

Geography Policy

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

CURRICULUM AIMS

Our Geography curriculum aims to:

- Inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people.
- Develop knowledge of the location of globally significant places including their physical and human characteristics.
- Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of different regions.
- Describe and understand key aspects of physical and human geography using a wide range of geographical vocabulary.
- Use geographical skills including maps, atlases, globes, digital computer mapping, compasses, grid references etc.
- Use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods.

RATIONALE FOR OUR CURRICULUM DESIGN

The following areas were considered when designing our geography curriculum:

- Planning reflects our local area, and the cohort of our school, with a strong emphasis on fieldwork.
- The curriculum has an enquiry approach including research, investigations and fieldwork.
- Activities are accessible to pupils of all backgrounds and abilities and enables them to make progress.
- Cross-curricular links are meaningful and are used to promote the study of geography.
- Pupils have opportunities to develop their Basic Skills.
- The taught curriculum is enhanced by a range of enrichment opportunities - including visits (and visitors) every term - see our Curriculum Overviews for details.
- Curriculum design reflects current research e.g. progression of knowledge and skills.
- Opportunities are identified to teach morality, respect and equal opportunities.
- There is a focus on pupils retaining key knowledge. There are recurring themes between the different topics – helping pupils to remember key knowledge taught.
- Pupils develop a broad and long lasting knowledge of historical vocabulary and they confidently understand and are able to utilise this vocabulary in their work.

Legal Framework

This Policy will have regard to the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- History NC programmes of study (Key Stages 1 and 2)
- DfE: Early years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS)

HOW IS GEOGRAPHY PLANNED?

Early Years Provision

Activities and experiences for pupils will be based on the areas of learning and development, as outlined in the DfE's 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. All activities will adhere to the objectives set out in this framework. In particular, geography-based activities will be used to develop

pupils' knowledge and understanding of the 'People Culture and Communities' and 'The Natural World.' These are the expected levels at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

People Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Years 1 to 6 Provision

Geography is taught as a discrete subject although links are made with other subjects where possible (see our Curriculum Overviews). Our school uses the Rising Stars Geography plans as a framework for breaking down the National Curriculum programmes of study into manageable chunks. All teachers adapt this planning according to the needs of the pupils in their class including those with SEND (see further details below). Planning is also adapted to consider the local context, particularly in the case of fieldwork opportunities. Pupils learning is enriched through class visits/visitors, fieldwork and workshops inspiring pupils' curiosity and fascination about their world.

TEACHING APPROACHES

- All topics start with a 'hook': This includes enquiry questions (see below), visitors, visits, objects of interest, photographs etc.
- Pupils are presented with Knowledge Organisers at the start of each topic – these are stuck in pupil books at the start of each unit. They include 'sticky knowledge' we want pupils to remember and understand, as well as lists of key unit vocabulary including definitions.
- All planning uses an enquiry approach including enquiry questions, investigations, research and local studies.
- Teachers plan one visit/visitor, every term, to consolidate and enhance learning.
- Teachers frequently recap on work covered to help pupils retain key knowledge. This includes the use of quizzes.
- All pupils complete 'Key Assessment Tasks' every topic (linked to National Curriculum expectations). This helps inform ongoing teacher assessments of attainment and progress.

OVERVIEW CURRICULUM CONTENT

Class	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Early Years	People Culture and Communities The Natural World		
Year 1	Our Local Area What's it like where we live?	People and their Communities Where in the world do these people live?	Animals and their Habitats Where do our favourite animals live?
Year 2	Seasons What are seasons?	Journeys – Food	Our Wonderful World

		Where does our food come from?	What are the 7 wonders of our world?
Year 3	Climate and Weather Why is climate important?	Our World Where on Earth are we?	Coasts Do we like to be beside the seaside?
Year 4	The Americas Can you come on a Great American Road Trip?	Rivers and the Water Cycle How does the water go round and round?	Earthquakes and Volcanoes How does the earth shake, rattle and roll?
Year 5	Europe – A Study of the Alpine Region Where should we go on holiday?	Changes in our Local Environment How is our country changing?	Journeys – Trade Where does all our stuff come from?
Year 6	South America – The Amazon What is life like in the Amazon?	Protecting the Environment – Global Warming and Climate Change Are we damaging our world?	Our World in the Future How will our world look in the future?

