

St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary School



Geography Policy

With **Christ** at the
centre, our *Dream*
is for **greatness** in our
learning, to
Believe in our
unique talents, to be
Guardians of
life & creation
and to *Achieve*
a better world, by
living life to the **full**.

Approved by:

Date: July 2021

Written by:

M. Keiley

Reviewed:

M. Keiley

Next review due by:

July 2022

Intent – What are we trying to achieve with our Geography curriculum?

Our geography curriculum is designed to teach an understanding of people, places, cultures and environments. Through their work in Geography, children at St Joseph and St Bede's RC Primary School will 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. The children will also learn about distant locations, linked with the topic they are studying as part of our developing Curriculum. Children will learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. They will develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving to help aid their long-term memory. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children will 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 and the role they play as responsible citizens of the world.

Aims

The school's aims are to:

- To enable children to gain substantive and disciplinary knowledge and understanding of places; locality, United Kingdom and in the world, which are built upon yearly.
- To understand key physical and human geographical features of the world and how they change over time.
- 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 enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level. Developing empathy for social justice, human rights, global conflicts and the diverse nature of our world, in line with the global dimension policy.
- To understand sustainable development and have an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means through Laudato Si.
- To allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps.
- To develop a variety of other skills and communicate geographical information in a number of ways, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, numerical, writing at length, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

Implementation – How do we deliver our curriculum?

Teaching and learning styles

The intent of Geography is to 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. The children delve deeper when answering 'Big Questions' which are designed to enhance their long-term memory. We plan our lessons using the 'Learning Challenge' curriculum for the foundation subjects. We plan our topics with an 'enquiry focus' and encourage the children to play a role in the planning of the topic. What do they already know? What do they want to find out? 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 will take part in role-play, debates, presentations and discussions in class and also in wider school life, such as assemblies and school council meetings. The children will 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 common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, using 'learning challenges'
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group when necessary. (We also use TA support effectively and efficiently)
- 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 and planning for these classroom assistants effectively
- We evaluate teaching and learning through annotating planning and encourage other adults to do the same, to aid assessment for learning

Teacher's identify the key learning objectives on their medium term plans and will also provide a 'Learning Challenge Overview' containing their key topic questions. Throughout our planning we make cross curricular links with literacy, science, maths, ICT, history, art, and PSHE and we aim to ensure these links are meaningful and purposeful for the children we are teaching.

Our curriculum planning is in two phases. We have long term Topic plan, to ensure even coverage throughout the foundation subjects across the school. Topic plans for our bespoke curriculum are submitted to the Senior Leadership Team. We combine the geographical study with work in other subject areas. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently.

As we have mixed-age classes, we do the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. In this way we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not repeat topics.

All lesson plans are to be completed using PowerPoint, with related notes attached. Teachers may plan on a weekly basis, or may choose to plan their topic as a six week block. Either way, learning challenges must be identified.

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.

Early Years

We teach geography in Early Years classes 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 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG 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 investigating what makes a 'good' playground.

The contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas

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 English are geographical in nature, for example articles, news reports. For example, in Key Stage 1 we read Christopher Columbus, Patan's Pumpkin and The Colour of Home to develop children's knowledge and understanding. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. We link geographical issues to persuasive writing and text types such as reports, letters and spoken presentations. This will all develop children's writing ability. Through geographical themed assemblies, linked to our embedding of the global dimension and the International School Award, we promote inclusion of all children through speaking and listening opportunities.

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.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet and present their findings using word processing packages and multimedia presentations. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images via Google Earth and Google Expeditions.

PSHE

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, social welfare and social justice. 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. Geography, couple with our strong catholic ethos, 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 and the global dimension. 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 their topic studied.

Impact – What difference is our Geography Curriculum making to our pupils?

Assessment and recording

We use assessment to inform and develop our teaching. Topics commonly begin with an assessment of what children already know. We use "Check In's" at the beginning of the topic and then "Check

Out's" at the end to see how much we have learnt. Children are involved in the process of self-improvement, recognising their achievements and acknowledging where they could improve. Activities during, and at the end of, each topic record achievement and celebrate success. Assessment is continually under review to ensure that accurate information is obtained regarding achievement. Assessment is completed on our 'Whole Class Feedback' sheets and summative data is recorded on Integris after each topic. Assessment is both formative and summative and may rely on questioning and observation throughout the topic, evidence may not always be in a written format. We use 'Knowledge Organisers' at the front of the children's books to allow the children and the teachers to assess their learning throughout the topic. At the end of KS1 and KS2 assessment judgments may draw on the previous judgments that have been made earlier regarding the geography content that has been taught before the final year of the key stage.

The geography subject leader will keep samples of the children's work in a portfolio section of their subject leader folder. Class teachers provide topic books for the children where their work is collected and marked regularly following the marking policy. These books will be submitted for book scrutiny and feedback at least once termly.

