

Holy Redeemer Primary School Geography Policy

Aim

At Holy Redeemer, children are encouraged to develop curiosity and fascination about the world they live in, to explore it with maps and keys, to understand their own cultures and welcome different ones too. We aim to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. As an 'Eco School' we aim to let physical and human geography combine with science and PSHE to instill enthusiasm for sustainability into the future leaders of our planet.

Intent

Our school continues to show a deeper understanding of geography and therefore children are always defining physical and human characteristics in their local environment as well as experiencing life from other cultures.

Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognise the importance of sustainable development (Nolet, 2016).

In all key stages across our school, children will learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving, at an age appropriate level, starting in the school playground and moving toward maps of Pershore and beyond (Wiegand, 2016).

Geography allows for the exploration of our planet and varied environments that it provides. In Year 1 children learn about their local area (Pershore) and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom (such as a coastal region) and in the rest of the world (Europe). In Year 2, children learn about the UK and Kenya. Lower key stage 2 focuses upon physical geography such as: natural disasters, rivers and mountains. Upper key stage 2 compares life in Pershore to USA, and El Salvador (Blundell, 2016) (Malone, 2018) (Nairn and Kraftl, 2016).

The aims of geography are to:

- enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world; both terrestrial and marine;
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time;
- increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country;
- collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes;
- interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS);
- allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level;
- encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- 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.

Implementation

Geography Planning

Our school implements geography from the national curriculum programmes of study scheme of work relevant to the subject.

In the long term planning, we take the objectives for each key stage and plan a sequential scheme through those classes, which best connects to other areas of the selected year groups topics in other subjects creating a broad and balanced curriculum.

Holy Redeemer is very keen to take a pioneering role within the community and therefore use the local environment to implement fieldwork and sustainability action. Teachers apply map skills in identifying the human and physical geography within the local area as well as research trade links and comparing them to other larger cities, located in different continents.

Our medium term plans give details of each unit of work for each term. In previous years, we have accommodated mixed-age classes; therefore, the medium term planning is based on a two-year rotation cycle. In this way, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum but do not have to repeat topics.

Geography Teaching

Each class teacher creates their own plan for each lesson. These daily lessons plans list specific learning objectives.

We believe that sequential planning of the topics, not only in geography, should build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

The enquiry approach to learning is one of geography's strongest assets (Pike, 2016). Therefore, geography is delivered in whole-class teaching methods across the school and where ever possible combined with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions.

Children have the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures and aerial photographs (Vujakovic, 2016). They also use ipads, laptops to enable them to use IT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning.

Active learning plays a key role in organised, chaired debates and discussions, and they present their arguments from reports they have presented to the rest of the class.

Field work is encouraged as much as possible in order to engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the internet to investigate a current or past issues. Pickering; 2017, suggests that enquiry is often facilitated and exemplified through outdoor learning, by employing fieldwork skills. Geography provides transformative opportunities for learning in the environment as well as from it, about it and for it.

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 supported by a teaching assistant if required.

Impact

Through active engagement in primary geography, children are enabled to learn not only about the world but also how it works, how it fits together and how to make a difference and become positive contributors to it.

(Catlin & Willy, 2018).

We assess children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons or their participation in fieldwork.

Once the children complete a piece of work, teachers use formal assessment and use this information to plan for future learning. A benchmark grid is available to teachers grading children either: emerging, secure or working at greater depth for human, physical and locational geography against their year group objectives. Reporting to parents occurs annually with a written report and through parent evenings. Currently, there isn't any form of formal, written assessment for geography in our school (see appendix 1).

We have a short supply of resources in our school to be able to teach geography. Where we do not own specialist equipment, we will outsource our learning to an external, verified provider. There is a class set of atlases for both key stages. In the library, we have a good supply of geography topic books, which are accessible at any time.

The current Headteacher: **Christina Hall** and the current subject co-ordinator: **Russell Hawtree** are responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

References

Blundell D (2016) *Rethinking Children's Spaces and Places*. London: Bloomsbury.

Catling S and Willy T (2018) *Understanding and Teaching Primary Geography*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE.

Malone K (2018) *Children in the Anthropocene: Rethinking Sustainability and Child Friendliness in Cities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nairn K and Kraftl P (eds) (2016) *Geographies of Children and Young People 3: Space, Place and Environment*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Nolet V (2016) *Educating for Sustainability: Principles and Practices for Teachers*. New York: Routledge.

Pickering S (ed.) (2017) *Teaching Outdoors Creatively*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Pike S (2016) *Learning Primary Geography*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Vujakovic P (2016) You are here. *Primary Geography* 89: 8–9.

Wiegand P (2016) *Learning and Teaching with Maps*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Policy based upon: <http://www.baynards.essex.sch.uk/index.php/school-policies/geography> [accessed 19.03.2020]

Appendix 1:

It is helpful to consider the three familiar levels of assessment thinking:

AfL practices such as peer and self-assessment, immediate feedback, helping pupils understand where they are in their learning, where they are going and how to get there and other activities to directly support progress

Focus: short term, formative assessment/Assessment for Learning

Broader view of progress for teacher and learner

Making interim judgements by applying geography benchmarks in the classroom; opportunities to improve

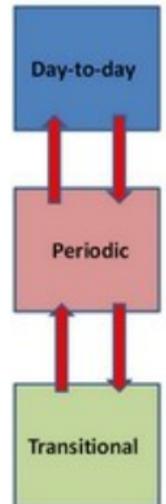
Focus: mainly medium term, formative/summative

Making summative judgements, formal recognition of achievement, based on geography benchmarks

Reported to parents/carers and next teacher/school

Curriculum review

Focus: long term, summative/Assessment of Learning



Geographical Association (2020) <https://www.geography.org.uk/Assessing-progress>: Assessing Progress in geography. [Accessed 19.03.2020]