



St John's Church of England Academy

Belonging Believing Becoming



Geography Policy

Date of Review: July 2021

Date of Next Review: July 2022

Responsible Group: School Policy



Geography Policy

‘The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It’s about understanding the complexity of our world.’ Barack Obama

Introduction

The purpose of the curriculum at St John’s Church of England Academy is to prepare our children for life in the 21st Century.

Our Curriculum is focussed on ensuring that all our children have the best chance to achieve our Christian Vision of **‘Belonging, Believing, Becoming’**, which is rooted in **Mark 4:30-32, ‘The Parable of the Mustard Seed’** and **The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust** and **The Church of England’s vision to ‘Live Life in all its fullness’** rooted in **John 10:10**.

St John’s Church of England Academy is an inclusive school where all people are valued and nurtured to become the best version of themselves and responsible members of God’s family. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind and our curriculum celebrates the diverse nature of our society, enabling children to embrace the world around them and encourage adherence with British values.

Subject Intent

At St John’s Church of England Academy, we wholly embrace our local community and environment and have enhanced our curriculum through ‘Foresters’ Forest’ led enquiries to ensure that our children have a better appreciation and understanding of the uniqueness of The Forest of Dean.

At St John’s Church of England School, we believe that through the study of geography children make sense of their world, as well as their place in it and enrich their understanding of it. Our Geography Curriculum ensures that children are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of living in the Forest of Dean and encourages children to learn through experience, particularly through practical and fieldwork activities. We provide children with a knowledge and an understanding of the geography of our local area and the world, to provoke and provide questions about the natural and human aspects of it.

Curriculum Drivers

Through the delivery of our curriculum, we want our children to be ready for life beyond St John’s. We aspire for them to be:

- **Articulate**
- **Aspirational**
- **Curious**
- **Appreciative**

As a Geographer we want our children...

To view our locality with awe and appreciation, understanding its similarities and differences to other parts of the United Kingdom and wider world.

Aims

- Increase pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
- Develop pupils' graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps.
- Make pupils aware of environmental problems at a local, regional and global level.
- Encourage pupils to commit to sustainable development.
- Develop a variety of skills, including those in relation to problem-solving, Computing and presenting conclusions in the most appropriate way

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) 'National curriculum in England: geography programmes of study'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- Equalities Act 2010

Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Holding the subject leader to account for pupils' attainment.
- Assisting the subject leader in reviewing and updating this policy annually.
- Supporting the subject leader in identifying CPD opportunities for themselves and classroom teachers.
- Promoting the needs of all pupils and ensuring they can access a well-rounded and inclusive curriculum.

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Attending training courses and undertaking CPD opportunities for themselves.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising staff on new developments and assisting in their implementation.
- Working with classroom teachers to plan lessons and ensure continuity and progression from year group to year group.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching, providing support for staff where necessary.
- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all resources.
- Liaising with teachers and holding them to account for the attainment achieved.
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessment.
- Advising on cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for development of geography in subsequent years.
- Identifying areas for improvement and ensuring these are included in a subject specific action plan and form part of the SDP.

Belonging

Perseverance

Respect

Forgiveness

Truth

Aspiration

- Liaising with subject leaders from local Primary and Secondary Schools.

The classroom teacher is responsible for:

- Working with the subject leader to ensure the high-quality delivery of the curriculum and continuity between year groups.
- Acting in accordance with St John’s Church of England Academy’s Policies.
- Ensuring progression of pupils’ skills with due regard to the national curriculum.
- Planning engaging and interesting lessons, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the national curriculum.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader or a member of the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach the subject and improve practice.
- Reporting on pupils’ progress at parents’ evenings and in end of year reports.

The Specialist Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) is responsible for:

- Liaising with the subject leader in order to implement and develop the subject throughout the school.
- Organising and providing training for staff for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Advising staff how best to support pupils’ needs.
- Advising staff on the inclusion of objectives in pupils’ individual education plans.
- Advising staff on the use of teaching assistants in order to meet pupils’ needs.

The Curriculum

Early Years Provision

Activities and experiences for pupils will be based on the seven areas of learning and development, as outlined in the DfE’s ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Children will also be supported in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Communication and Language

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to

Belonging Perseverance Respect Forgiveness Truth Aspiration

thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

The National Curriculum

The national curriculum is followed and provides a full breakdown of the statutory content to be taught within each unit.

KS1 pupil objectives

Locational knowledge:

- Name and locate the world's continents and oceans.
- Name, locate and identify characteristics of the countries which make up the United Kingdom (UK).

Place knowledge

- Understand the geographical similarities and differences of areas of the UK and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.

Belonging Perseverance Respect Forgiveness Truth Aspiration

Human and physical geography

- Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the UK.
- Locate hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the equator.
- Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features, as well as human features, including buildings, vegetation and seasons.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- Use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the UK and any other countries studied.
- Use simple compass directions, locational terminology and directional language to describe the location of features and routes on a map.
- Use aerial photos and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features.
- Devise a simple map and construct basic symbols in a key.
- Use observational skills to study the geography of the school and identify the key human and physical features of the surrounding environment.

KS2 pupil objectives

Locational knowledge

- Use maps to locate countries around the world, concentrating on Europe's and North and South America's environmental regions, major cities and key characteristics.
- Identify counties and cities of the UK, geographical regions and their identifying characteristics, key topographical features and land-use patterns.
- Understand the location and significance of the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, the Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Greenwich Meridian and other time zones.

Place knowledge

- Identify geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of one region in the UK, Europe and North or South America.

