

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL



Life in all its fullness

Geography Policy September 2024

- A creative, inspiring school.
- An exciting, quality environment.
- An inclusive place that nurtures children's individual talents
- A place to learn 'People Skills' to prepare us to become good citizens.

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GEOGRAPHY POLICY

1. Aims and objectives

1.1 Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem solving. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in other cultures. Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

1.2 The aims of geography are:

- To instil the Christian values of love and understanding of the world around us and the people that live all across the globe. Through teaching Geography we give hope and the wisdom to fight for a sustainable future as a global citizen.
- To teach British values and how they form this country in the global community.
- To enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world.
- To increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country.
- To allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps.
- To enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level.
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means.
- To develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

2. Teaching and learning style

2.1 We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as

answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures and aerial photographs and we enable them to use ICT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. orienteering trips.

- 2.2 We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
 - Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks.
 - Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group.
 - Providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child.
 - Using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

3. Geography curriculum planning

- 3.1 We use the new Maestro knowledge-based curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We will adapt the new curriculum to the local circumstances of our school i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.
- 3.2 Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the key objectives to be studied in each year during each key stage. We combine geographical study with work in other subject areas in a knowledge and skills-based curriculum where some topics have a particular geographical focus.
- 3.3 Our medium-term plans follow the key skills from the National Curriculum. The class teacher is responsible for ensuring they have taught all objectives by the end of the year. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis to ensure coverage.

- 3.4 Each class teacher uses the new Maestro scheme for each lesson. These lesson plans list specific learning objectives. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and adapts where necessary, and often discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis.
- 3.5 We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the Maestro scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

4. Foundation stage

- 4.1 We teach geography in Foundation class as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the statutory EYFS Framework which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the EYFS objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or journeys to and from home.

5. The contribution of geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 English

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the English lessons are geographical in nature. At Key Stage 2, we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

5.2 Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four and six figure grid references. They also use graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

5.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the laptops and i-pads in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning at Key Stage 2 and we use it at Key Stage 1 when appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet. We arrange for the children to communicate with other pupils in other schools and countries by using e-mail. We also offer children the opportunity to use the I-pads to record and use photographic/video evidence images.

5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle materials and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We allow them to organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as helping the those less fortunate than themselves or homeless. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of geography. For example their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study.

6. Teaching geography to children with special educational needs

- 6.1 At our school we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.
- 6.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.
- 6.3 Intervention through special needs interventions will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography.
- 6.4 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

7. Assessment and recording

- 7.1 We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lesson. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. We comment on the child's overall progress in geography at the end of every year. The new Maestro scheme will focus on curriculum objectives from September 2024.

8. Resources

- 8.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the key skills in geography. We keep these resources in a central area. We keep a collection of geography equipment which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of atlases for both key stages. We have a good supply of geography topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research. These are supported termly by a range of books borrowed from the Education Library Service.

8.2 We also have a set of I-pads and laptops which are used regularly to enhance learning.

9. Fieldwork

9.1 Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

9.2 At Key Stage 1, we let all children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2 the children do a study of the local area. We offer them the opportunity to take part in a residential visit in Year 2 and Year 6 to a very contrasting locality.

10. Monitoring and review

10.1 The geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. The geography subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The geography subject leader gives the headteacher an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Reviewed: September 2021

Review: September 2024

Reviewed by Staff:Mr Heaps

Reviewed by Governor: