

St. John's Catholic Primary School



Geography Policy

September 2024 – D.Williams

Vision and Purpose

At St John's, we believe that Geography stimulates children's curiosity and inspires a thirst for knowledge about the world around them. We aim to build upon the child's "personal geography" by developing geographical skills, understanding and knowledge through studying a range of places and themes. Through delivery of a creative curriculum in geography, children learn about their local area and the physical and human features within it. They can compare their life in this area with that of other regions in the UK and the rest of the world. Our mission statement is, 'In God's love we shine together,' at St.John's our Geography curriculum allows for a deepening of children's spirituality through an appreciation of life in other cultures and through recognising how their own actions can impact upon wider global issues. Fieldwork and 'Learning Outside the Classroom' (LOTG) is an integral part of Geography throughout the school. Through studies of other places, people and cultures, we aim for children to value themselves and each other and to find their place in St John's as well as in their local, national and global communities.

Aims

The national curriculum for geography 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.

EYFS

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Key Learning – linked to Geographical Development (a sense of place):

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- **Communication** - talk about the features of different places/patterns/change
- **Mapping** – recognize / talk about the features in familiar / other places
- **Fieldwork** - look at similarities/ differences and make simple comparisons
- **Enquiry** – comment/ask questions about familiar / other places and people
- **Use of Technology** – use technology/ IT equipment to make observations / find out information about locations and places.

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.

Implementation of Geography at St John's.

- Geography is taught through the school's topic-based, creative curriculum. Each class follows a two year topic cycle. Each key stage includes termly or half-termly topics that allow for broad and balanced coverage of the national curriculum objectives.
- The nature and timing of these topics is set down in the long term overview. Each topic should be adapted to meet the needs of each class and the learners therein.
- National Curriculum documents are drawn on to support each class's themed medium-term planning.
- During the foundation stage, Geography is included as part of '*Knowledge and Understanding of the World.*'

Learning outside the classroom

Learning outside of the classroom is seen as imperative in the development of a child's skills of geographical enquiry. Lessons and visits outside of the classroom should focus on the development of children's geographical enquiry and skills. Planning for such visits should be based on specific targets for learning to maximise the potential for the quality teaching and learning of Geography. All off-site and on-site lessons outside of the classroom should follow current health and safety procedures (see *health and safety*, below).

Health and safety

Teachers are encouraged to plan as many learning experiences as possible outside of the classroom as possible. All off-site visits should be risk-assessed following Local Authority guidelines.

Assessment

Assessment is seen as on-going and part of usual methods of assessing children's learning in the course of teaching. These will include questioning, observations, peer and self-assessment, marking of work and discussions with pupils etc. At the end of each unit of work, teachers will assess children as emerging, expected or exceeding against the year group expectations and annotate their plans. Indication of how judgements were reached will be noted and Subject Leader to be informed of attainment within each year group. The Oddizzi assessment grids are now being used where possible and reports given to the subject leader. Staff meetings within school and moderation with local schools will be scheduled into the Monitoring Plan as well as Subject Leader interviews with pupils, book scrutinies and regular feedback between staff to help identify strengths / weaknesses in pupil achievement and the quality of learning and teaching in geography.

Homework

At St John's, we aim to foster each child's natural curiosity about the world around them. We also aim to provide opportunities for a child to develop his/her own geographies at home through the inclusion of geography-specific homework tasks as part of our topic-based homework approach. For further details, see school homework policy.

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