

# St. Mary's

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Church of England Primary School  
Kirkby Lonsdale

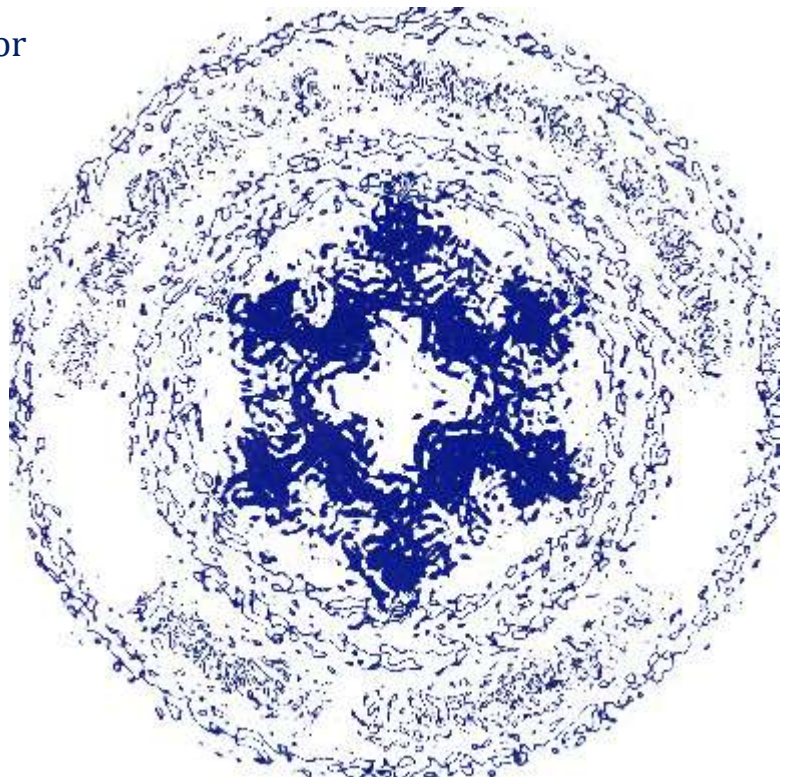
## Geography Policy

Approved by:

Name: J Gill

Position: Chair of Governor

Signed:



## **Contents**

- 1. Our Vision**
- 2. Subject Statement**
  - **Intent**
  - **Implementation**
  - **Impact**
- 3. Teaching and Learning**
- 4. Assessment**
- 5. Geography Curriculum**
  - **Key Themes**
  - **The Early Years Foundation Stage**
  - **Key Stage 1**
  - **Key Stage 2**
- 6. Resources**
- 7. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**
- 8. Educational Visits and Fieldwork**
- 9. Role of the Subject Leader**
- 10. Parents**



## 1. Our Vision

Our vision is for our children and community to flourish together and enable others to do the same, using their talents and gifts to serve and support others, encouraging a sense of care and responsibility to others and the world. Within geography, we want our children to flourish through being inspired by a creative curriculum, developing a sense of awe and wonder for the world around them, as well as building a secure foundation of geographical skills and knowledge. Our aim is for pupils to develop a deep understanding, curiosity and lifelong fascination of the world, which fosters both an appreciation for its diverse environments and a sense of responsibility for its protection. There is an emphasis on the interconnectedness of physical and human processes, encouraging pupils to explore the impact of human actions on the planet and develop sustainable solutions to real-world problems, locally and from a global perspective. This should empower our children to become passionate geographers who are informed and engaged citizens, ready to address the challenges of a changing world.

## **2. Subject Statement**

### **Intent**

We believe that Geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Children are encouraged to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, as well as their place in it. The geography curriculum at St Mary's enables children to develop knowledge and skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas and which can and are used to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. We seek to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote the children's interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. We use the local environment, the Lake District and surrounding area, as a starting point to understanding the world. The curriculum is designed to develop knowledge and skills that are progressive, as well as transferable, throughout their time at St Mary's CE Primary and also to their further education and beyond.

### **Implementation**

Geography at St Mary's is taught in themed blocks throughout the year, so that children can achieve depth in their learning. Each themed block has a key enquiry question which we explore through critical thinking and attempt to answer with the knowledge and skills developed. Teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each blocked topic and consideration has been given to ensure progression across topics throughout each year group across the school. Building on Rosenshine's principles, at the beginning of each topic, children are able to convey what they know already as well as what they would like to find out. This informs the programme of study and also ensures that lessons are relevant and take account of children's different starting points. Consideration is given to how greater depth will be taught, learnt and demonstrated within each lesson, as well as how learners will be supported in line with the school's commitment to inclusion. Cross curricular outcomes in geography are specifically planned for, with strong links between geography and other subjects identified, planned for and utilised. The local area is fully utilised to achieve the desired outcomes, with extensive opportunities for learning outside the classroom embedded in practice.

