



GEOGRAPHY POLICY

**Geography Policy
for
St Mary's C.E. School**

First agreed by Governing Body:	March 1999
Reviewed and Revised:	March 2005, January 2010
Last updated:	May 2014
Person responsible:	Annabel Gürdenli

Geography Policy

1 Introduction

Under the New National Curriculum, Geography still plays a key role in school life. It is the study of places, the human and physical processes which shape them and the people who live in them. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of geography taught in St Mary's.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the New Curriculum 2014 schemes of work which set out in detail what pupils will be taught in different year groups as of September 2014.

2 Policy Statement

Geography remains a valued part of the National Curriculum as it provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography stimulates curiosity and imagination and we aim to build upon the child's awareness by developing geographical skills, understanding and knowledge through the study of places and themes. Through their work in Geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions of the United Kingdom and the rest of the world. A key part of the New Curriculum will be the focus on drawing and interpreting maps, developing the skills of research, investigating, analysing and problem-solving.

The organisation of outdoor learning environments and Field Trips to sites of Geographical interest broadens pupils' understanding of their own and different environments. Each year the Year 4 children visit Sayer's Croft and the Year 6 children visit France, to encourage children to learn by experience. We value fieldwork as an integral part of learning about Geography, and this will continue with the New Curriculum.

3 Curricular Aims

The study of geography should enable pupils to:

- stimulate and develop children's interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface
- foster children's sense of wonder at the beauty of the world around them;
- help children to develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat; and thereby
- enhance children's sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people
- develop an understanding of continents, countries, counties, oceans and seas.

Content of Geography in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1:

- investigate and learn about the physical and human features of their own environment and appreciate how their locality is similar to and different from other places

- focus on geographical questions like *What/Where is it? What is it like? How did it get like this?*
- develop and use geographical enquiry skills, including fieldwork skills, geographical terms, making and using maps, and using photographs

Content of Geography in Key Stage 2:

- study places and themes at different scales from local to national in the United Kingdom and overseas, and investigate how people and places are linked and how they relate to the wider world
- study how and why physical and human features are arranged as they are in a place or environment, and how people are influenced by and affect environments
- focus on geographical questions like *What is it like? How did it get like this? How and why is it changing?*
- develop and use geographical enquiry skills, including fieldwork and IT skills, geographical terms, making and using maps, and using photographs

4 Role of the Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator is responsible for:

- understanding the requirements of the subject order
- preparing policy documents, curriculum plans, Schemes of Work etc. for the subject
- encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils, to develop valid activities appropriate for children at different stages of development and which enable pupils to progress in the subject and to have regard to the three principles for inclusion:
 - setting suitable learning challenges
 - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- putting good ideas, activities or approaches to the subject in a teaching file, which can also be used to arrange displays
- helping colleagues to develop their subject expertise
- collecting resources
- ensuring common standards and formats for recording and assessment;
- liaising with teachers of the subject in other phases
- producing reports on the subject in the school, eg. to governors, in newsletters
- communicating all developments in the subject, eg. through staff meetings, distributing information, using notice boards
- organising and monitoring professional development in the subject. To prepare an inset plan for the subject
- producing annual development plans including costings and priorities which can help inform the school development plan
- liaising with relevant organisations regarding the subject, eg. advisory teachers, inspectors, QCA, Geographical Association, libraries
- organising and advising on the contribution of a particular subject to other curriculum areas including cross-curricular and extra-curricular ones
- working with the SENCO, as required.

5 Staffing

The class teacher is responsible for timetabling to ensure that the relevant sections of the Programmes of Study are covered during each topic cycle. Teachers will use a balance of:

- teacher-prepared materials
- published resources
- practical tasks
- visitors, e.g., parents, experts, etc
- educational visits
- occasional homework tasks.

6 Entitlement

The National Curriculum Programmes of Study at KS1 and KS2 specify the syllabus for the Primary School. The curriculum is delivered through our Schemes of Work, which also link to other curriculum areas, where appropriate. For further details see the Annual Topic Plan.

The Programmes of Study are divided into KS1 and KS2 and are organised into levels of increasing challenge. Pupils will work at the level appropriate to their ability. It is expected that most children will achieve Level 2 at age 7 and Level 4 at age 11.

The Programmes of Study specify three areas of learning:

- geographical skills and enquiry
- the study of places
- the study of themes in KS2 – water and landscape, settlement and environmental issues

Children will have the opportunity to:

- ask questions
- undertake map work
- investigate and research current geographical issues
- take part in fieldwork, covering aspects of physical and human environments
- learn from visits to places of geographical interest
- learn from visitors to the school
- learn from material presented by the teacher
- make use of audio/visual material
- read (eg. descriptions), write (eg. summaries, personal accounts), speak and listen (eg. discussion and debate)
- record findings in different ways
- handle and interpret data
- take part in role play, educational games or simulations
- use ICT, including web-based resources
- engage in a variety of practical activities.

