

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Geography Policy



“Doing our best for God”

Signed: *Sophie Gooch* (Geography Lead)

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'The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.' Barack Obama

Geography raises and answers questions about the natural and human worlds. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps and a range of investigative and problem solving skills to be applied both inside and outside the classroom. Geography provides a focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving the issues concerning the environment and sustainable development. Geography allows pupils to encounter different societies and cultures leading them to realise how nations rely on each other. Geography can encourage pupils to think about their own place in the world, their values, and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment.

Aims

The aims of geography are:

- To stimulate children's interest in their surroundings and develop a knowledge and understanding of the physical and human processes which shape places.
- 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 provide learning opportunities that enthuse, engage, and motivate children to learn and foster a sense of curiosity and wonder at the beauty of the world around them.
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means.
- To make sense of their own surroundings through learning about their own locality and the interaction between people and the environment.
- To develop the geographical skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps of different scales, and the vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry.
- To be able to apply map reading skills to globes and atlas maps and identify geographical features.
- To formulate appropriate questions, develop research skills and evaluate material to inform opinions.
- To enable children to work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment including other people's experiences and knowledge.

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
- collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
- interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Key stage 1

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country

Human and physical geography

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
- key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
- key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

Key stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities

- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America

Human and physical geography

- describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies

EYFS

Geography is taught in the Early Years as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The children are given the opportunity to learn about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. In the Early Years geography makes a significant contribution to developing a child's understanding of the world through activities such as collecting postcards from different places, singing songs from around the world, or investigating seasonal changes.

The Contribution of Geography to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

Our curriculum enables us to teach in a cross-curricular manner where appropriate. Throughout school Geography is taught both discretely and in a cross-curricular way. The curriculum can promote learning across the curriculum in a number of areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key skills and thinking skills.

RE

'Fill the world with people; look after the world; look after one another; take care of the fish and the birds, the animals wild and the reptiles, the trees and the flowers and the plants. And so it was. God saw all creation and indeed it was very good.' (Genesis 1: 26-31)

As Christians we believe that we are made in the image and likeness of God and that means that each person has dignity and is to be treated with respect, creation is not ours to own but it is on loan to us for the time we live on the Earth. Genesis tells us of our responsibility to take care of the Earth and everything in it; that is to be good stewards. We must sustain and protect it for future generations. Geography is an

integral part of RE where children learn about the destruction caused by global warming through drought, mud slides and flooding on poorer countries and the destruction of rainforests and the world's oceans through overuse of plastic. RE teaches children that charities such as CAFOD work to support sustainable development and allows children to respond to 'big questions' on stewardship and respond to it by referring to the scripture.

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. Teachers organise debates on environmental issues using drama activities such as 'conscience alley' because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. 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. Reading about geographical places and environmental issues is also promoted within geography lessons developing children's skills such as retrieval, comprehension, skim and scan and prediction. Key vocabulary for the unit of work is displayed in the classroom.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children 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.

Computing

Provision is made for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning in EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work and developing map skills. They research information through the internet.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) and Citizenship

Geography can inspire pupils to develop their concept of themselves as a global citizen and become aware of a range of social issues which would be beyond their own experience. The children learn and develop an understanding of matters of concern to them, such as responding to famine, natural disasters and refugees. For example, children study the way people recycle materials and how environments are changed for better or for worse and the impact an individual may make including plastic waste.

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.

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 'stewardship' in relation to 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.

Inclusion and the Geography Curriculum

At St Bernadette's Primary 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 match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Provision Maps (I.P.M.'s) Teachers take account of the three principles of inclusion that are set out in the National Curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to the diverse learning needs of pupils.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils in order to narrow the gap.

Equal Opportunities

It is the responsibility of all teachers at St Bernadette's Primary School to ensure that children irrespective of ability, race, gender, age, faith, sexual orientation, and disability are given full access to the geography curriculum and make the greatest possible progress in accordance with recent legislation.

The Subject Leader's role:

- Prepare policy documents and action plans
- Provide consultancy, advice, skills, staff meetings
- Specifying and ordering resources in consultation with staff
- Monitor teaching and learning in Geography through scrutiny of planning, books and pupil interviews.
- Create a progression of skills to indicate steps of learning.
- Provide staff with a vocabulary bank suited to their topics which are age appropriate and provide suitable stretch and challenge.

The Teacher's role is:

- Plan for and teach exciting and stimulating geography lessons.
- Ensure that the lesson begins with a question.
- Use assessment to influence future planning such as the KWL grid.
- Plan extended writing tasks within the subject.
- Ensure Geography objectives are being taught consistently and fairly weighted in comparison to History objectives where possible.
- Use retrieval/revision activities to encourage retention of key skills (sticky knowledge) and previously taught knowledge.

Resources

St Bernadette's provides a range of primary and secondary resources for children to examine, discuss, question and investigate. These include:

- books including library books
- atlases/globes/maps
- photographs/pictures
- Google Earth
- ICT, DVD, CD Rom
- teaching visitors
- class trips

Alongside the resources, teachers have access to Odizzi, a geography website that provides fully resourced schemes of works. These are supported with films, powerpoints and online images. There are downloadable resources including reading texts, maps as well as an online world map.

Assessment

Our Geography curriculum and assessment framework sets out steps so that pupils reach the end of key stage expectations in the new national curriculum. Teachers use a range of formative assessment opportunities to enable them to make a judgment about each child at the end of a unit of work. This information is put into the tracker to show whether a pupil is Entering (E), Developing (D) or Secure (S). A secure judgment on the tracker must only be used once all objectives for a year group are evidenced. Reports to parents are completed during the academic year, when indications are made as to the individual's progress in this area of the curriculum. Reporting of Geography at the Foundation Stage appears within the Knowledge and Understanding of the World Early Learning Goal.