate issues and propose their own solutions

## *Communication skills*

Geographers use a great variety of diagrams and other visual devices to communicate findings

## *ICT*

Modern information processing systems from digital cameras to Global Information Systems (GIS) give us valuable new ways of studying the world

## *Knowing the locality*

Children need to develop an awareness of their surroundings for their educational and psychological well-being

## *International understanding*

As the political, economic and ecological links between nations becomes ever more apparent, we need to promote international understanding and tolerance

## *Respecting diversity*

Geographical studies can tackle biased images and negative stereotypes in a neutral and unemotional way

## *Sustainability and the environment*

Sustainability and the care of the environment are key issues for the twenty first century

## *Global citizenship*

We are all global citizens and we each have a responsibility both to the planet and to each other

## *Cycles, patterns and processes*

Geographical concepts such as cycles, patterns and processes provide a unique way of describing and analysing the world

## *Developing attitudes and opinions*

Geography helps children to develop attitudes and opinions about some of the key issues of our time

## *Critical and creative thinking*

The best geographical studies promote critical and creative thinking skills and enhance long term learning across the school curriculum

## The Geographical Association believes that ...

- Geography makes a major contribution to our physical, intellectual, social and emotional development
- Geographical knowledge, concepts and skills are essential components of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Geographical education is an entitlement for all and should remain a statutory component of the curriculum at key stages 1, 2 and 3
- The programme of study, and examination specifications, should be sufficiently flexible to allow for a range of approaches to the teaching and learning of the subject
- Appropriate curriculum time must be allocated to the teaching and learning of geography for all young people
- All those who teach geography should have the subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills to do so
- All who teach geography are entitled to regular, high quality subject-specific continuing professional development
- Geography should be challenging, topical, motivating and fun!

The GA publishes *Primary Geographer*, the only magazine devoted to geography in primary schools. It has a Primary Committee, provides relevant CPD at its annual and special conferences and publishes a large selection of primary resources. Further copies of this document, for use with your school governors and managers, are available in packs of 25 at a cost of £5.95 plus p&p. Please refer to our webshop [www.geographyshop.org.uk](http://www.geographyshop.org.uk), or contact us at the address below.



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