

St Veronica's RC Primary School



Not just a school; a family.

Geography Policy

The Mission Statement of St Veronica's RC Primary School

Secure in the love of Jesus, we

Try to do our best.

Valuing all God's family, we recognise that

Each one of us is special.

Respecting everything God has made, we use

Opportunities to explore and learn.

Never overlooking the needs of others, we

Include everyone, helped by our

Caring, friendly, Catholic community.

Always forgiving, we

Share and celebrate the life of Jesus

The Importance of Geography

At St. Veronica's Primary School, we believe Geography is an important part of the curriculum where pupils can become engaged and develop key skills. Geography is an exciting, relevant subject which can be seen in action in the daily lives of our pupils. There are many cross- curricular links to ensure pupils are able to see the subject in context of themselves and the lives of the community around them and wider world, developing their ideas of global citizenship.

This document sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and give guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The policy should be read together with the Schemes of Work for geography.

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography children learn about their area and compare their life in this locality to other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to 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.

Key Aims of Geography

To develop children's spatial awareness through a growing range of enquiry skills, knowledge and understanding of people, places, patterns and environments. To develop the ability to use and apply geographical skills in other areas of the curriculum and in real life.

Objectives:

1. To enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world
2. To increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in doing so, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
3. To allow children to learn graphic skills including how to use, draw and

interpret maps

4. To enable children to know and understand environmental problems and world events at a local, regional and global level
5. To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means
6. To develop a variety of other skills including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way
7. To acquire skills in carrying out observations and in collecting, organising, recording and retrieving information as part of an enquiry. To be able to use a variety of sources to find information. To be able to communicate their findings in various ways

Teaching and Learning Style

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 e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the internet to investigate a current issue.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical 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. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;

- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

Geography Curriculum Planning

We use the new Primary Curriculum guidance for KS1 and KS2 together with the EYFS Early Learning Goals for our youngest pupils in Early Years Foundation Stage. We have adopted the Lancashire Curriculum which is used throughout KS1 and KS2. We ensure through careful monitoring that all aspects of the EYFS and Primary Curriculum guidance are used to ensure the coverage and progression of key skills, knowledge and understanding.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases, namely, long-term, medium-term and short-term planning. The Subject Leader works together with each year group and the Lancashire Planning document provides the long term overview and the medium term plans for implementing in year groups.

The medium term plans list specific learning objectives and outcomes for use in the short term planning. The geography subject leader reviews plans on a regular basis. The plans list specific learning objectives taught in the classroom.

We are an inclusive school and **differentiation** is incorporated into planning so that the children build upon prior learning, giving children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. We also build in progression into the scheme of work so there is an increasing challenge for the children as they progress through school.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception Class is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our youngest pupils learn about geography within the EYFS curriculum 'Understanding of the World'. The objectives are set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning of children aged between three and five years old.

The Contribution of Geography to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

Our curriculum enables us to teach in a cross-curricular manner where appropriate. Throughout school Geography is taught both discretely and in a cross-curricular way. The curriculum can promote learning across the curriculum in a number of areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key skills and thinking skills.

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. 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. We also use environmental issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children 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.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use the computer in geography lessons where appropriate. We incorporate ICT in our geography curriculum planning in EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Children use ICT in geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the internet. We also offer children the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images. Bee-Bots (small programmable robots) are used for direction and mapping work.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) and Citizenship

Geography can inspire pupils to develop their concept of themselves as a global citizen and become aware of a range of social issues which would be beyond their own experience. The children organise campaigns on matters of concern to them, such as responding to famine, natural disasters and refugees. For example, children study the way people recycle materials and how environments are changed for better or for worse and the impact an individual may make. The nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. Thus geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

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.

British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs are integrated into the Curriculum according to the 2011 Prevent Strategy.

Inclusion and the Geography Curriculum

At St. Veronica's Primary School we teach geography to all children whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide 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.

Teachers take account of the three principles of inclusion that are set out in the National Curriculum:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to the diverse learning needs of pupils.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils in order to narrow the gap.

Equal Opportunities

It is the responsibility of all teachers at St. Veronica's Primary School to ensure that children irrespective of ability, race, gender, age, faith, sexual orientation, and disability are given full access to the geography curriculum and make the greatest possible progress in accordance with recent legislation.

Assessment and Recording

Both formative and summative assessments are used. We assess children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work we mark and comment as necessary. This information then informs planning.

Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the geography scheme of work from the Lancashire Curriculum. We keep these resources in a central store and classes also have class based equipment. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and the ICT suite is available for software and internet links. Resources are audited annually.

Fieldwork

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 on our site and in our local area.

At Key Stage 1, the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site and the local area.

At Key Stage 2, the children will visit the local area where they will observe and record their findings. Residential visits will also include aspects of the Geography Curriculum such as mapping skills and Orienteering.

Monitoring and Review The geography subject leader contributes to the development plan each year. Monitoring and review will take place according to current school practice.