MARKING, FEEDBACK AND REPORTING

Formative Assessment in Geography:

- Is embedded as an essential part of teaching and learning.
- Involves sharing learning objectives and success criteria with pupils.
- Aims to help pupils to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for.
- Involves pupils in peer and self-assessment.
- Provides subject specific feedback which leads pupils to recognising their next steps and how to take them.
- Is used by the Senior Management Team and teachers to: adapt the curriculum, target professional development, audit resources and to further develop progression of all pupils in all classes.

All pupils complete 'Key Assessment Tasks' every topic. This is usually at the end of a topic, but could be within, depending on the concept or skill that is being assessed. Teachers mark this work in-depth and use assessment criteria to award a level: Working Towards, Meeting or Exceeding.

Teachers use this assessment to record individual pupil progress on a half-termly tracking sheet. This information is then used to plan for gaps in knowledge. Each teacher then assesses whether a child is meeting the 'Expected' standard at the end of the year based on these ongoing records. End of year levels are recorded on our online assessment tracker.

Parents are invited to a Parent Consultation meeting every term and they receive an Annual Pupil Progress Report (including attainment and progress in Geography).

RESOURCES AND CLASSROOM DISPLAYS

Our curriculum uses an enquiry approach - using a range of resources. These include up-to-date atlases, maps, globes and text books. We have audited the local area and planned one trip, visit or fieldwork, every term, to enhance learning.

Displays are used, in class, to showcase work and to develop pupil's knowledge and understanding. All classes will have at least one geography display throughout the year. All displays include pupil work as well as key vocabulary and enquiry based questions.

We make use of various online resources - including our Geographical Association membership and the Digimaps online maps. We have developed links with various external groups including the Groundwork Trust, Iver Environment Centre and local farms (see further details below).

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Although History is taught as a discrete subject, meaningful links are made wherever possible. Core texts are used, each term, to introduce English work (we have made links with our History teaching) e.g. Egyptian Cinderella is used in Year 4. Our history planning includes links with other subjects - every topic. In history lessons there is also a focus on Basic Skills and links are made wherever possible. Pupils are taught to use technology to find/analyse different sources and as a tool for presenting their findings.

LINKS WITH THE COMMUNITY

We have developed the following links:

- Groundwork Trust: Projects have included visits to a local quarry, plans to improve our local park and a Love Local Food initiative involving growing projects and visits to local farms.
- Iver Nature Study Centre: Teacher training and pupil workshops.
- Local farms (including Copas pick your own): Exploring the importance of local food.
- Talks from family members e.g. One World Week (appreciation of different cultures).

Subject Leader - Roles and Responsibilities

The Geography Lead is responsible for:

- Supporting staff in creating an effective learning environment
- Supporting teachers in planning lessons and providing enrichment opportunities
- Supporting the professional development needs of staff teaching Geography
- Evaluating pupil progress
- Action planning- setting targets and indicating how these can be achieved
- Leading moderation exercises with staff
- Establishing & monitoring assessment systems in school
- Liaising with Geography subject leaders from across our network of Catholic schools
- Arranging transition links with feeder secondary schools
- Keeping up-to-date with current research in Geography education and incorporating this into our CPD programme and curriculum development.

Differentiation and SEND Support

We recognise the fact that in all geography lessons there are children of a variety of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all pupils by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We provide the following support:

- Use of visuals including writing frames, vocabulary prompts, sentence starters etc.
- Additional adult support including teaching assistants in each class.
- Differentiated and simplified activities and tasks.
- Extension and enrichment activities for the more able.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupils have a separate Geography book for recording their written work and key assessment tasks. Each teacher has a class iPad which can be used to take photographs of any learning that is not written work.

The Geography Lead (also a member of the Senior Management Team) carries out monitoring, every term, according to the whole school monitoring schedule. This includes:

- Book Looks (every term)
- Learning Walks - including lesson observations (annually)
- Pupil interviews (annually)

This policy was formulated by the Subject Leader and then shared and adapted by all teaching staff.

This document will be updated annually.