

St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School



Geography Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the intent, implementation and impact of geography education at St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School. It reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum and supports the school's commitment to providing a broad, ambitious and inclusive curriculum which enables all pupils to develop secure geographical knowledge, skills and understanding whilst fostering curiosity about the world around them.

Geography helps pupils understand the relationship between people, places and environments. Through the study of local, national and global geography, children develop an appreciation of the world's physical and human features and their role as responsible global citizens.

Purpose of Study

A high-quality geographical education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that remains with them throughout their lives. Teaching equips pupils with knowledge about places, people, resources and environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's physical and human processes.

As pupils progress through the school, their growing knowledge helps them understand the interaction between physical and human geography and how landscapes, environments and communities are shaped and changed over time.

Curriculum Intent

At St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School, our geography curriculum is designed to:

- Develop children's curiosity and fascination about the world and its people.
- Build secure locational knowledge of the local area, the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- Develop understanding of human and physical geographical features and processes.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful fieldwork and first-hand geographical enquiry.
- Equip pupils with the disciplinary skills required to think and work as geographers.
- Develop pupils' understanding of environmental issues, sustainability and their responsibilities as global citizens.
- Promote understanding, respect and appreciation of diverse cultures, communities and environments.
- Ensure that geographical knowledge and skills are built progressively from EYFS to Year 6.
- Enable pupils to communicate their geographical understanding confidently using appropriate subject-specific vocabulary

Aims

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

Develop Locational Knowledge

- Know the location of globally significant places.
- Understand the characteristics of countries, continents and oceans.
- Develop a secure knowledge of their local area and the wider world.

Understand Human and Physical Processes

- Understand key physical geographical processes.
- Understand key human geographical processes.
- Recognise how physical and human processes interact to shape the world.

Develop Geographical Enquiry and Fieldwork Skills

- Collect, analyse and communicate data.
- Undertake experiences of fieldwork.
- Interpret maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
- Use geographical skills to investigate and explain geographical phenomena. =

Curriculum Implementation

Our geography curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils progressively build:

Substantive Knowledge

The factual content that pupils learn, including:

- Continents and oceans.
- Countries and capital cities.
- Physical features.
- Human features.
- Climate zones.
- Biomes.
- Settlements.
- Trade and sustainability.

Disciplinary Knowledge

The skills and processes used by geographers, including:

- Fieldwork.
- Observation.
- Data collection.
- Mapping.
- Interpretation of evidence.
- Questioning.
- Analysis and communication of findings.

Pupils revisit key concepts throughout their primary education, allowing knowledge and skills to become secure and embedded.

Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, geography forms part of the Understanding the World area of learning.

Children begin to develop geographical understanding through:

- Exploring their immediate environment.

- Talking about places that are familiar to them.
- Observing seasonal and environmental changes.
- Comparing places and environments.
- Exploring simple maps and positional language.

These experiences provide important foundations for future geographical learning.

Key Stage One

Pupils develop knowledge about:

- Their locality.
- The United Kingdom.
- The world's continents and oceans.

They begin to:

- Understand basic human and physical geography.
- Use simple maps and geographical vocabulary.
- Carry out first-hand observations.
- Ask geographical questions.
- Collect and record information.

Key Stage Two

Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include:

- The United Kingdom.
- Europe.
- North and South America.
- Other globally significant regions.

They:

- Develop increasingly sophisticated map skills.
- Use fieldwork techniques.
- Analyse data.
- Understand environmental issues.
- Make comparisons between places.
- Explain geographical patterns and processes.
- Develop informed opinions about sustainability and environmental change.

Geographical Vocabulary

The explicit teaching of vocabulary is an integral part of geography.

Key geographical vocabulary is:

- Identified within every unit.
- Explicitly taught and revisited.
- Displayed and modelled.
- Applied through speaking and writing.

Pupils are encouraged to use subject-specific terminology accurately and confidently when explaining geographical knowledge and concepts.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a crucial component of our geography curriculum.

