

Geography Policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Reviewed: September 2026

Love, Listen and Learn

Mission Statement

St. Mary's school community follows the teachings of Jesus Christ, working together to develop the whole child, in a spiritual, moral, academic, physical, social and emotional way, within a caring and supportive environment.

Ethos

We recognise that there is a challenge in creating an enriching environment for all those involved at every level of school life. We take our lead and inspiration from Christ with regard to the Gospel values: the belief that all human beings are uniquely created and loved by God and worthy of respect. This challenge manifests itself in the way that we treat and value:

- Our relationships with each other and the wider community
- Our respect for one another
- Our welcome to and interest in all those who visit our school
- Discipline inspired by forgiveness, healing and reconciliation
- Our school environment

Through rising to this challenge, we aim to create an awareness of a sense of belonging to and being part of the life of St Mary's.

The Aims of our School

We will endeavour to create a Catholic Ethos in our school, which reflects the Gospel values, through the love, care and respect we show to each other, and to all who come to our school. We will teach the beliefs, traditions and practices of the Catholic Faith.

Through the prayer and worship in school we will try to be a living community of people celebrating their love for God and one another.

We believe the quality of the curriculum, with Religious Education at its core, is of prime importance and will focus on the development of the whole child. We will at all times try to make provision for children with special needs, so that all members of our school community achieve their potential.

We will help the children to develop an awareness of and respect for other religious and cultural backgrounds, as we believe this to be an essential preparation for adult life.

We believe that good communication between governors, staff, parents and children is important for the wellbeing of our school, and we will work in partnership with the wider community especially the home and parish in developing each child's potential.

The Aims for Each Child at St Mary's Catholic Primary School

- ◆ Whilst at St. Mary's School I will learn about being a Christian. I will experience the beliefs, traditions and practices of the Catholic Faith.
- ◆ I will achieve as much as I possibly can in each area of the National Curriculum.
- ◆ I will know how to learn and enjoy learning, and will view work in a positive and conscientious manner.
- ◆ I will co-operate and communicate with others effectively, independently and in a group, and try to win and lose graciously.
- ◆ I will tolerate and respect the religious beliefs, views and values of others, understand the need for good behaviour and moderate my behaviour accordingly. I will respect the belongings and property of others.
- ◆ If I have a problem I know I can find someone who will discuss it with me.
- ◆ I will try to learn from my mistakes and accept there is always room for improvement.
- ◆ I will share a sense of responsibility for my school, parish, local community and the wider environment.

National Curriculum aims and Objectives

Geography is a key subject in the primary Curriculum and pupils will be inspired to develop a curiosity and fascination about the world. Geography helps pupils to develop their 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 and interconnected and change over time.

Aims

The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- 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
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
- 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)
- communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

(Taken from the National Curriculum)

St Mary's Geography Aims and Objectives

We want them to be learners who ask questions, think critically, listen to different opinions and make judgements based on evidence.

Geography Curriculum Planning

We use the New Curriculum for our planning in Geography supported by Chris Quigley's Curriculum. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the schemes of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school. The key skills which are repeatedly explored and developed throughout St Mary's are:

- * Location
- * Physical processes
- * Physical features
- * Human features
- * Diversity
- * Human processes
- * Techniques

Foundation Stage

In EYFS we teach Geography as part of the Understanding of the World through a topic- based approach, we begin in Nursery with the 3 to 4 year- old statements and progress towards the ELGs at the end of Reception. Pupils are supported to make sense of the world around them through having various opportunities to explore their physical world, local community and beyond. For example, visits from firefighters, nurses, exploring places/people through sharing fiction and non-fiction stories.

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Comment on images of familiar situations in the past. Remembrance Day. Explore Transport from the Past Black History Month	Describe their immediate environment. Transport. Focus on carriage used in Cinderella to transport used today. Homes. Explore castles and contrast to homes children live in. Draw information from a simple map. Draw maps to show our walk to the Post box. Make maps of the walk to the Post box using blocks, roads and signs. Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live. Houses and homes in the local area and in the countryside.	ELG Past and Present Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. Role of a nurse. ELG Past and Present Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Toys from the Past. ELG Past and Present Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling. Peepo
Marvellous me: Talk about members of their immediate family and community. Create timelines. Introduce past/present vocab. Name and describe people who are familiar to them. Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate different times in different ways: Judaism. Black History month People who help us: Visit from the Fire Brigade Draw information from a simple map. Draw map from the walk Rosie the hen made in the story Rosie's walk.	Understand that some places are special to members of their community. Visit to Mary Mother of God church. Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate different times in different ways. Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this county and life in other countries. Lunar New Year. Focus on China. Lunar New Year. Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities: St. David's Day St Patricks Day St. Georges Day	ELG People, Culture and Communities Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. Signs of Summer walk around local area ELG People, Culture and Communities Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Islam ELG People, Culture and Communities Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, nonfiction texts and (when

