



St. James' Church of England Primary School

**'Building One Faith, One
Family,
Our Future'**

Geography Policy

Written by M. Tindall – Autumn 2021
Adapted by L. Whaley – Summer 2024
Approved by Governors – Summer 2024

Foundation, Vision and Intent

St James' Lower Darwen

Church of England Primary School



"Building One Faith, One Family, Our Future."

"We offer a holistic curriculum that champions our community and is aspirational."

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

through

ENRICHMENT

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

SKATS

FORGIVENESS

COMPASSION

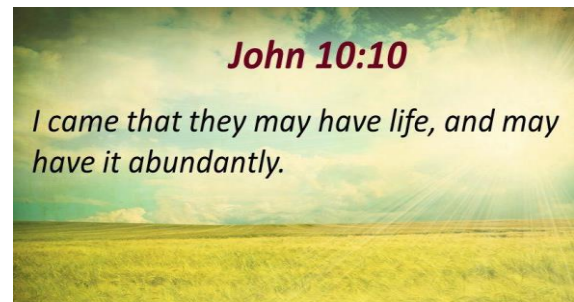
LOVE

TRUTH

JUSTICE

Jeremiah 29:11

John 10:10



We want our children to know that **God has a plan for them** that means **they live their best life possible.**

Each **policy** and procedure within school, alongside the ongoing **curriculum** delivery, our **SKATS** programme, **enrichment** and the **spiritual development** offered to our families through Worship, RE and our links with Church, work towards making this happen.

The Importance of and Entitlement to Geography

The study of geography involves pupils in exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they depend.

Many of the pupils who now attend our school will live to see the next century and inhabit a world of 11 billion people. The many opportunities and challenges that will arise during their lifetime will be very much about geography – personal, local, national and global. From adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change to predicting natural hazards such as Tsunami and Earthquakes, to understanding the causes and effects of population migration around the world our pupils will need to know about geography and to think like geographers. Geography helps to prepare them for life in the 21st century with all of its currently unknown possibilities.

In terms of what we teach in geography and how we encourage and support our pupils to learn the subject we seek to develop young geographers who are able to make links and connections between the natural world and human activity and to understand the kind of questions geographers ask such as *Why is this place like it is, how is it changing and what will be the costs and benefits of these changes when they happen?*

In line with the statutory requirements of the school curriculum which must be balanced and broadly based, our school commits to ensuring that every pupil at every stage of learning has regular and appropriately challenging and engaging learning in Geography which is informed by the National Curriculum. In addition we will ensure that what our pupils learn in Geography and how they learn it not only inspires and stretches them intellectually but also contributes to their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the 21st century.

Aims

A full version of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for History can be viewed at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239044/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Geography.pdf

In accordance with the importance we attach to Geography our school aims to:

- stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the earth's surface;
- foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat;
- enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;
- develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using computing to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues such as sustainability and sustainable development;
- enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

Planning of Geography

Geography is taught mainly through specific Geography-led topics within our delivery of the creative curriculum. National Curriculum guidelines are followed. Class teachers are expected to inform the Geography Co-ordinator of any amendments to their topics when planning, thereby ensuring coverage of the required Programmes of Study and key elements. Geography is also taught in a cross curricular way through History, Science, RE, Art and Music topics, as well as in Literacy.

Expectations of Outcomes

At our school we want pupils to become better geographers and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at Geography entails and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to develop as young geographers as they progress through the school.

To enable this to happen we have established an outcomes driven curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in Geography but more crucially the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve by and through their learning.

As pupils progress as geographers we recognise that whatever the content of their learning and the subject skills they are using our expectations of them must be focused on the following progression in subject outcomes:

- Recognise – identify – Respond – Express – Basic Subject Vocabulary
- Describe – Observe - Reason– Select – Speculate – Appropriate Subject Vocabulary
- Classify – Categorise – Sequence – Compare and Contrast – Views and Opinions
- Understanding through informed Explanation and Synthesis – Specialist Subject Vocabulary
- Highlight and explain Links, Patterns, Processes and Interrelationships
- Apply – Reach conclusions – Make judgements
- Evaluate – Critique - Predict – Reflect – Hypothesise

Whilst we recognise that our expectations of pupil outcomes must never be confined by their stage of learning we nevertheless ensure that in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 our core subject expectations enable pupils to learn and consolidate the fundamental attributes of a being a geographer. At this stage there is a particular focus therefore on ensuring that our pupils are able to recognise, identify, describe, observe reason and begin to offer explanations for geographical phenomena whilst using basic and increasingly appropriate subject vocabulary. These anticipated outcomes are reflected in the objectives for the end of Key Stage 1.

