

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
'To Live, Love and Learn in a caring Christian community'

Geography Policy

Intent

- To encourage and develop children's understanding and love of God by having a curiosity and fascination of the world He has created, including their interaction with the physical and human processes.
- By developing their knowledge of sustainability, they become guardians of God's world and preserve it for future generations.
- To use first-hand observation and secondary sources of information to gain a deep understanding of Bishop's Stortford, the UK, Europe and the wider world including changes of physical and human characteristics over time.
- To celebrate the diverse geographical backgrounds of the families in our school which includes those from BAME groups.

Within our school context, we aim to inspire in the pupils a love for God through studying the geography of the world and all living creatures that He created.

Implementation

In the EYFS, the teaching of geography comes under the strand 'Understanding the World' and opportunities for children to learn about the people, places and features of their natural world are planned for termly. Opportunities for the children to meet the relevant EYs outcomes are planned for in each topic, leading on from the interests of the children through some adult-directed activities alongside meaningful enrichments to CIL.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, class teachers develop long term plans based on the Rising Stars Voyagers scheme of work, which meets all of the requirements for this subject, as set out in the National Curriculum, and was devised with guidance from the Geographical Association. Pupils develop their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding through termly topics comprising of approximately six lessons each. Geography, along with the other foundation subjects, is blocked as we feel that this is the best way for our pupils to progress and to ensure that the new content is fully understood, practised and rehearsed.

In order to ensure that the pupils make rapid and sustained progress within each geography topic, teachers ensure that:

- The pupils are excited about their learning and motivated to find out more through using 'hooks' to engage pupils throughout the lessons;
- Learning objectives are clear and precise and focused on the geographical skill/knowledge;
- Their subject knowledge is good and this is imparted with authority;
- They use ongoing formative assessment strategies to inform planning;
- Pupils have opportunities to work collaboratively and present their learning in a variety of creative ways;
- A mastery approach is used alongside making effective adaptations, ensuring that pupils of all abilities are challenged and supported; and
- Pupils are provided with regular feedback – both oral and written – to ensure that any misconceptions are addressed and to provide opportunities for high order thinking.

Contribution to 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. Geographical enquiry involves: reading a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts; writing reports, descriptions, explanations, letters etc; speaking and listening skills are developed through asking and answering questions about a topic or issue, role play, interviews, presentations, key questioning, debates and team tasks.

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 compasses, tables, diagrams and graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data.

PSHE

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The topics covered helps to raise the children's awareness of citizenship and social welfare e.g. through studying the way people recycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse' or researching the issue of plastic pollution.

Computing

We use ICT effectively to enhance the learning of geography in class, through the use of Interactive White Boards, laptops/notebooks and iPad's with links to the internet, together with a selection of DVDs and compatible geographical resources. We also offer the children the opportunity to use the iPads to record and take photographic images for evidence.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions of life through the medium of geography. We encourage 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 the 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.

Inclusion

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability, and our teaching is planned to provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children. Lessons are taught using a mastery approach, with adaptations made for those pupils who require greater scaffolding.

Assessment and recording

Pupils' attainment in geography is assessed through ongoing Assessment for Learning strategies which highlight areas of strength and development; this in turn informs future planning, and planning is adapted to meet the needs of the pupils as the topics progress. At the end of each topic, summary judgements are made against the topic outcomes, and pupils are assessed as working at either WTS (working towards the expected standard), EXS (working at the expected standard) or GDS (working at greater depth within the expected standard). Geography assessment is stored centrally so that it is easily accessible to the geography subject lead team.

Pupils' attainment in geography is reported to parents as part of the annual report.

Health & Safety

Risk assessments are conducted by staff prior to any fieldwork. (See health & safety policy).

Resources

A variety of resources are available for the teaching of geography and these are regularly reviewed and updated by the subject leader. They are kept in the staff workroom and are easily accessible to all members of staff. In addition, there is a range of geography topic books located in the library and pupils are encouraged to bring in topic-related resources.

Impact

The effectiveness of the geography provision in the school is monitored through:

- Lesson observations and learning walks conducted by SLT and members of the subject lead team;
- Pupil voice questionnaires;
- Staff voice questionnaires;
- Analysis of pupils' attainment and progress data; and
- Book and planning scrutiny.

The members of the humanities team are responsible for:

- Producing and reviewing the geography policy;
- Monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography;
- Supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography;
- Keeping informed about current developments in the subject;
- Providing a strategic lead and direction for the geography in the school;
- Reviewing and updating the subject SEF and action plan; and
- Reporting to the curriculum committee of the governors.

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