### **Impact**

Outcomes in topic and literacy books, evidence a broad and balanced geography curriculum and demonstrate children's acquisition of identified key knowledge. Children review their successes in achieving the lesson objectives at the end of every session and are actively encouraged to identify their own target areas, with these being identified, shared and verified by teachers as necessary. Children also record what they have learnt comparative to their starting points at the end of every topic. As children progress throughout the school, they develop a deep knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their local area and its place within the wider geographical context. Geographical understanding, as well as children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is further supported by the school's links with international partner schools. This aspect of the work of the school is also supported through specific drives which include 'European Language Day' in which they learn the origin of language and food to celebrate diversity and culture. Children are able to learn about careers related to geography from members of the local and wider community with specialist skills and knowledge, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next steps of their education. We also have built links with organisations such as the Lune Rivers Trust.

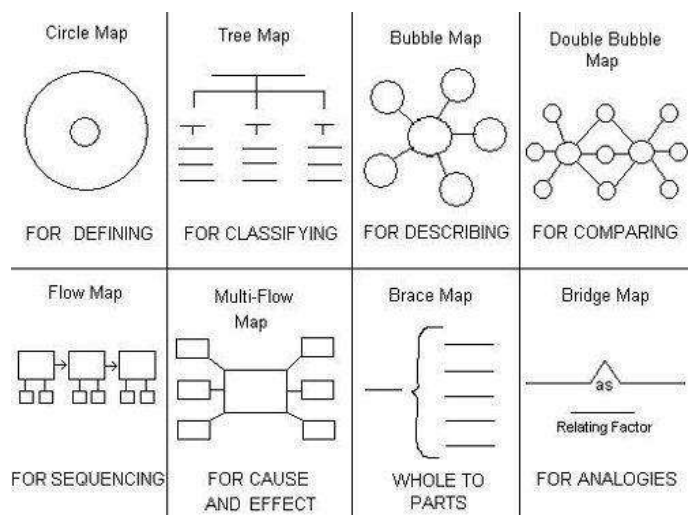
### 3. Teaching and Learning

Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. As pupils progress, they deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and use subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography, with accuracy and confidence. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in different societies, helping to develop a sense of other cultures, and how nations rely on each other. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Within the academic year, children study geography in blocks, as outlined in the overall curriculum framework overview. This allows children to enhance their geographical knowledge and develop their geographical skills through focused daily learning, throughout the duration of each block. This model also promotes the children in being able to achieve a greater depth of understanding of each topic. The geography curriculum framework has been devised in conjunction with the history subject leader to ensure that the humanities complement each other throughout the year. The learning intention for each lesson is informed by the national curriculum 2014 and children are guided towards this within each lesson through the use of success criteria.

Teachers have identified the key knowledge that is being taught, as well as the skills that are being developed across each topic. Knowledge organisers support all topics covered and are used to scaffold learning and reinforce vocabulary. These are also explicitly outlined on each topic overview, which makes explicit links to the national curriculum 2014. Key vocabulary is also identified, as well as how consideration to the school's context has informed the programme of study. Cross curricular outcomes are also identified prior to teaching and these are evidenced through outcomes of work, as well as being stated explicitly in planning. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the national curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We use Enquiry Questions to focus the children's learning and build independence and critical thinking skills into their geography lessons. We encourage the use of 'Thinking Maps' to facilitate learning, in particular highlighting knowledge gained and responses to our enquiry questions. The progression of Thinking Maps used throughout the school is also included on the Curriculum Framework document.



Children from Reception to Year 6 take part in Home Projects throughout the academic year, where they research and present a project based on their geography or history topic that half term. It involves them choosing a specific area within their topic that is of interest to them, to explore in greater depth, then present this to their class. This allows pupils to deepen their knowledge significantly on something from the topic which has sparked their interest. Children also further develop their knowledge by listening to their peers' projects.

Outdoor learning is planned for and progressive throughout the school and programmes of work are embedded with key knowledge, which itself has been mapped, along with key skills, to support effective assessment and ensure progression across the school.

St Mary's is a lead school for The Prince's Teaching Institute (The PTI); resources from both their in-person training and their online platform inform teaching, learning and staff CPD. We also access resources from the Geographical Association, Ordnance Survey and Digimaps.

#### **4. Assessment**

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Key geographical knowledge is taught to enable and promote the development of children's geographical skills. Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.
- Using differentiated, open-ended questions that require children to explain and unpick their understanding.
- Providing effective feedback, including interactive marking through green pen questions where appropriate, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment, consolidation, depth and target setting.
- Book moderation and monitoring of outcomes of work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and to ensure that tasks meet the needs of different learners, with the acquisition of the pre-identified key knowledge of each topic being evidenced through the outcomes.
- Use of the 'what I know already, what I want to know and what I have learnt' (KWL) strategy throughout a unit which may be through the use of a 'Circle Map' which is one of the Thinking Maps shown above, in the 'Teaching and Learning' section. These are used alongside specific and measurable learning intentions for each lesson with child and teacher review of the agreed success criteria.

## 5. Geography Curriculum

### Key Themes

Throughout the curriculum, key themes have been developed to provide focus and enable the children to make lasting connections. These include, 'Settlement and Location,' 'Environment,' as well as 'Tourism and Economics.' Most topics in the EYFS span more than one of these themes at once due to the nature of the EYFS curriculum and framework. In Key Stages One and Two, each topic is focused on one key theme, whilst links are also made between them to enhance understanding.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years, geographical themes and content are explored through the Understanding the World strand of the EYFS framework and the carefully planned EYFS long term plan. The curriculum has been constructed to be ambitious and designed to give children the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The children are guided to develop a sense of their physical world, as well as their community, through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. The coherently planned and sequenced curriculum builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning. There is a focus of ensuring that children acquire wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and children benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum.

### Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils build on the strong foundations made in the EYFS.

During Key Stage 1, pupils will 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.

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their local area. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Children will develop their **locational knowledge**; they will learn to name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans. In addition, they will learn to name, locate and identify the characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.

They will also develop a greater **understanding of place** by comparing the geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of

the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country. The specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In addition to developing children's locational and place knowledge, they will have the opportunity to learn about **human and physical geography**. During this study, they will 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. They will also begin to use geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features (beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather) and key human features (city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shops).

Children will develop **geographical skills and fieldwork skills**, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use world maps, atlases and globes; simple compass directions; aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features and to use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their local area.

## **Key Stage 2**

During Key Stage 2 Pupils extend and develop their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America; studying the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They continue to develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

They extend their **locational knowledge** when they learn to locate and name European countries as well as North and South America countries, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities. In addition to this, they extend their locational knowledge to be able to name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, describing key geographical regions, human and physical characteristics, key topographical features and land-use patterns. This is further extended to identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Arctic and Antarctic Circle and the Greenwich Meridian and time zones.

They will build on their **understanding of place** by comparing the geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region of a European country and a region within North or South America.

As in Key Stage 1, the specific geographical locations selected for these comparisons will be selected to link to other areas of the curriculum to allow for cross-curricular work and development.

In Key stage 2 **human and physical geography** knowledge is extended to allow children to develop an understanding of aspects of physical geography (investigating climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle) and human geography (learning about types of settlement and land use, economic activity and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.)

Children will continue to develop **geographical skills and fieldwork skills**, through these three areas of study, where they learn to use maps, atlases and globes and digital/computer mapping; eight-point compass directions; four and six-figure grid references, symbols and keys and the Ordnance Survey maps. They will also use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

## **6. Resources**

Resources are used effectively to meet the children's needs and promote learning. This is especially important in the EYFS and Year 1 where staff plan carefully how to utilise resources to create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious, coherently planned and sequenced curriculum.

Geography resources are stored throughout the school and are organised into topics, which are clearly labelled. The school has an extensive supply of geography topic books to support children's individual research. Children can also use ICT resources, remotely enabling parents to become involved in their child's learning. In addition to this, class teachers develop a 'working wall' for each of the geography topics where books and other artefacts are displayed and easily accessible for children. Planning is achieved collaboratively with parallel-class teachers and plans are saved electronically for ease of access.

We have a wide selection of mapping resources, with progression shown in the globes, physical maps and atlases that are accessed by different age groups in a way that matches their needs. Digital maps and tools are accessed through Digimaps for Schools, Google Earth and Ordnance Survey. Map skills are also taught through use of the Cross-Curricular Orienteering resources and the permanent orienteering course within the school grounds. In addition, we have a set of compasses which can be used for learning both in and outside of the classroom. Where additional resources are required for fieldwork, links have been made with a local secondary school and there is the opportunity to borrow resources where appropriate.

## **7. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

At St Mary's CE Primary school, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive attitudes towards others.

All pupils are entitled to access the geography curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs, to be able to flourish in a way that enables them to achieve their full potential. To ensure inclusion, teachers use a range of strategies in line with the school's SEND Policy, Accessibility Plan and Equality Plan.

Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration also given to meeting the needs of pupils who require further challenge. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are well-adapted to ensure full accessibility, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different groups of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential. Resources are also chosen carefully to ensure that they meet the needs of the children and promote learning.

Through a child's educational journey at St Mary's, teaching takes account of children's own interests to ensure topic relevance to all individual learners. Opportunities for enrichment are also fully utilised, to ensure a fully inclusive and engaging geography curriculum and this is supported through a number of links with places of geographical interest in the immediate and wider locality. In addition, projects with local organisations take place to engage the children further through practical learning activities.

## **8. Educational Visits and Fieldwork**

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in our geography curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, teachers should be aware of health and safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to activities, to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for all pupils. Before undertaking a field trip, teachers are encouraged to visit the proposed area of study and fill in a risk assessment form via the Kym Allan Health and Safety website, as well as informing and getting authorisation from the Educational Visits Lead.

## **9. Role of the Subject Leader**

The subject leader's responsibilities are:

- To ensure a high profile of the subject.
- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.
- To model the teaching of geography.
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.
- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported, by SLT.
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of geography.
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview.
- To ensure that the geography curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment.
- To ensure that the geography curriculum takes account of the school's context, promotes children's pride in the local area and provides access to positive role models from the local area to enhance the geography curriculum.
- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.

## **10. Parents and community**

At St Mary's, we actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of geography. Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children with topic-based home learning. Geography home learning tasks are well communicated and have a clear purpose, often providing children with the means to research and explore a topic to support their classroom work.

**Policy Agreed: July 2025**

**Policy Review Date: July 2028**