

St Alban's Catholic Primary

School Geography Policy

At St Alban's we are committed to providing all children with learning opportunities to engage in geography. This policy sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can work, and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. It has been developed through a process of consultation with school staff and governors.

Geography is an essential part of the curriculum, it provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Geography explores the relationship between the Earth and its people through the study of place, space and environment. It contributes to the cultural, social, spiritual and moral life of children as they acquire knowledge of a range of different cultures and traditions, and learn tolerance and understanding of other people and environments. Geography is the subject in which pupils learn the skills of understanding a locality and how and where people fit into its overall structure. Developing geographical skills is essential as children live in a world that is wide open to them. With opportunities to travel and work in different cities and countries across the world, pupils need to use maps, charts and other geographical data efficiently. The opportunities for the children to carry out geographical enquiry are also of value.

The teaching of Geography would be difficult without acknowledging the future of our planet. The Geography Curriculum places great importance on the interaction between the physical and the human environment. Many areas of study give opportunities to make children aware of these effects upon their surroundings, their own responsibilities and how they can contribute to improving the environment, however small that contribution might be.

Aims

- To stimulate children's interest in their surroundings and develop a knowledge and understanding of the physical and human processes which shape places.
- To 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.
- To provide learning opportunities that enthuse, engage, and motivate children to learn and foster a sense of curiosity and wonder at the beauty of the world around them.
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what global citizenship means.
- To make sense of their own surroundings through learning about their own locality and the interaction between people and the environment.
- To develop the geographical skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps of

different scales, and the vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry.

- To be able to apply map reading skills to globes and atlas maps and identify geographical features.
- To formulate appropriate questions, develop research skills and evaluate material to inform opinions.
- To enable children to work geographically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment including other people's experiences and knowledge.

Curriculum

The children undertake a broad and balanced programme that takes account of abilities, aptitudes and physical, emotional and intellectual development. Through geography the children learn a range of skills, concepts, attitudes and methods of working.

Early

Years

Geography is taught in reception as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years curriculum which underpin the planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's understanding of the world through activities such as finding out about different places and habitats and investigating our locality.

In both Key Stages 1 and 2 children should study four strands.

These are:

1. Locational knowledge
2. Place knowledge
3. Human and physical geography
4. Geographical skills and fieldwork

Key

Stage

1

During Key Stage 1, pupils investigate their local area and a contrasting area in the United Kingdom or abroad, finding out about the environment in both areas and the people who live there. They also begin to learn about the wider world. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions about people, places and environments, and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps and photographs.

Key

Stage

2

During Key Stage 2, pupils investigate a variety of people, places and environments in the United Kingdom and abroad, and start to make links between different places in the world. They find out

how people affect the environment and how they are affected by it. Pupils carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. In doing this, they ask geographical questions, and use geographical skills and resources, such as maps, atlases, aerial photographs and ICT. Children will develop geographical enquiry skills, including asking geographical questions, collecting and recording information and identifying different views. They will acquire the appropriate practical skills associated with Geography, including using suitable vocabulary, fieldwork techniques and maps, plans and atlases. Pupils will use secondary sources of information with accuracy, including aerial photographs, satellite images, etc. As well as making its own distinctive contribution to the school curriculum, geography contributes to the wider aims of primary education. Teachers will ensure that links between subjects are maximized.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Spiritual development: Through helping pupils to recognise the beauty and diversity of the world. A geographical awareness helps children understand their place in the world. Geography provides opportunities for children to learn about sites of wonder, or physical features that they might wish to visit in the future.

Moral development: Through helping pupils to reflect on how the environment is affected by decisions made by people, so that the children can make informed choices in the future. Through discussion, the children learn to appreciate the moral dilemmas posed by introducing changes to the environment (for example, building a motorway) and the effects this can have on the surrounding area. Our environmental awareness is a theme which works alongside our Eco Committee in school.

Social development: Through helping pupils to understand the need to consider the views of others when discussing localities, settlements and the environment. Work on a locality in a less economically developed country provides an opportunity to discuss social issues. Fieldwork encourages collaborative projects, making the most of different strengths and interests within a team.

Cultural development: By exploring different settlements, the children can gain knowledge of different cultures, learning tolerance and understanding of their diversity.

Progression & development: The school uses a variety of teaching and learning styles in geography lessons. Our principal aim is to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding in geography. We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to handle artefacts and to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, aerial photographs, geographical footage and we enable them to use IT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in roleplay and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They 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, visiting relevant sites and carrying out fieldwork. We recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to

the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies which are differentiated by task, expected outcome and/or support from peers or adults.

Geography **and** **curriculum** **and** **planning**

At St Alban's geography is taught through a topic approach alongside ICT, Maths, History and Art. Our Curriculum is carefully planned to engage and excite all our learners.

Our long-term and medium-term plans map out the themes covered each term for each key stage. These plans define what we will teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. We have recently begun the Opening World's curriculum in Years 3 – 5 which are planned using the teaching slides provided.

Progress **and** **Achievement**

Children are monitored on a regular basis to check progress through questioning, marking and observation. We encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their own and their peers learning. Children are encouraged to make personal assessments of their own work through evaluating activities and identifying what they need to improve, the use of talk partners and end of unit teacher/pupil evaluation. Through these, both children and adults can recognise the progress being made.

Assessment **and** **Recording**

At St Alban's, assessment is an integral part of the teaching process. Assessment is used to inform planning and to facilitate differentiation. The assessment of children's work is on-going to ensure that understanding is being achieved and that progress is being made. Feedback is given to the children as soon as possible, and marking work will be guided by the school's Marking Policy.

Monitoring

Monitoring takes place regularly through sampling children's work, and teacher planning, through book scrutiny and lesson observations.

Health **and** **Safety**

Visits and fieldwork are an essential part of the Geography Curriculum helping to develop geographical enquiry and skills. Children learn best when the learning environment is ordered and they feel safe, any visit should be well organised and provide a stimulating and valuable experience. The pupils should prepare well for the visit and, on their return, use the experience to good effect in the classroom. The class teacher should plan the visit meticulously, with the pupils' safety and welfare paramount. Please see the Policy for Educational Visits for detailed information.

Resources

We have atlases and make great use of interactive boards to access the internet as a class and there is a range of geographic material in the school library. People with an interest, or expertise, in a particular topic or area of geography could be invited into school to work with the children. These might be parents, grandparents, other family members, neighbours or representatives of the local community.