Investigate Places Ask and answer geographical questions (such as: What is this place like? What or who will I see in this place? What do people do in this place?). • Identify the key features of a location in order to say whether it is a city, town, village, coastal or rural area. • Use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied. • Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of the school and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment. • Use aerial images and plan perspectives to recognize landmarks and basic physical features. • Name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas. Name and locate the world's continents and oceans.	Investigate Patterns Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom and of a contrasting non-European country. • Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles. Identify land use around the school.	Communicate Geographically Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to: • key physical features, including: beach, coast, forest, hill, mountain, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation and weather. • key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office and shop. • Use compass directions (north, south, east and west) and locational language (e.g. near and far) to describe the location of features and routes on a map. Devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key. Use simple grid references (A1, B1
--	---	--

• Ask and answer geographical questions about the physical and human characteristics of a location. • Explain own views about locations, giving reasons. • Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features. • Use fieldwork to observe and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods including sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies. • Use a range of resources to identify the key physical and human features of a location. • Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, cities, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time. Name and locate the countries of Europe and identify their main physical and human characteristics.	• Name and locate the Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle and date time zones. Describe some of the characteristics of these geographical areas. • Describe geographical similarities and differences between countries. • Describe how the locality of the school has changed over time.	• Describe key aspects of: • physical geography, including: rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes and the water cycle. • human geography, including: settlements and land use. Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key to communicate knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
--	---	--

• Ask and answer geographical questions about the physical and human characteristics of a location. • Explain own views about locations, giving reasons. • Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features. • Use fieldwork to observe and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods including	• Name and locate the Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle and date time zones. Describe some of the characteristics of these geographical areas. • Describe geographical similarities and differences between countries. • Describe how the locality of the school has changed over time.	• Describe key aspects of: • physical geography, including: rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes and the water cycle. • human geography, including: settlements and land use. Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key to communicate
--	---	---

sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies. • Use a range of resources to identify the key physical and human features of a location. • Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, cities, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time. Name and locate the countries of Europe and identify their main physical and human characteristics.		knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
---	--	---

• Collect and analyse statistics and other information in order to draw clear conclusions about locations. • Identify and describe how the physical features affect the human activity within a location. • Use a range of geographical resources to give detailed descriptions and opinions of the characteristic features of a location. • Use different types of fieldwork sampling (random and systematic) to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area. Record the results in a range of ways. • Analyse and give views on the effectiveness of different geographical representations of a location (such as aerial images compared with maps and topological maps - as in London's Tube map). • Name and locate some of the countries and cities of the world and their identifying	• Identify and describe the geographical significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, and time zones (including day and night). • Understand some of the reasons for geographical similarities and differences between countries. • Describe how locations around the world are changing and explain some of the reasons for change. • Describe geographical diversity across the world. Describe how countries and geographical regions are interconnected and interdependent	• Describe and understand key aspects of: • physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes and the water cycle. • human geography, including: settlements, land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals, and water supplies. Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and a key (that uses standard Ordnance Survey symbols) to communicate knowledge of the United Kingdom and the world.
---	--	--

human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time.		
--	--	--

Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Milestone 3
Years 1 and 2	Years 3 and 4	Years 5 and 6
Weather The United Kingdom Mapping the World Continents and Oceans Climate Australia	Earthquakes and volcanoes Landscapes: Rivers and Mountains Europe Trade	North and South America Climate Zones and Biomes

Cross Curricular Links

The Contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas:

English/Literacy

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children develop oracy through discussing geographical questions or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. Children's speaking and listening skills are enhanced through the use of drama and role play within Geography lessons. They develop their writing ability by composing reports, diary entries and letters. Pupils' writing is supported by the use of writing frames and word banks.

Mathematics/Numeracy

The teaching of Geography contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children will use their numerical and quantitative skills when communicating geographical information. Children will develop map work skills and use grid references, measure and record human and physical features of different areas.

Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions, such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognise and challenge stereotypes, and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and they start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

In our teaching of Geography, we contribute where possible to the children's spiritual 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. 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 and ICT

Information and Communication technology enhances our teaching of Geography, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their Geography work in Key Stage Two. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as word processing, finding information on the Internet and presenting information through PowerPoint. They can make creative use of the digital camera and iPads to record photographic images. They can further use email to gather information from sources in other countries.

Geography and Inclusion/Equal Opportunities

All children will be given access to Geography irrespective of race, gender, creed, level of ability or nationality. Mutual respect and tolerance for all cultures will be promoted through the study of Geography. This corresponds with the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language. We take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational needs; Disability Equality; Gifted and Talented. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Education Care Plan (ECHP) for children with special educational needs. The ECHP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to Geography. We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment for Learning

We use POP (Proof of Progress) tasks to record how children are progressing in their learning in Geography. POP tasks further deepen connections in a schema by gradually changing the nature of thinking. POP tasks are categorised into 3 cognitive domains; basic, advancing and deep.

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all Geography teaching units in the school. We keep these resources in the Geography cupboard or Year Group areas where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. Resources also include software for some topics. The library also contains a supply of topic books to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Geography is the responsibility of the Geography subject coordinator. The work of the subject coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject coordinator has specially allocated time in which to fulfil this role by reviewing samples of children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Updated September 2026 Susan Linnane