

St. John Bosco RC Primary School



Geography Policy

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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 inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world.
- To enable children to 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.
- To equip pupils with knowledge of diverse places, people and the environment and the interactions between them.
- To develop in children the skills of drawing and interpreting maps, enquiry, analysis, evaluation and presentation.
- To develop children's understanding of issues such as global citizenship, diversity, human rights and sustainable development.
- To develop the cross curricular use of Geography in other subjects.

The National Curriculum Aims for Geography

To ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of places, seas and oceans, including their defining physical and human characteristics
- 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 and writing at length.

1. TEACHING METHODS

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 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, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks to each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, according to the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

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We recognise the importance of first hand experience (fieldwork) on learning and teachers are encouraged to focus attention on the opportunities available in the local area. This will necessitate the exploration of the world beyond the classroom. All teachers are encouraged to organise visits that will enable pupils to extend their knowledge of the world around them e.g. the seaside and local walkways and woods. We also offer our Year 5/6 children the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Derwent Hill.

2. GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM PLANNING

Geography is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our curriculum planning in geography, but we have adapted this to our local context, building on the successful units of work already in place. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. The long term plan is devised by the Senior Leadership Team in partnership with the Subject Leader and class teachers. The children study geography topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. Some topics have a particular geographical focus, and in Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on independent geographical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our medium-term plans as well, which give details of each unit of work for each term. The Senior Leadership Team keeps and reviews these plans with the Subject Leader on a regular basis. Because we plan our Creative Curriculum topics in Key Stage phases, e.g. Y1/Y2, Y3/Y4, Y5/Y6, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum, but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each geography lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and copies are kept and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leader on a regular basis.

3. GEOGRAPHY IN FOUNDATION STAGE

Geography is taught in Foundation Stage 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 Years curriculum which underpin the planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's understanding of the world through activities such as finding out about different places and habitats and investigating our locality.

4. GEOGRAPHY IN KEY STAGE 1

During Key Stage 1, pupils investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, finding out about the environment in both areas and the people who live there. They also begin to learn about the wider world. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps and photographs. 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:

Location 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

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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 (e.g. 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.

5. GEOGRAPHY IN KEY STAGE 2

During Key Stage 2, pupils investigate a variety of people, places and environments and start to make links between different places in the world by extending their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. They find out how people affect the environment and how they are affected by it. Pupils carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions, and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps, atlases, aerial photographs and ICT. Children will develop geographical enquiry skills, including asking geographical questions, collecting and recording information and identifying different views. They will acquire the appropriate practical skills associated with Geography, including using suitable vocabulary, fieldwork techniques and maps, plans and atlases and secondary sources of information with accuracy, including aerial photographs, satellite images, etc. As well as making its own distinctive contribution to the school curriculum, geography contributes to the wider aims of primary education. Teachers will ensure that links between subjects are maximized. 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 tools and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

Location 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

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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 and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

6. GEOGRAPHY AND ICT

Information and Communication Technology enhances our teaching of Geography, wherever appropriate in all Key Stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their geography work in Key Stage 2. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as word processing, finding information on the internet and presenting information through PowerPoint presentations and data handling graphs and tables. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

7. GEOGRAPHY AND INCLUSION

There are children of differing abilities in all classes at St. John Bosco RC Primary School. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are underachieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask the children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.

8. ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment involves spending time before and during each unit or theme time eliciting children's knowledge and understanding – Mind Mapping, discussions etc. We follow the principles of Assessment for Learning in all of our Knowledge and understanding. This involves identifying a child's progress in each area of learning, determining what each child has learned and identifying the next steps in his/her learning, linked to the learning intention and success criteria for the session. Effective tools used by our teaching staff include:

- Sharing explicit learning intentions and success criteria
- Quality questioning
- Self assessment and peer assessment against learning intentions and success criteria
- Quality marking to identify areas where the success criteria has been met and areas that need to be improved

Summative assessment involves spending time at the end of each unit or at the end of year assessing children's skills and understanding. The Early Year Outcomes provide a baseline assessment level in each area of learning. This can be used to produce end of year targets throughout KS1 and KS2. Class teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether each child is working at, above or below the expected level using the key skills document termly and levels are inputted into the school's foundation subject tracking system.

The geography subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of achievement is in history for each age group in the school.

9. RESOURCES

There are sufficient resources for all geography teaching units in the school. This allows resources to be matched to any developments in the curriculum through the teaching of key skills. The library also contains a good supply of topic books and software to support children's individual research.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The coordination and planning of the Geography curriculum and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and standards of children’s work in Geography is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leader. The work of the Subject Leader also involves supporting colleagues in their planning and teaching, being informed about current developments in Geography and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject in the school.

Signed: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____