

VICTORIA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



World Around Us Policy

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Policy for World Around Us

1. Policy for the World Around Us

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of the World Around Us at Victoria Park Primary School. The World Around Us is a compulsory subject and an important part of the curriculum.

2. What is the World Around Us?

The World Around Us is the exploration and understanding of the children's surroundings and the world in which they live. It helps to prepare pupils for the responsibilities, experiences and opportunities of adult life.

3. Aims

Our aims in teaching the World Around Us are that all children will:

- Enjoy studying the world around them.
- Develop an awareness of themselves and their place in the world.
- Develop an awareness of other cultures and their impact on the environment around them.
- Develop their knowledge and understanding of places in local, regional, national, international and global contexts.
- Explore ways in which changes have and will occur in the world and the effects on those who live there.
- Explore sources of energy in the world and the possibilities of protecting and managing these resources.
- Explore the positive and negative effects of natural and human events upon a place over time.
- Explore why things move and how they work.
- Enjoy learning in the outdoor classroom.
- Have opportunities to develop their scientific understanding and be motivated and enthused by the practical nature of discovery.
- Acquire knowledge of the world around them through the use of questioning, observing, investigating, identifying patterns, explaining and initiating enquiry.

4. Skills

Through the teaching of the World Around Us all children will develop skills in the following areas:

- Literacy, numeracy and ICT
- Managing information
- Thinking, problem-solving and decision-making
- Being creative
- Working with others
- Self-management
- Observation, questioning, planning, predicting, doing, evaluating, recording and communicating.

5. Principles of the teaching and learning of the World around Us.

The World Around Us is important because

- The skills and knowledge of the World Around Us have wide applicability in everyday life.
- It is the knowledge essential to our understanding of the world around us and as such making sense of this.
- It is interesting and enjoyable providing an awareness of other places and peoples.

6. Strategies for the teaching and learning in the World Around Us.

- The emphasis is on an integrated approach with linkages between science, geography, history, the outdoor classroom and other curricular areas.
- The development of children's enquiry skills through STEM investigations.
- The effective use of the school grounds (outdoor classroom), year group flower beds, local environment, educational visits and visitors to the classroom.
- The curriculum is organised on a topic basis wherein the contributory subjects are integrated into the yearly programme of topics followed throughout the school.
- The emphasis in our teaching of the World Around Us is on stimulating the children's minds and satisfying their growing need to "know the reason why".
- To make the World Around Us real to the children by offering opportunities for direct experience, practical activities and exploration.
- A range of teaching approaches are employed including whole class teaching, group work and individual work.

- Pupils with special needs have the same World Around Us entitlement as all other pupils.
- Homework is used to support learning in the World Around Us.

7. The Outdoor Classroom

The outdoor classroom provides children with one of the best environments in which to learn. Our pupils will have opportunities to develop skills and concepts in an outdoor learning environment where they will:

- Become more aware of, more observant in and more responsive to their surroundings.
- Develop an approach to careful observation, accurate recording and thoughtful analysis.
- Encourage an interest in environmental issues.
- Foster a sense of wonder and discovery.

Children will have the opportunity to study aspects of their own immediate world, including different features of town and countryside, plants and wildlife within the school grounds and make comparisons between local and wider world issues.

8. Progress and continuity

- Planning in the World Around Us is a process in which all teachers are involved.
- It is intended that topic teaching plans will be drawn up by staff and they will be selected to ensure balanced coverage of geography, history and science and technology.
- The World Around Us co-ordinator:
 - supports, advises and guides colleagues in the appropriate delivery of the World Around Us.
 - monitors the running of the World Around Us scheme to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school.
 - ensures the four strands of the World Around Us are covered in each key stage
 - informs staff about current developments in the World Around Us.
 - provides a strategic lead and direction in the World Around Us.
 - takes responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for the World Around Us.
 - provides resources specific to the school for use in the outdoor classroom and design and technology projects in class.

9. Recording and reporting

Parents receive a general written report on their child's progress annually.

10. Assessment

Assessment in WAU, as in all areas of learning, will be used to promote, enhance and deepen the children's learning. It involves all methods normally used to appraise the children's learning, either individually or in groups. The outcomes from these assessments can then be used to identify the progress which pupils make in relation to the processes, skills, understanding and knowledge outlined in the NI Curriculum. We take account of Assessment for Learning strategies and allow this formative assessment to help and guide planning. The key reasons for assessment within WAU will be to:-

- Enhance performance, self esteem and self-confidence.
- Promote greater resilience when faced with challenges.
- Increase independence.
- Develop a positive climate for learning.

11. Monitoring

Each teacher is responsible for the regular assessment of the pupils through observations and marking work, using this to inform future planning.

The co-ordinator will monitor the WAU within the school through teacher's half termly planning, book looks and liaising with staff. Written feedback will be given and followed up where necessary.

12. Resources

Resources are clearly labelled and located in a central store for use by all.

Class teachers will supplement these resources with their own (and pupils') materials.

Copies of Outdoor Classroom and Science and Technology activity booklets, created by co-ordinator, specific to our school, are shared and stored between each year group (in paper format) and electronically.

- Mini beasts and Pollinators
- Primary Science and Technology Challenges Foundation Stage
- Primary Science and Technology Challenges Key Stage 1
- Primary Science and Technology Challenges Key Stage 2
- Using and exploring the Natural environment in Victoria Park Primary School
- Science Activities in the Outdoor Classroom
- Outdoor Classroom Activities – Forests and Parks
- Bird Handbook
- School garden with year group flower beds
- Science Activities in the Outdoor Classroom – Parent booklet
- The Outdoor Classroom Part 2 – Parent Booklet