

St Monica's Catholic Primary School Geography Policy



Status	School need
Policy updated	Autumn 18
Date presented to the Education Committee	Autumn 18
Date published on web site	Autumn 18
Date of next review	Autumn 21

At St. Monica's our Mission Statement prompts us all to 'Never stop trying' and 'Aim to be the best we can be'. In planning, how we teach Geography we aim to develop a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. We aim to teach that all creation, all creatures, peoples and places should be treated with respect.

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The aim of Geography teaching at St Monica's is to deliver a high-quality education that should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should 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. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

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 read, 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 objectives of teaching Geography in our school are:

- Inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
- Equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, cultures, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes.
- Develop a growing knowledge about the world to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments.
- Acquire Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills including graphic skills and how to use, draw and interpret maps
- Enable children to learn and explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time
- Support children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level and to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development, and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means and to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development, and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means

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 using fieldwork where possible to find enquiries in their local area carrying out focussed in depth studies looking at issues/ changes in the area. Children are also encouraged to use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

2.2 We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different 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 in order to support all children in achieving their potential. We achieve this by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty to the needs of children
- securing their motivation and concentration;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- grouping children by ability, and setting different tasks for each group;

- class teachers and classroom assistants work in a supporting role with individual pupils or small groups of children.

3 Geography curriculum planning

3.1 We plan to the statutory requirements of the new National Curriculum. Class teachers plan using objectives set for their year group found in the St Monica's Curriculum (accessed on the platform Classroom Monitor). Objectives have been tailored to fit the chosen NC split of aims for each year group by the Subject Champion. We have adapted Place Knowledge to contrast the local circumstances of our school with regions globally, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area

3.2 We carry out the curriculum planning in Geography in three phases: long-term, medium-term and short-term. The long-term plan maps out the enquiry study covered in each term during the key stage. This is done by the Key Stage teams.

3.3 Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. They identify learning objectives and outcomes for each unit, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

3.4 We plan the activities in Geography so that they build on the prior learning of the children. We give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, and we also build planned progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school

4 The Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1 We teach Geography in the foundation stage as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the EYFS, which precedes the New National Curriculum, 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 development of each 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. (In which children explore the use of space in the school environment)

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. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in the literacy hour are geographical in nature. For example, in Key Stage 1 we use newspaper reports to present the differences between the Arctic and Antarctica in the topic Hot and Cold. At Key Stage 2 we organise debates on environmental issues, because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability and further subject knowledge and understanding. An example of this is in Y3 when children carried out an enquiry into the topical issue of plastic pollution, creating reports on its effects.

5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of Geography in our school contributes to children's mathematical understanding 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. Often children are challenged to apply mathematical problem solving, calculation skills and reasoning to their Geography learning to give them a context to apply their mathematical knowledge outside of their timetabled maths lessons.

5.3 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the impact of trade and how environments are changed for better or for worse by the influence of external trade. Each year the school marks "Fairtrade Fortnight" which educates children on the influence that their spending power has globally. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We encourage the children to be aware of global issues and initiatives through our International School status. We strive to educate children through the global dimension and allow every opportunity to link their understanding with wider global issues and understandings. Thus Geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

5.4 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. 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 Geography and Computing

6.1 Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of Geography, wherever appropriate, in each key stage. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use Computing as part of their Geography work in Key Stage 2. Children use Computing to enhance their skills in data handling (mountain, climate, population or river data) when using digital mapping systems and in presenting written work. They research information through the Internet and libraries of digital images (aerial photographs, for example). We also offer children the opportunity to use the iPads to take digital photographs of the school grounds and surrounding local area to enhance their fieldwork and geographical skills.

7 Geography and inclusion

7.1 At our school we teach Geography to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Geography implements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties, and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Intervention Plans (previously called IEPs). We work hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

7.2 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, such as a visit to a coast, we carry out risk assessments prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8 Assessment for Learning

8.1 For all pupils in KS1 and KS2, an enquiry question is chosen as the underpinning focus of each geographical topic. We encourage students to be active participants and investigators and not just the passive recipients of knowledge. This enquiry question allows their skills to be applied to find out knowledge. By using a 'meaty question' the children can get their teeth stuck into their learning and be challenged when applying their skills.

For all pupils a self-assessment sheet is stuck into the front cover of their exercise book, this indicates the enquiry studies for that year group. Objectives for each enquiry are broken into the key skills: enquiry and communication; locational knowledge; using geographical vocabulary; using globes, maps and plans; and using geographical and fieldworks skills. The children are encouraged to use these grids as a form of self-assessment and to track their progress throughout the term, highlighting and dating when covered. This will be used by the class teacher and

subject champion as a form of assessment and to help ensure coverage and progress when uploading to Classroom Monitor.

8.2 At the end of each academic year, class teachers collate information from Classroom Monitor data and complete a Foundation Subject Accountability Chart which conveys progress to the Subject Coordinator.

9 Resources

9.1 Resources are stored centrally within the staff room on a shelf with resources labelled clearly. Staff also order topic boxes from a local library education service which delivers books, artefacts etc. The school library contains a set of topic books to support children's individual research.

10 Fieldwork

10.1 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.

10.2 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 undertake a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in studying a different locality in the UK.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in History is the responsibility of the Subject Coordinator who feeds back to the Head Teacher and Governing Body.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary.

Signed

Chair of Education Committee

Date: