

ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

celebrates life and learning



GEOGRAPHY POLICY

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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Bede, patron of our school, wrote:

“It was always my delight to learn and to teach”.

We are a celebrating community, living the Gospel Values, committed to educating children in the light of the Catholic Faith.

We journey together so that we

“Might have life - life in all its fullness”.

John 10:10

RATIONALE

Geography teaches an understanding of places and the relationships between people and their environments. Through their work and experiences in geography, children are able to us to make sense of the world we live in. The children of St. Bede's are encouraged to seek an understanding of where things are found, why they are there, and how they develop and change over time. 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 motivates children to find out about the physical world. Geography provides a wealth of opportunities beyond the classroom for children to engage with.

“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 natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.”

(The National Curriculum for England, 2014)

Children learn the interaction of people with their physical and human environments; the physical and human processes that give rise to the distinctiveness of environments and; an alternative future for environments. In addition, geography can play an important part in the promotion of responsible citizenship.

“The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It’s about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it’s about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.”

(Barack Obama)

INTENT

The study of geography involves our pupils exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they and all life on Earth depends. 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 at personal, national and global scales. What we intend pupils to learn in geography reflects this throughout the curriculum. In particular we have established a school curriculum plan for geography as an entitlement for all pupils that is:

- Aspirational in terms of instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success through providing them with the opportunities to excel in terms of their acquisition of long-lasting knowledge and understanding and mastery of core geographical skills. Such high aspirations are clearly identifiable in the progressive and increasingly challenging objectives of the schemes of work of each enquiry, which define what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do;
- Logical, relevant, broad and balanced in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance of and are commensurate with the demands of the National Curriculum. For example, we have ensured that content includes an even proportion of physical and human investigations such as the effect of rivers on the landscape and the impact of the rise of megacities in the world. Due consideration has been given also to making certain that our geography curriculum maintains relevancy and topicality through including enquiries that engage pupils in studying issues such as climate change, flooding and trade;
- Sequenced to ensure that pupils can build on previous knowledge and understanding as they tackle more complex and demanding enquiries. For example, the understanding gained and concepts explored through an enquiry on the impact of earthquakes at Lower Key Stage 2 are revisited and extended when the pupils study the impact of living on a volcanic island in Iceland at Upper Key Stage 2;
- Progressively more challenging Years 3 through 6 both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and also the critical thinking skills we support them to utilise to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge. These anticipated outcomes in knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition are detailed in the objectives of the schemes of work of each enquiry. In terms of the geographical techniques we want our pupils to master as they progress through the school, our curriculum planning has been informed by our identification of the geography pupils will have learned in Key Stage 1 prior to joining the school and the coverage required at Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2. These are integrated into our half termly enquiries to ensure adequate coverage through the curriculum;
- Inclusive in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities and adapting where necessary through, for

example, in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

We adopt an enquiry focused approach to learning and teaching in geography which develops our pupils as young geographers. Through enquiry, our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. We structure learning in geography through big question led enquiries about relevant geographical topics, places and themes.

Our curriculum is therefore 'knowledge rich' rather than content heavy as we recognise that if we attempt to teach geographical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we restrict opportunities for pupils to master and apply critical thinking skills and achieve more challenging subject outcomes. We adopt a policy of immersive learning in geography that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and understand the significance of what they have learned.

Our learning and teaching in geography is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Learning activities are varied including the use of mysteries, maps at different scales, geographical puzzles, photographs and drama. Similarly, we provide varied and adapted ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of PowerPoint, concept mapping, annotated diagrams, improvised drama and the application of a wide range of writing genres. Only in this way will knowledge become embedded and ensure that our pupils can retain the information they learn and build on what they know and understand from one year to the next.

The schemes of work for each geographical enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation. Our learning and teaching in geography also recognises the importance of fieldwork with a number of our investigations involving observation, recording, presentation, interpretation and the evaluation of geographical information gathered outside of the classroom.