During Lower Key Stage 2 our expectations increase proportionately as we challenge our pupils not only to know more but also to master progressively more demanding subject outcomes such as reaching explanations through the synthesis of evidence, perhaps from a wide range of sources. At the same time we expect greater subject vocabulary readiness from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary.

At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in Geography are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned in other contexts and at other

stages to make links and identify patterns in their geographical learning. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about geographical issues and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own. Once again these expectations are clearly outlined in our curriculum objectives for the end of Upper Key Stage 2.

Ensuring Continuity and Progression in Learning

Whilst knowing more is an integral part of continuity and progression, it is nevertheless just one element of it and merely sequencing subject content will not ensure on its own that our pupils become better geographers.

To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is carefully organised EYFS – Year 6 to ensure that our pupil’s knowledge and understanding of geography develops because:

- Expected subject outcomes in terms of developing as a young geographer increase in complexity and level of challenge as detailed above and are used as the starting point for all planning of content delivery and learning and teaching enquiries;
- There is increasing breadth and scale of study through the curriculum moving progressively from personal experiences to local, regional, national and global perspectives informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum;
- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to conceptual awareness and generalised knowledge about more abstract ideas;
- The mastery and application of geographical tools and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;
- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed and mature in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of recognising the importance of attitudes and values about contested matters;

The Early Years Foundation Stage

We encourage the development of skills, knowledge and understanding that help reception children make sense of their world as an integral part of the school’s work. As the reception class is part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we plan opportunities based on Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Reception	Understanding the World		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw information from a simple map. • Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries. • Explore the natural world around them. • Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live.
ELG	Understanding the World	People, Culture and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
		The Natural World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons.

Approach to Learning and Teaching

In Geography the pedagogy which underpins learning is a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages our pupils to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. At our school therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through big question led enquiries about topics, places and themes which focuses on real people, places and geographical issues and allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in high order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers to questions in geography), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising.

Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why. This approach is reflected in all of our planning.

We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes. We recognise that simply knowing more information in itself will not enable our pupils to progress as young geographers capable of making links, seeing things more conceptually and recognising the significance of attitudes and values in shaping the world in which they live. To this end, we identify important topics, issues, places and themes informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum to ask important questions about and then plan enquiries which are carefully structured. We recognise that we cannot teach whole topics without risking the curriculum becoming largely content driven. Our approach to leading learning in geography through big investigative 'How' and 'Why' questions ensures that achieving key subject outcomes and our pupils being able to develop as young geographers remains central to all we do.

We are currently developing regular and high quality outdoor learning because it is central to a young person's statutory entitlement in Geography. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and concepts introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real' world. Fieldwork provision enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and deduction and to start to develop 'enquiring minds'. Fieldwork and learning outdoors involving the testing and investigation of ideas and theories through practical exercises including observation, data collection, recording, presentation, interpretation and evaluation is therefore fundamental to the study of Geography and the development of young geographers at our school. Consequently fieldwork is a core element of geographical learning in every year group in line with the National Curriculum and this entitlement, along with the appropriate guidance on completing a risk assessment and ensuring awareness of school emergency procedures, is identified in the appropriate enquiries we have planned and resourced.

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, in geography teachers design activities which help pupils answer the geographical questions such as:

- Where is it? What is it like? How has it changed? Why has it changed? How will it change next? What will happen if? How might it be better? What can be done about? How do I feel?
- share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;

- ensure that objectives for lessons are presented in the form of “key questions” that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher, sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate places, geographical patterns and processes and environmental changes;
- plan for pupils to make and use maps, atlases, satellite and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- set high expectations and use our curriculum overviews at EYFS/Key Stage 1; Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 to aid this so that learning objectives and activities are sufficiently challenging;
- provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils’ levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;
- expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and accounts. As appropriate, pupils make oral presentations of their work.

Assessment, Performance Descriptors and Reporting

Key objectives and subject outcomes along with suggestions as to how achievement against these expectations can be evidenced is detailed in each of our geographical enquiries and investigations.

During EYFS and Key Stage 1 we challenge and support our children to undertake geographical investigations which enable them to use and apply basic and appropriate subject vocabulary, subject tools (including maps, aerial photographs and graphical data and fieldwork skills) to recognise, identify, describe, observe, reason and begin to explain the interaction of people with their environments through pursuing the following enquiries:

Reception	A Place Called Home Who lives with me at home?	Gateways to Geography What would it be like to live with the Inuit in the Arctic?	The United Kingdom Whereabouts on Earth do I live?
	Out & About Floor maps & Jigsaws		
Year 1	How does the weather affect our lives?	Why do we love being beside the seaside so much?	Why does it matter where our food comes from?
Year 2	Why don't penguins need to fly?	What is the geography of where I live? (Local study – Corporation Park)	How does Kampong Ayer compare with where I live? (Small area in a contrasting non-European country)

A range of assessment tasks involving written work, annotated maps and diagrams; satellite and photograph interpretation; improvised plays, film animations, news reports, PowerPoint presentations, talks, GIS, discussions and fieldwork are used to assess the performance of pupils against objectives and to form the basis of reporting to parents which occurs in accordance with the school’s whole school policy. In order to avoid an

over emphasis on assessment to the detriment of learning in Geography a balance is maintained between ensuring we understand how a pupil is progressing and allowing time and space for progress to occur. To this end all of our assessment is Assessment for Learning (judging where a pupil has reached at one moment in time and determining what they need to do next to progress) other than a summative statement of attainment which occurs at the end of Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. Not the entire range of anticipated subject outcomes will necessary be assessed for every pupil in every investigation. It is left to the discretion of the teacher as to what is most appropriate and relevant to assess for her or his pupils. The subject co-ordinator keeps evidence of pupil performance against subject outcomes for each stage of learning to ensure consistency of judgements across the school and to use for moderation purposes.

Through Years 3 and 4 in Geography learning and teaching builds on the knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes outcomes at Key Stage 1 and the pupils make progress through being provided with opportunities to reach consolidated explanations (which means that their understanding is based on the clear use of evidence e.g. from data they have collected and presented in a graph) and reach conclusions about topics, places and issues they have studied through enquiry. Another important aspect of geography at lower Key Stage 2 is that our pupils begin to be able to see the world through the perspective of different stakeholders i.e. people and things that have an interest in or our connected to an issue or place. To this end during Lower Key Stage 2 we challenge and support our children to undertake geographical investigations which enable them to use and apply appropriate and increasingly specialised subject vocabulary, subject tools (such as satellite imagery and GIS) and fieldwork skills to recognise, identify, describe, observe, reason, explain and reach conclusions about the interaction of people with their environments through the study of the following topics, places, themes and issues:

Year 3	Why do some earthquakes cause more damage than others?	Why are jungles so wet and deserts so dry?	Why do so many people live in megacities?
Year 4	How and why is my local environment changing? <small>(Locality study- impact of the building of the Leeds-Liverpool canal)</small>	How can we live more sustainably?	Beyond the Magic Kingdom: what is the Sunshine State really like? <small>(Region within North or South America)</small>

Upper Key Stage 2 Geography focuses on topics and big questions which extend the children's subject skills so that they are able to make judgements about things they learn both from their own personal perspective and through empathising with the position of others. In addition opportunities are provided for the children to evaluate what they have learned and how they have learned it and to come up with their own questions to investigate. Higher outcomes in geography also involve children being able to apply what they have learned in one context to another and to understand concepts as well more discrete areas of knowledge which they learned and understood e.g. being aware of the fact that a seaside beach is only one example of how the land meets the sea and that 'coast' (a concept or generalised set of information) refers to anywhere where the land meets the sea which may be a beach but also could well be a cliff, port, estuary, mud flat, marsh etc. To achieve during Upper Key Stage 2 we challenge and support our pupils to undertake geographical investigations which enable them to use and apply specialised subject vocabulary, subject tools (such as GIS) and fieldwork skills to recognise, identify, describe, observe, reason, explain, reach conclusions and make judgements, evaluate, apply and hypothesise about the interaction of people with their environments through the study of the following topics, places, themes and issues:

Year 5	Why is fair trade fair?	What is a river? (a region of the United Kingdom)	Why are mountains so important?
Year 6	Who are Britain's National Parks for? (A region of the United Kingdom)	How do volcanoes affect the lives of people living on Hiemaey? (A region in a European country)	How is climate change affecting the world? (A region of the United Kingdom)

Teachers make routine formative assessments of pupil performance against the outcomes detailed in the objectives of each half termly enquiry and use these to make ongoing evaluations about progress in History based on their professional judgement. These judgements are generated from the scrutiny of a range of evidence generated by the pupil including oral responses and discussions, practical activities such as model making, graphical outputs like annotated diagrams, concept maps, drama pieces and PowerPoints as well as written narratives.

