



# St. Mary's RC Primary School

## Geography Policy

Date policy last reviewed: March 2022

---

## **Our Mission**

We aim to provide a safe, caring, Catholic community where each member is valued and respected and enabled to achieve their potential through a broad and balanced curriculum. This is summed up neatly in our school motto: To learn and grow together in Christ.

## **INTENT**

At St Mary's, we believe that Geography helps to provoke and answer questions about the natural and human world, encouraging children to develop a greater understanding of their world and their place and responsibilities within it. Geography helps children to develop a range of investigation and problem-solving skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas and which can be used to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills and feeds a child's natural curiosity. We seek to inspire in children curiosity and fascination about the world in which they live, and its people, which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote children's interest and understanding about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. We aim to ensure children are aware of topical geographical issues, the importance of sustainability and human action upon our world and armed with this knowledge debate and make decisions about how they choose to live.

### **1. Aims and Objectives**

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area, and they 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.

Our objectives in the teaching of geography are:

- 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 multicultural 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 in children a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem-solving, ICT, investigation, and that of presenting their conclusions in

- the most appropriate way
- to develop the cross-curricular use of geography in all subjects.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **2. Statutory Requirements**

- 2.1** This policy reflects the requirements of the *National Curriculum Programmes of Study*, which all maintained schools in England must teach.
- 2.2** It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014* and *Equality Act 2010*, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's *Governance Handbook*.
- 2.3** In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework*.

### **3. Subject Organisation**

#### **3.1 Planning**

##### **3.1.1 Foundation Stage**

We teach geography in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the development of each child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through a wide range of appropriate activities.

##### **3.1.2 Key Stage 1 and 2**

Geography is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We have used this to develop our own personalised scheme of work for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have considered 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. Our curriculum planning provides the children with a pathway, building on prior knowledge and each lesson begins with a focus question. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school. Geography is taught weekly over three half terms.

##### **3.1.3 Cross-curricular links**

###### **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 additional texts that we use in literacy are geographical in nature. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability.

###### **Mathematics**

The teaching of geography in our school contributes to children's mathematical understanding 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.

### **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 in which people recycle material, 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. Thus, geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

### **Geography and ICT**

Information and Communication Technology enhances our teaching of geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They can research information through the Internet.

### **Equal Opportunities**

#### **4.1 Protected Characteristics and Inclusion**

4.1.1 All children in school have regular access to geography appropriate to their stage of development. Challenge for all is integral to our teaching and we aim to encourage all pupils to reach their full potential through the provision of varied opportunities. We recognise that our geography planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding and competency as they move through our school.

4.1.2 Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teacher's planning will ensure that children who are more able or those with low prior attainment are catered for.

The Pupil Premium strategy outlines provision for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

4.1.3 The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy,

maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

#### **4. 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. 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.

#### **5. Assessment and Reporting**

Teacher assessment is the basis for assessment in geography. It is an ongoing process throughout the year. A number of methods will be used: observing pupils, talking with pupils, marking written work, self-assessment and peer assessment. At the end of each unit an assessment sheet is completed by each class teacher and sent to the subject lead. This, along with robust monitoring, will be used to create a picture of geographical teaching and learning throughout school.

#### **6. Role of the Subject Leader**

##### **6.1 Monitoring and Review**

The coordination and planning of the geography curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in geography and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject.
- gives the head teacher, curriculum lead and the Governing Body an annual summary report in which the geography lead will highlight the strengths and weaknesses in geography and indicate areas for further improvement on a subject action plan.
- collect evidence of the children's work, planning and display work and to observe geography lessons across the school.

##### **6.2 Resources**

We are currently in the process of updating resources in our school, to enable quality teaching of all the geography units in our sequence of learning. We keep these resources in a central store. We also keep a collection of geography equipment, which the children use to gather weather data, and a set of atlases for both key stages. We use library loans to ensure that we have a good supply of geography topic books, as well as access to the internet to support the children's individual research.

#### **7. Role of the Governing Body**

**7.1** The governing body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

**7.2** The governing body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets

- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

## **8. Additional Subject Information**

### **8.1 Teaching and Learning style**

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, starting each geography lesson with a focus question.

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. research of a local environmental problem, or use of the internet to investigate a current issue. 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 tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty and challenge.

### **8.2 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 in which people recycle material, 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. Thus, geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship. Many global geographical issues are raised weekly in the resource 'Picture News'. This resource gives our children the opportunity to have challenging discussions, and to think deeply about worldwide geographical issues.

## **9. Linked Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Marking and Feedback
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Assessment
- Behaviour
- Presentation
- Pupil Premium

## **10. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed March 2023

.