

Geography Policy



Through respect we will work together in Christ to develop the whole person

Written: September 2025

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Leader: Miss K Roberts

SMSC Statement

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultures around the world.

Overview

"A high-quality geography education 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 environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world helps them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge provides the tools and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time."

National Curriculum 2014

The aims of Geography

Geography is a National Curriculum foundation subject. The programme of study outlined in the long-term planning make up the content of the school's geography curriculum. All children are entitled access to the programmes of study at a level appropriate to the needs of the individual child. The knowledge, skills and understanding in the programmes of study identify the aspects of geography in which children make progress:

- Geographical enquiry and skills.
- Knowledge and understanding of places.
- Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development.

Geography is taught at St Matthew's Catholic Primary using a topic-based approach. Skills and knowledge are taught and cross curricular opportunities are encouraged. 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. We enable them to use ICT in geography lessons to access mapping software; interpret data in the form of graphs or tables and to research geographical environments where this serves to enhance their learning. Children will experience fieldwork in a geographical context across all key stages.

In Foundation Stage, pupils will focus 'on the world around them' including new routines in their immediate environment and understanding the locality of the school and how they get here. Children will be asked to consider similarities and differences between themselves and others in their class. Children will learn about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They will learn to talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and talk about changes.

In Key Stage 1, Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including enquiry and first-hand observation both in and outside of the classroom, to enhance their locational awareness. They will be introduced to the affect human behaviour has on the environment.

In 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 knowledge, understanding and enquiry skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge and revisit their prior learning whenever possible to consolidate key skills, vocabulary in the correct context and demonstrate learning at a greater depth wherever possible. This will include learning both in and out of the classroom. In upper key stage 2, children will begin to explore further the effect on the environment by human behaviour and will be challenged to discuss the reason and morals behind these actions.

Planning and Delivery

Both Key Stage 1 and 2 follow the National Curriculum 2014

Activities both within the classroom and outside are planned to encourage full participation by all children irrespective of ability.

Fieldwork activities are an important part of geography and form an integral part of geography curriculum planning.

The geography curriculum will be delivered by class teachers.

Curriculum Path 2024

At Key stage 1, pupils should be taught:

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 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 (including The Arctic & Antarctic) 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.

Be introduced to the use of data to measure and study patterns of physical and human behaviour.

At Key Stage 2, pupils should be taught

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, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

Progression and Differentiation and Assessment

All children should be included in the teaching of Geography. Work should be scaffolded accordingly to ensure children can achieve the objective without being impacted by barriers in reading or writing. Assessment opportunities are built into study units and will conform to the whole school policy on N.C. assessment, against which value and reliable judgements can be made to assist children's learning. The majority of children are expected to perform within Age related expectations (ARE).

Resources

Children will have access to a variety of resources to aid their learning that include; atlases, maps, photographs (including aerial), compasses, measuring equipment, books and games. Geography resources can be found in each classroom with additional resources supplied by the coordinator when required.

Co-ordinator Responsibility

The member of staff with responsibility for the co-ordination of geography will augment, advise on, seek opportunities to enrich and support the development of geography and its provision throughout the school.

Background Documentation

The National Curriculum 2014

Signed: Kate Roberts Date: September 2025