7 Assessment and Recording

- Teacher and self-assessment will be conducted at the end of each unit of work. They should be ongoing throughout the school year and feed into the end of year and end of key stage reports.
- Assessments are carried out through teacher set tasks, focused observations, questioning of the children and by reviewing the children's work.

- Assessments should be based on the National Curriculum level descriptors.
- Assessment will be reported to parents on an annual basis in the form of a written report, a copy of which will be retained by the school for the pupils' files.

Continuity and Progress

Evaluation is carried out to enhance both teaching and learning and is the responsibility of the class teachers and the Curriculum Co-ordinator. The Headteacher monitors standards. Schemes of Work and policy documents are reviewed on a regular basis.

Evaluation focuses on:

- content, ensuring that the National Curriculum requirements have been met
- organisation and teaching methods, with reference to teaching resources
- pupil progress.

Evaluation methods include:

- assessing children's work and achievements
- reviewing coverage of Programmes of Study at the end of a topic
- reviewing provision of fieldwork and similar activities
- records of teaching plans
- discussion with staff
- external inspection.

8 Inclusion

We aim to ensure that the geography curriculum is accessible to all children regardless of gender, race and ability. This is achieved by:

- providing a range of activities to extend children's abilities
- making materials accessible to all
- encouraging children to think through and express their own ideas
- creating classroom roles to encourage children to help each other
- providing materials which do not enforce gender stereotypes
- valuing other cultures, beliefs and attitudes
- differentiation of task and outcome
- providing curriculum materials which support children's tasks.

The Geography Co-ordinator and class teacher will work closely to identify children who are gifted and talented. Provision will then be made to support and encourage the pupil to perform at a level that exceeds that which is expected of their age and to help develop the personal qualities which will enable them to maximise their potential.

Special Educational Needs

- Opportunities are provided for all children to participate in geography so that they are able to experience success at their own levels
- children with specific needs are given appropriate learning support
- the curriculum is accessible to children of all abilities
- support staff are made aware of our approach to work
- teachers' expectations are appropriate
- success is recognised
- appropriate resources are provided.

9 Safe Practice and Risk Assessment

The school's Health & Safety Policy outlines the safe codes of practice for our school and provides the necessary guidance on the response and the reporting of all incidents.

Children are taught the appropriate safe practice when using equipment. This will include:

- safe practices in the field and how to achieve them
- how to use equipment correctly and in accordance with health and safety guidelines
- to behave in a considerate and responsible manner, showing respect for other people and the environment whilst on trips outside the classroom.

A Risk Assessment will be completed for any educational visit.

10 Cross-Curricular Links

Geography is taught in a variety of ways at St Mary's. Where possible the geography themes will be taught through the school's thematic approach. This will result in geography being linked to and taught through various other subject areas. In particular we will endeavour to establish links between:

Citizenship: we will help pupils to respect, tolerate and value the views of others and of decision making through democratic processes. Their attention will be drawn to examples of such during their study of geography.

PHSCE: all areas of the curriculum will aim to challenge the pupils, developing a feeling of personal improvement, a sense of achievement, a sense of learning something new and wanting to learn more, a wish to perform well with commitment.

Maths: pupils will be encouraged to improve their numeracy skills when studying geographical location and analysing numerical, geographical data. It can also be developed during the teaching of coordinates when studying maps.

English: we will make a strong contribution to pupils' literacy development through the extensive use of all four literacy skills. This will be achieved by the wide range of media employed to teach the subject of geography. Geography is often used as a stimulus for a piece of descriptive writing.

Science: the study of geographical discoveries and breakthroughs will serve to build children's understanding of current day scientific principles.

ICT: pupils will be encouraged to investigate geographical topics through Internet websites and to acknowledge the importance of the internet as an information tool. They will also complete units of work which link directly to geographical themes. This allows them to research and present information in a variety of ways to a particular audience.

11 Equipment and resources

Most resources are year based, in topic boxes, with a small supply of central stock, which includes compasses, various maps and atlases. Equipment for monitoring weather can be found in the Science Room situated at Richmond Road. Additional material may be found in the School Library.

ICT resources are available to support certain topics and can be identified by the ICT or geography co-ordinators. New resources can be purchased through negotiation between class teacher and co-ordinator, within the amount allocated in the annual budget. The co-ordinator prioritises needs.

12 E-safety

Before every lesson the class teacher will remind children about how to use the internet safely and refer to the poster on display. They will monitor and report e-safety incidents in line with the AUP (Acceptable Use Policy).

13 Equalities Statement

St Mary's CE School is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Governing Body recognises that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy as it is the governors' aim that no-one at St Mary's school should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.