Summative judgements of pupil attainment are made on two occasions during the course of the year:

Summative judgements based on a **'best fit'** evaluation are made against performance descriptors and are based on the accumulated professional judgement of teachers built up over the year of facilitating learning in Geography with the pupils. At these two points, professional judgement/use of assessment grids will be used to make a considered decision as to whether a pupil has:

- Achieved the **expected** level of achievement for Geography outlined in the relevant performance descriptors;
- **Exceeded** the expectations of achievement of the performance descriptors;
- **Yet to achieve the expected measure** of achievement in Geography, for this stage of learning.

Assessment grids for each unit (New from 2021) are completed termly and saved on Google drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SZiz5qYRjTmyqSxevarzicOnbyOMJaWk>

Connecting Geography to Other Areas of the Curriculum

In our planning we have made meaningful links with other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) where incorporating content and perspectives adds value to and extends the geographical understanding of our pupils.

Making links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world but when making such connections we must maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in Geography for each stage of learning. For example the primary objective of applying key literacy and numeracy conventions to Geography is to enable our pupils to achieve more and better in Geography – i.e. to develop as young geographers. To this end we must ensure that high standards of literacy and numeracy when applied to Geography result in equally and appropriately high standards of geographical subject attainment.

In each of our geographical enquiries links made to other subject areas are clearly documented and as a consequence many are able to deliver substantial elements of the content of other disciplines in a cross-curricular manner.

Homework

Homework in Geography is provided in line with whole school policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation and the role of the Geography Coordinator

All teachers at our school are responsible for monitoring standards in Geography but the Geography Coordinator, under the direction of the Headteacher, takes a lead in this. Monitoring activities are planned during the year and form part of the Geography Coordinators leadership schedule.

In summary, these are:

- staff meetings to analyse samples of pupils' geography work to moderate standards (attainment and progress against outcomes and end of stage performance descriptors) to ensure consistency and that colleagues are informed of subject developments at local and national levels with which the Co-ordinator has been involved;
- lesson observations to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that progress is being made by the pupils;
- the sampling of pupils' work to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;
- During the year the subject leader provides feedback to staff about the quality of Geography being taught and uses evidence to lead a discussion on standards being achieved within the subject.
- The Geography Coordinator has the responsibility to take a lead in developing Geography further across the school within the school's improvement plan; monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and the use of resources. Teachers and educational support staff can expect informal support from the Geography Co-ordinator, support arising from the school improvement plan and identified in performance management and induction programmes. To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching Geography:
- the Geography Coordinator will attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and in the context of the whole School Improvement Plan together with the Geography Subject Development Plan;
- whole-school training needs are identified as a result of the monitoring and evaluation programme;
- other training needs are identified through induction programmes and performance management review;
- the subject leader will arrange for relevant advice and information from professional development programmes including courses to be disseminated and, where appropriate, included in improvement planning;
- where necessary, the subject leader leads (or arranges) school-based subject improvement training for colleagues.

Inclusion, Equality of Opportunity and Differentiation

Geography forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of Geography and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in Geography including those with special educational needs, those with disabilities and those identified as Able Gifted and Talented for one reason or another; and those with English as an additional language.

In our differentiation planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment. Differentiating by learning environment is as crucial as differentiating by task, outcome; learning style or aptitude and this is recognised through the inclusion of regular fieldwork opportunities in our geographical enquiries.

Multi-cultural Themes

Multi-cultural themes are often encountered in Geography, which affords opportunities to promote understanding. Children should be encouraged to develop an interest in people and places beyond their immediate experience. An awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity within our society should also be promoted, as well as tolerance towards people who hold different values and beliefs.

Safety Guidelines

Teachers should refer to the school's Health and Safety Policy and the safety procedures recommended in the DfEE 'Health & Safety of Pupils on Education Visits' guidelines, for the field study aspect of this subject.

Resources

The resources for Geography topics are mainly based in the classrooms. There is also a bank of resources in the non-fiction library. These include a variety of texts, photographs, posters, artefacts, worksheets and videos.

The subject coordinator will share key resources at staff meetings during the year as part of the whole school CPD.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme and no later than the following date: Spring 2025