Resources

We are continually reviewing resources in our school to support the wide variety of Topics that are being covered through our creative curriculum. Discussions are held in staff meetings and informally with the subject coordinator regarding equipment that may be needed and resources that are desired to support teaching and learning. We keep these resources in a central store in school. The resources are vast and varied. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books to support children and staff; there are also whole sets of text books to support the teaching of Mountain environments, Changes and Rivers. Each classroom in school has been equipped with a globe to be placed in a dominant position to aid geographical enquiry. There is a range of educational software to support the children's individual research in the classes and recommended websites are listed in the ICT suite. There is also software such as Espresso, full of fantastic videos and maps; on each laptop to aid the teacher's planning of their topic. We are also subscribed to 'Letter's from Afar' which is a monthly letter drop from an explorer, Isabelle. She is based on a real explorer and writes about her adventures across the world. This is a great way for our children to experience the world without leaving Bury.

Fieldwork

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, be it in school, on our playground, in the local area, or further afield.

In the Foundation stage and at Key Stage 1 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. There are also opportunities to visit Chesham woods in conjunction with a Science topic. School trips may be planned in support of topics. These will have a geographical focus, and will be planned for by the class teacher. Risk assessments, photographs and planning will be collated as evidence.

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. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject. We also talk to the children about their learning, asking them questions about what they are learning/already learnt. The reviewing of work will take place in designated staff meetings through a book sampling process. The Geography coordinator will ask for examples of planning (PowerPoints) to add to the subject leader file. The subject leader will complete an annual report where they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicate areas for further improvement.

Links with wider school initiatives

Our school is a vibrant and busy school with a strong catholic ethos. We are involved in many schemes and awards that aim to improve the quality of opportunities in school for the children we teach and develop our school further. The following all link closely and essentially with geography, and support the teaching and learning of geography in our school.

Global Dimension

The global dimension is a whole school ethos that we are currently developing in school through our teaching and learning. The Global dimension has supporting 8 principles:

Global Citizenship
Conflict Resolution
Social Justice
Values & Perceptions
Sustainable Development
Interdependence

Human Rights Diversity

We are developing the global dimension in school through our geography teaching, PSHE lessons and collective worships, as well as whole school assemblies throughout the academic year.

International School Award (ISA)

In 2018 we participated again in the ISA and was awarded the re-accreditation. This involves 7 key projects. Each of these projects includes the whole school. They have an international focus, which involves teaching and learning about different locations, people, places, communities, beliefs and cultures. These projects are planned for by the ISA coordinator and staff, linking with geographical topics covered in class. The ISA supports a cross curricular style of teaching, with geographical enquiry and learning at the core. We are currently looking to be reaccredited with the award during 2020-2021.

Eco Schools

We are an Eco School with a developing Eco Garden. We were awarded the 'Eco School Silver Award' in 2018. We are currently gathering evidence to achieve the 'Green Flag Award' during 2020-2021. We show our love for our environment through litter picking, composting and recycling. We attend Eco Days and have an Eco representative on the teaching staff. Our 'Eco Ambassadors' help to keep our school sustainable through their new topics this year. Eco Ambassadors are working on 'Biodiversity', 'Healthy Living' and 'Waste'. These are ongoing projects that are promoted throughout the school to help gather evidence towards the 'Green Flag Award'. The school council will work together to continue to make our school a more sustainable and eco-friendly school.

Community Cohesion

With geographical themed assemblies, Eco Schools, and the ISA, we will support community cohesion through giving our community the opportunity to come into school to watch and support assemblies. We also have a school with many nationalities and cultures, and so we embrace our diversity through inviting in speakers and parent helpers to share their expertise and experience. We take opportunities to give back to our local area with termly fairs, charity events, such as the harvest basket appeal, and through whole assemblies and celebrations.



International Policy

Aims and Objectives

The focus of our schools international policy is to develop a global awareness throughout the school, at all levels. This focus will grow and be nurtured through whole school assemblies, celebration assemblies, through whole school Mass and through cross curricular focus weeks/day throughout school. As a school we will involve all staff, the children, Governors, parents, carers and families in our international activities as much as we can – sharing our achievements and developing community links. Our school aims to develop an awareness of global issues in the news such as sustainable development, globalisation, environmental issues and fair trade around the world. Our school aim is to create a new link with an International school, and hopefully form links with a school in France and a school in Liverpool with 80% EAL children attending. We aim to celebrate world festivals, music, sports, languages and art through our cross curricular weeks – focussing on the cultural richness, cultural traditions and diversity of our world.



As a school, we will continue to support CAFOD in their international work through fund raising and support in faith. We will strive to place global citizenship at the centre of our curriculum and make meaningful curriculum links for the children of St Joseph and St Bede.

Evaluation

This International Policy will be reviewed by staff and the Governing Body. It will be incorporated into the School's Development Plan and a statement of evaluation will appear on the school Action Plan. After each of our seven projects and after any internationally focussed curriculum work, staff, children and other parties involved will evaluate the activities accordingly. These evaluations will be collated and placed into the Portfolio by the International School Award Coordinator.

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

ISA Coordinator