

Geography Policy



Love, Learn, Respect and Appreciate

Geography Policy

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Approved by	Board of Governors	October 2021
Next Review Due	October 2022	

St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School: Geography Policy

1 Statement of Intent and aims

1.1 The intention of our Geography curriculum is to inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. We strive to equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. 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 in our school 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 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

1.3 Roles and responsibilities

The subject Lead for Geography is responsible for

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of geography, providing support for staff where necessary.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression from year group to year group.
- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all geography resources.
- Liaising with teachers across all phases.
- Communicating developments in the subject to teaching staff.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessment.
- Advising on the contribution of geography to other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

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 computing 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.

2.2 We recognise the fact that there are children of 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;
- 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 A carefully devised programme of study based on National Curriculum objectives and statutory frameworks inform curriculum planning. Geography lessons focus on the key features of locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography and geographical skills and fieldwork so that children learn to use a variety of skills to find out more about the world they live in. These types of geographical enquiry include: using maps and globes, using compass directions, recognise key symbols.

3.2 Our curriculum planning is in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our long-term plan maps the geography topics that are studied for half a term, each term. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group. In some cases we combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas, especially at Key Stage 1.

3.3 Our medium-term plans follow the national geography Curriculum and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have one- form entry classes, we do the medium-term planning on a one-year cycle. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

3.4 Our medium plans state the objectives and activities for each weekly lesson. The class Teacher keeps these individual plans, and has opportunities to discuss 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 scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

4 Early Years Foundation Stage

Within a secure and challenging environment and with effective support, children can explore, develop and experiment as they play to help them make sense of the world.

The EYFS strand 'Understanding the World' leads directly to geographical elements of the curriculum and leads to more formalised Geography learning in KS1 and then KS2.

Geography makes a significant contribution in developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the features in the place they live and the natural world. They find out about their environment and talk about those features they like and dislike.

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.

The children develop oral skills in geography lessons through discussions and through recounting their observations of the world around them.

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 arguments 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 Computing

We make provision for the children to use the computer 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 also offer children the opportunity to use ipads to record and use photographic images.

5.4 Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE education) 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 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. We allow them to help organise campaigns for charity, such as 'The Good Shepherd' or raise awareness of work done in CAFOD or Fair Trade. 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 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. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected outcomes.

6.2 In school we aim to meet the needs of all our children by differentiation in our Geography planning, by adapting the curriculum and in providing a variety of approaches and tasks appropriate to ability levels. This involves providing opportunities for SEND children to complete their own projects, with support, to develop speech and language skills, as well as geographical skills and knowledge. This will enable children with learning and/or physical difficulties to take an active part in geographical learning and practical activities and investigations and to achieve the goals they have been set. Some children will require closer supervision and more adult support to allow them to progress whilst more able children will be extended through differentiated activities.

7 Assessment and recording

7.1 We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. We use these to plan future work with that pupil, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

8 Resources

8.1 We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography units of work. We keep these resources in a central store where there is equipment for each unit of work.

9 Fieldwork

9.1 Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and there are opportunities to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

9.2 At Key Stage 1 we let all the 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 also offer them the opportunity to take part on school trips.

Monitoring and review

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 goes into classes to observe displays and teaching wherever possible and listen to the pupil voice and monitor children's workbooks to evaluate, standards, progress and attainment throughout the school. i

Date: December 2021

To be reviewed: December 2022