

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School



Geography Policy

Introduction

The Mission for St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is

"to ensure a happy and secure learning environment where we celebrate the dignity and worth of all in our school community."

"As a Christian community we recognise that in loving others we love Jesus and so help each other to reach our full potential."

Therefore the full implementation of our Geography Policy plays an important part in enabling us to strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care.

Rationale

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School we believe that 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.

Through Geography we 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 and Objectives

The aims of Geography are to:

- 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
- ensure children 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

- allow children to interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- support children to communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps and writing at length.
- 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

Teaching and Learning Style

At St Bernadette's School, we use a range of teaching and learning styles in our Geography lessons. These include:

- teacher guided sessions, where information is provided
- mixed ability group work where the children discuss problems in small groups
- class discussion lessons where members are encouraged to join in with their personal opinions
- the use of differentiated tasks allowing children of different ability levels to work at their appropriate pace
- the use of role-play in studying contentious issues
- the use of audio visual aids in presenting material to the children
- the use of fieldwork so that children gain first hand experience of local and contrasting environments
- the integrated use of ICT within Geography lessons
- the use of outside speakers with relevant experience, where possible

The teaching of Geography tends to be taught in block units throughout the year.

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
- 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

Geography curriculum planning

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.

Geography Subject Knowledge

The Foundation Stage

We teach Geography in the Reception Class as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in Development Matters which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

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:

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

- 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.

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 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

- 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.

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 the literacy are geographical in nature. At Key Stage 2, we organise debates on environmental issues 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.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of Mathematics in a variety of ways. 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.

ICT

We make provision for the children to use the computer in Geography lessons, where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our Geography curriculum planning, using the Digimaps For Schools Programme. The children use ICT in Geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They can research information through the Internet and communicate with other pupils in other schools and countries by e-mail. Children have the opportunity to use a digital camera to record and use photographic images.

PSHE

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of PSHE. The subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship. The children study recycling material and how environments are changed for better or worse. We encourage children to take part in a range of practical activities that promote active citizenship e.g. charity fundraising, giving of their time and talents to help individuals or groups less fortunate than themselves, thus promoting the concept of positive citizenship.

Teaching Geography to Children With Special Needs

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. In our Geography teaching, we take into account the targets set for individual children.

Assessment and Recording

The subject approach to assessment and recording follows the whole school policy. All pupils' work is regularly marked in line with our Marking Policy.

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.

At the end of the school year, each teacher submits end of year group evaluations in Geography against National Curriculum year group expectations. This includes the overall evaluation of the standards in each year group and the evaluation of sub groups such as boys, girls and Pupil Premium.

This enables the subject leader to have a full understanding of the standards in Geography throughout the school and the information needed to support further subject development.

Monitoring and Review

The Geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching. The subject leader supports colleagues in the teaching of Geography, by giving them information about current developments in the subject and by providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader is also responsible for evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicating areas for improvement to be shared with governors and included in the School Improvement Plan.

The Geography subject leader and the Headteacher are responsible for the monitoring and review of this policy.