Visible Learning in school emphasises the importance of making learning explicit and measurable in every curriculum subject. By focusing on evidence-based teaching strategies, Visible Learning encourages staff to highlight learning intentions, set clear success criteria, and regularly assess student progress. This approach helps pupils become more aware of their own learning journey, fosters a deeper understanding of the content, and empowers them to take ownership of their learning. Through Visible Learning in geography both teachers and students can track growth and identify areas for improvement, ultimately enhancing outcomes in the subject.

IMPACT

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives and outcomes for the pupils in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. The schemes of work also suggest a range of ways in which the teacher can assess whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. We ensure that when assessing our pupils,

evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing in different genres. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use the outcomes to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each unit of work we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil against the subject learning goals for geography in that year. At this point teachers decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. These decisions are based on the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

St. Bede's endorses the principles set out in the Curriculum Guidance Document 2 which suggest that:

“translating the principles of entitlement and access to the National Curriculum into daily provision for pupils with special educational needs begins with good practice.... good practice is most likely to be advanced when all members of staff are committed to the same aims, providing a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum and raising standards for each of the pupils they teach”.

As the majority of time is spent by all children in mixed ability classes and groups, at St. Bede's we aim to enable the child with special needs in geography, (including the exceptional child), to progress and gain access to the geography curriculum through:

- adaptation by task and outcome, support given and through use of materials and resources.

Consideration of these will be made:

- by the whole staff when planning/evaluating topics;
- by the Geography Subject Leader and SENDCO when purchasing resources;
- by individual teachers and teachers in year groups in their weekly, termly and yearly planning and evaluations.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is intended that learning about the world in the ways detailed in this Policy statement will enhance the individual pupil's understanding of themselves, their local and global connections and the complexity of our world. In addition to acquiring a sound knowledge of geography and the skills of enquiry, they will be helped to gain an informed understanding of the issues of race, gender and culture and to challenge negative, prejudiced and stereotyped views of other people.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

Children are assessed using continuous formative assessment, which is recorded at the end of each topic. An overall teacher judgement of working towards, working at or working above the national expected standard will be made. This is used to inform the Subject Leader of any 'gaps' in attainment between groups of learners or in particular concepts, and to support class teachers in delivering future lessons, particularly when children progress to the next year group.

REMOTE LEARNING

During periods when schools are instructed to partially close, it will be necessary for the majority of pupils to access the geography curriculum remotely. In order to facilitate this, teachers will:

- Follow the long-term plan for geography so that all children, whether at home or at school, access the same learning opportunities;
- Adapt the scheme of work as necessary, so that the majority of pupils can access their learning independently and with as minimal support from parents/carers as possible. It may be necessary to provide additional resources to pupils with SEND;
- Create resources to support learning remotely and upload to SeeSaw for pupil access. Resources may be in the form of PowerPoint presentations, voice recordings, links to videos or other online materials etc.;
- Monitor pupil engagement with the learning tasks set and provide relevant and timely feedback to pupils, either individually or to groups of pupils as necessary;
- Ensure that teaching and learning in geography is allocated appropriate curriculum time during remote learning so that the curriculum is delivered in its entirety as much as possible.

REVIEW

The Geography Policy will be reviewed by the Geography Subject Leader in the light of training and changes in legislation, or at the request of any member of the school community. Any amendments will be agreed by the staff and Governing Body.

Geography Long Term Plan 2024-2025

<u>YEAR GROUP</u>	<u>Autumn 1</u>	<u>Autumn 2</u>	<u>Spring 1</u>	<u>Spring 2</u>	<u>Summer 1</u>	<u>Summer 2</u>
<u>Year 3</u>			Why do so many people in the world live in megacities?	Beyond the Magic Kingdom: What is the sunshine state really like?		
<u>Year 4</u>	Why do some earthquakes cause more damage than others?	Why are jungles so wet and deserts so dry?			How can we live more sustainably?	How and why is my local area changing? (Local study of Widnes)
<u>Year 5</u>			What is a river?	Why are mountains so important?		
<u>Year 6</u>	How do volcanoes affect the lives of people on Hiemaey?				Why is Fair Trade fair?	