Opportunities for fieldwork are planned progressively throughout the school and may include:

- Local area studies.
- Environmental surveys.
- Mapping activities.
- Data collection.
- Observation and recording activities.

Fieldwork enables pupils to apply geographical skills in meaningful contexts and strengthens their understanding of geographical processes.

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

Geography plays a significant role in developing pupils' understanding of environmental issues and sustainability.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about:

- Climate and environmental change.
- Sustainable resource use.
- Conservation.
- Human impact on environments.
- Responsible citizenship.

Children are encouraged to consider how their actions can contribute positively to local and global environments.

Diversity, Equality and Representation

Our geography curriculum reflects the diversity of people, cultures and environments across the world.

Pupils learn about:

- Different communities and cultures.
- Contrasting localities.
- Global interdependence.
- Economic and environmental challenges.

This promotes respect, empathy and understanding while preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and an increasingly interconnected world.

Contribution to Other Areas of the Curriculum

English

Geography contributes significantly to literacy through reading, writing, speaking and listening opportunities. Children produce reports, persuasive writing, explanations, discussions and presentations linked to geographical learning.

Mathematics

Geography supports mathematical understanding through:

- Scale.
- Distance.
- Coordinates.
- Data collection.
- Graphs and charts.
- Map reading and interpretation.

Personal Development

Geography encourages pupils to discuss environmental, social and global issues. It develops understanding of diversity, responsibility and active citizenship.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Through geography, pupils explore human experiences, environmental issues and cultural diversity. They develop an appreciation of different ways of life and reflect on their responsibilities towards others and the planet.

Computing

Technology enhances geographical learning through:

- Digital mapping.
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
- Data analysis.
- Aerial photography.
- Online research.
- Multimedia presentations.

Pupils are taught to use digital resources safely and critically when investigating geographical questions.

Teaching and Learning

Geography is taught through engaging lessons which promote enquiry, investigation and discussion.

Teachers ensure pupils:

- Retrieve previous learning.
- Build on prior knowledge.
- Explore geographical questions.
- Use a range of sources.
- Engage in fieldwork opportunities.
- Communicate findings using appropriate geographical vocabulary.

Children work independently, collaboratively and as part of whole-class learning experiences.

Inclusion

At St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School, every child is entitled to access an ambitious geography curriculum.

Teachers use adaptive teaching strategies to enable all pupils to achieve success. This may include:

- Visual supports.
- Vocabulary scaffolds.
- Practical experiences.
- Additional adult support.
- Appropriate challenge.

The needs of pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with EAL and those working at greater depth are carefully considered during planning and delivery.

Assessment

Assessment is integral to effective teaching and learning in geography.

Teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies including:

- Retrieval practice
- Questioning
- Observation
- Discussion
- Low-stakes quizzes
- Practical fieldwork activities

Assessment evidence is gathered through:

- Written outcomes
- Fieldwork records
- Presentations
- Geographical enquiries
- End-of-unit assessment tasks

Assessment information is used to monitor progression, identify misconceptions and inform future curriculum planning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Geography Subject Leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning through:

- Lesson visits.
- Book scrutiny.

- Planning reviews.
- Pupil voice.
- Assessment analysis.
- Curriculum monitoring.

This ensures the curriculum remains ambitious, progressive and effective in developing pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding.

Resources

The Geography Subject Leader is responsible for maintaining and auditing resources.

Resources include:

- Atlases
- Globes
- Maps
- Aerial photographs
- GIS software
- Fieldwork equipment
- Digital resources
- Books and artefacts

Resources are regularly reviewed to ensure they support curriculum progression and diversity.

Fieldwork and Health & Safety

All geographical fieldwork is conducted in accordance with:

- The school's Educational Visits Policy.
- Health and Safety procedures.
- Risk assessment requirements.

Appropriate staffing ratios, parental permissions and safeguarding procedures are followed for all visits and fieldwork activities.

Pupils are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour during visits as they do within school and to show respect for people, property and the environment.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner should statutory guidance change.

Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Mrs A. Davies
Geography Subject Leader