Human and physical geography

- Describe and understand key aspects of physical and human geography, including climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, the water cycle, types of settlement and land use, economic activity and the distribution of natural resources.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries.
- Use the 8 points of a compass and four- and six-figure grid references and symbols to build knowledge.
- Use a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies, to record the human and physical features in the local area.

Cross-curricular links

Wherever possible, the geography curriculum will provide opportunities to establish links with other curriculum areas.

English

- Pupils are encouraged to use their speaking and listening skills to describe what is happening.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed through recording findings and creating reports.
- Pupils' vocabulary is developed through the use and understanding of specialist terminology.

Maths

- Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of measurement and data handling.

Belonging Perseverance Respect Forgiveness Truth Aspiration

- Where appropriate, pupils record findings using charts, tables and graphs.
- Pupils use data analysis in order to identify patterns.

Science

- Pupils use their knowledge of the natural world to identify and analyse features of physical geography.
- Pupils' investigative and practical skills are developed through the use of fieldwork and problem-solving activities.

Computing

- Computing will be used to enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils will use Computing to locate and research information.
- Computing will be used to record findings, using text, data and tables.

Spiritual development

- Pupils' development will be focussed on the vastness of the world, encouraging an appreciation and fascination.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about the effect of humans actions on the environment.
- Current geographical developments and issues will be discussed in the classroom, where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

- Pupils will be taught to describe associated processes and key characteristics in common language, as well as understand and use technical terminology and specialist vocabulary.
- Pupils will undertake independent work, and have the opportunity to work in groups and discuss work with fellow classmates.
- Lessons will involve the use of a variety of sources, including maps, data, statistics, graphs, pictures and videos.
- Opportunities for outdoor learning will be provided wherever possible.
- All staff have access to the 'Key Assessment Criteria' document on the shared drive and G Drive; this can be used to promote progression throughout the school.
- In order to best meet the needs of our disadvantaged children and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, we ensure that every child has their barriers to learning identified and discussed. Quality First Teaching is our main driver to try to close the gap and appropriate interventions are considered, planned and reviewed termly.

Planning

- All relevant staff members are briefed on the school's planning procedures as part of staff training.
- Throughout St John's Church of England Academy, geography is taught as either a cross-curricular 'Enquiry' led driver or as a discrete lesson.
- Teachers will use the key learning content in the DfE's 'Geography programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2' and the national curriculum as a starting point for their planning.
- Long-term planning will be used to outline the units to be taught within each year group.
- Medium-term and Enquiry planning will be used to outline the Key Assessment Criteria expectations.
- Short-term plans are solely for the benefit of the classroom teacher and do not need to be shared with the subject leader.
- All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with pupils.

Assessment and Reporting

Belonging Perseverance Respect Forgiveness Truth Aspiration

- Throughout the year, teachers will plan on-going assessment opportunities in order to gauge whether pupils have achieved the key assessment criteria.
- Assessment in geography is based upon scientific knowledge and understanding, rather than achievement in English or maths.
- Formative assessment, which is carried out informally throughout the year, enables teachers to identify pupils' understanding of subjects and informs their immediate lesson planning.
- In terms of summative assessments, the results of end of year assessments will be passed to relevant members of staff, such as the pupil's future teacher.
- Parents will be provided with a written report about their child's progress during the summer term every year.
- Verbal reports will be provided at parent-teacher interviews during the Autumn and Spring terms.
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) will be monitored by the special educational needs coordinator.

Assessment will be undertaken in various forms, including the following:

- Talking to pupils and asking questions
- Discussing pupils' work with them
- Marking work against the learning objective
- Specific assignments for individual pupils
- Observing practical tasks and activities
- Pupils' self-evaluation of their work

Equipment and Resources

- Geography resources for each unit are stored in appropriate units of work. E.g. Mountains
- The subject leader is responsible for ensuring that all resources and equipment are sufficiently maintained.
- The subject leader is responsible for maintaining an inventory of resources.
- Staff members must inform the subject leader of any changes regarding geography resources, such as broken items or when new resources are required.
- The subject leader will carry out an annual audit of the geography resources.
- Class teachers can discuss the need for new resources with the subject leader.
- Class teachers to check they have the resources needed for a unit of work in a reasonable time before starting the learning.

Health and Safety

- Staff members will act in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy at all times.
- Accidents will be reported following the school's Accident Reporting Procedure Policy.
- All pupils will be made aware of how they are expected to behave, ensuring that they show respect to other people and the environment.
- Pupils are made aware of the personal safety protocols and equipment needed when using different equipment or carrying out different tasks.
- Any 'new' experiments or activities which a teacher has not used in the classroom before will be trialled prior to being performed with pupils.

Equal opportunities

- All pupils will have equal access to the entire geography curriculum, including practical experiments.
- Gender, learning ability, physical ability, ethnicity, linguistic ability and/or cultural circumstances will not impede pupils from accessing all geography lessons.
- Where it is inappropriate for a pupil to participate in a lesson because of reasons related to any of the factors outlined above, the lessons will be adapted to meet the pupil's needs and alternative arrangements involving extra support will be provided where necessary.
- All efforts will be made to ensure that cultural and gender differences will be positively reflected in all lessons and teaching materials used.
- We aim to provide more academically able pupils with the opportunity to extend their scientific thinking through extension activities such as problem solving, investigative work and research of a geographic nature.

Impact

The impact and measure of our geography curriculum is to ensure that children at St John's Church of England Academy are equipped with the geographical skills and knowledge that will enable them to be ready for the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and for life as an adult in the wider world.

Monitoring and review

- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the subject leader, in collaboration with the headteacher.
- The subject leader will monitor teaching and learning in geography at St John's Church of England Academy, ensuring that the content of the national curriculum is covered.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff.