

Our school
Vision and Values

Vision

We want ourselves and the children in our care to be successful, resilient and inquisitive learners who are happy and well-equipped to participate positively in the community and wider society.

Values

Our school values (*kindness, respect, responsibility and aspiration*) are an essential point of reference on all of our journeys. British values (*democracy, rule of law, liberty and respect*) play an equally important role.

What is Geography?

Geography is the study of places and the relationships between people and their environments.

Geography is learning about how people are connected to, and how they affect their environments and the world around them. Geographers explore both the physical properties of Earth's surface and the human societies spread across it.

Geography seeks to understand where things are found, why they are there, and how they develop and change over time.

Overview summary intent

The importance of Geography

The study of geography involves pupils in exploring the relationship and interactions between people and the environments in which they live and upon which they depend. At our school we seek to develop young geographers who are able to make links and connections between the natural world and human activity and to understand the kind of questions geographers ask such as Why is this place like it is, how is it changing and what will be the costs and benefits of these changes when they happen? We will ensure that what our pupils learn in Geography and how they learn it not only inspires and stretches them intellectually but also contributes to their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and helps to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the 21st century.

School context

The school is situated in the English Riviera, a UNESCO designated Global Geopark, only 1 of 7 in the UK and only 1 of 147 in the world. While we live and work in this area of outstanding

beauty we have some local challenges around families being able to take advantage of these opportunities.

Children are predominately from a white British background and therefore have less experience of mixing with other faiths and cultures than other children in the United Kingdom. For example our number of pupils with EAL and from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average.

Children often arrive at school with challenges around speech, language and communication. On average, children start school below the expected standards and leave school above the expected standards.

In our school we aim to :

- To stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the earth's surface;
- To foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- To help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat;
- To enhance pupils' sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles;
- To develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using computing to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- To help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues such as sustainability and sustainable development;
- To enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- To foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

Rationale-

Why is Geography taught in each phase?

Foundation Stage

For children:

- To begin to recognise, name, describe things about my home, school grounds and the places around it.
- To begin to give reasons about why the places we go to are like they are.
- To begin to compare our places to other places we have been to or have heard about in the wider world.

Year 1 & 2

For children

- To identify, describe, compare and offer reasons why my school grounds, the places around it and other places in the United Kingdom and the wider world are like they are.

- To accurately use a range of *Geographical* vocabulary, fieldwork, mapping and aerial images to help us learn about places and share our ideas.
- To develop our knowledge of where places are in the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- To identify, describe, compare and suggest reasons for daily weather patterns in the UK and hot and cold places in other parts of the world.

Year 3 & 4

For children

- To show our understanding of our home area compared to an area of North and South America by describing, explaining and giving reasons why these places are changing.
- To find, describe and explain some of the reasons why climate zones, deserts, tropical rainforests, earthquakes and large urban areas are where they are.
- To identify, describe and explain the main information that is shown on a world map or globe (latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)
- To develop our detailed knowledge of places in the United Kingdom, other countries and around the world using some specialised vocabulary and more complex ways to gather and show our findings.

Year 5 & 6

For children

- To interpret a range of *Geographical* information shown to us in a variety of ways and then communicate our knowledge and understanding in many different ways (talking, maps, numerical, statistical, writing)
- To develop our knowledge of features such as rivers and mountains and understand how landscapes are formed.
- To begin to make simple judgements about the challenges and benefits to humans of living in particular places through looking at conflicting viewpoints and perspectives before we form our own opinions.
- To use specialised *Geographical* vocabulary and techniques to share with others our knowledge and understanding.

Best practise in teaching and learning

Inclusion, equality of opportunity and differentiation

Geography forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school we ensure that all pupils can engage with geographical learning and develop as young geographers irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at

the heart of the study of *Geography* and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in *Geography* including those with special educational needs, those with disabilities and those with English as an additional language. In our planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment, including fieldwork opportunities in our geographical enquiries.

Expectations of outcomes

At our school we want pupils to become better geographers and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at *Geography* entails and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to develop as young geographers as they progress through the school. To enable this to happen we have established an outcomes driven curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in *Geography* but more crucially the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve by and through their learning.

Planning

Geography is planned using a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages our pupils to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes.

At our school therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their geography through big question led enquiries about topics, places and themes which focuses on real people, places and geographical issues and allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in high order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers to questions in geography), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising.

Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why.

We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes.

We recognise that simply knowing more information in itself will not enable our pupils to progress as young geographers capable of making links, seeing things more conceptually and recognising the significance of attitudes and values in shaping the world in which they live.

We identify important topics, issues, places and themes informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum to ask important questions about and then plan units or utilise the 'Connected Geography' scheme enquiries which are carefully structured and led by big 'How' and 'Why' questions.

The Connected Geography scheme units and resources are available on the Google drive in the Geography leadership folder.

Collectables

To support children's knowledge retention each year group uses 'collectables' which outline the key vocabulary, knowledge and localities studied in our geography work. These are child friendly and shared with parents, copied into our class books and pupil learning journals so that they can be referred to frequently to assist the children.

Fieldwork/ outdoor learning

Regular and high quality fieldwork and outdoor learning is central to a young person's statutory entitlement in *Geography*. It provides opportunities to develop and consolidate skills and concepts introduced in the classroom and allows pupils to extend their understanding of the 'real' world. Fieldwork provision enables pupils to become observant, to develop the skills of recording, analysis and deduction and to start to develop 'enquiring minds'. Fieldwork and learning outdoors involving the testing and investigation of ideas and theories through practical exercises including observation, data collection, recording, presentation, interpretation and evaluation is therefore fundamental to the study of *Geography* and the development of young geographers at our school.

Consequently fieldwork is a core element of geographical learning in every year group in line with the National Curriculum.

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, in *Geography* class teachers:

- design activities which help pupils answer the geographical questions such as: Where is it? What is it like? How has it changed? Why has it changed? How will it change next? What will happen if? How might it be better? What can be done about? How do I feel?
- share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- ensure that objectives for lessons are presented in the form of "key questions" that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher, sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- make valid cross-curricular links wherever possible.
- provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- encourage pupils to describe, explain, predict and evaluate places, geographical patterns and processes and environmental changes;
- plan for pupils to make and use maps, atlases, satellite and GIS imagery and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- plan to use a range of resources to support teaching and learning such as video clips, picture books, stories, information texts, images, graphs, charts and models.
- expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints, videos, photographs, models and accounts. As appropriate, pupils make oral presentations of their work.

- record pupils work in the Class book and Learning journals and mark it in accordance with the school marking policy.
- in Foundation stage and Year 1 & 2 can also record evidence of pupils work (transcriptions, photos, video and audio) on the Interactive Learning Diary (ILD)
- provide opportunities (where appropriate) for pupils to independently consolidate and / or extend their knowledge and understanding through continuous provision within the classroom environment.
- set high expectations and use our performance descriptors at EYFS/Key Stage 1; Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 to aid this so that learning objectives and activities are sufficiently challenging;
- provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;

Assessment in Geography

Ongoing assessment

Each enquiry (unit of work) which forms the programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives which define the anticipated outcomes for the pupil.

Evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform this process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, diagrams, pictures, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing.

The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly.

Teachers should record their ongoing assessments at the end of each enquiry noting those pupils who are working below expectation, at expectation and above expectation.

Summative assessments should not be made of individual pieces of work or for that matter of separate enquiries.

Summative assessment

A **summative judgement** about a pupil's knowledge and understanding of geography will be made on three occasions during the primary phase:

At the end of Key Stage 1:

Summer term of Year 2

At the end of Lower Key Stage 2: Summer term of Year 4

At the end of Key Stage 2: Summer term of Year 6

At the end of each of the three learning stages, the teacher will be able to use their knowledge and understanding of each pupil gained through extensive formative assessment over the previous two years to reach an accurate judgment of what they know and can do. At this point they need to take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and reach a 'best fit' summative judgement taking into account the whole of the descriptor rather than specific parts of it. **Most critically this decision is based on the professional knowledge and judgement that the teacher possesses of the pupil, built up over an extended period of time, which is then used to make a rounded and holistic judgement of their attainment in geography.**

Key Stage 1 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Key Stage 1 will be able to:

Identify, describe, compare and contrast and offer reasons for the similarities and differences they observe in the physical and human geographical features of their school grounds, the locality of the school and a number of contrasting environments in the United Kingdom and around the world. In achieving this pupils will have shown a capacity to use accurately a wide range of basic geographical vocabulary together with simple fieldwork, mapping and aerial imagery techniques to observe, present and communicate geographical information. Consequently they possess a sound locational knowledge of the basic geographical characteristics of the United Kingdom, the wider world (Continents, Oceans, North and South Poles and the Equator) and can also identify, describe, compare and contrast and suggest reasons for daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and contrasting hot and cold locations in other parts of the world.

Lower Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Lower Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate geographical understanding by describing and explaining in basic terms the similarities and differences in the physical and human features of their home area and a region in North or South America, including offering some reasons why both places are changing. They will also be able to locate, describe and explain some of the reasons for the distribution of globally important physical and human geographical features including climate zones, deserts, tropical rain forests, earthquakes and the world's largest urban areas. Additionally they will also be able to identify, describe and explain the significance on a world map and globe of important lines of latitude and longitude, the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn together with the Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Greenwich Meridian and Time Zones. They will now demonstrate more detailed locational knowledge of the geographical features of the United Kingdom together with those of the other countries and locations around the world they study through their enquiries. In achieving the above pupils

show they understand and apply some specialised subject vocabulary and use effectively more complex techniques to gather, present and communicate geographical information, including digital technologies, inside and outside the classroom.

Upper Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Upper Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate that they can interpret a range of sources of geographical information including GIS and communicate their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways e.g. through oracy, maps, numerical and statistical techniques and writing at length. Through the study of physical features such as rivers and mountains pupils show that they understand how distinct landscapes are formed by natural processes and can make basic informed judgements about some of the challenges and benefits they present to humans. Pupils show, for example, through investigating the impact of volcanoes in Iceland, the rationale behind Fair Trade and role of National Parks in the United Kingdom that they are able to evaluate information from conflicting viewpoints and perspectives and make their own informed judgments and geographical decisions. In achieving this pupils use mostly specialised subject vocabulary and techniques to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

Progression in skills and knowledge

Whilst knowing more is an integral part of continuity and progression it is nevertheless just one element of it and merely sequencing subject content will not ensure on its own that our pupils become better geographers. To ensure continuity and progression for all pupils the curriculum is carefully organised EYFS - Year 6 to ensure that our pupil's knowledge and understanding of geography develops because:

- Expected subject outcomes in terms of developing as a young geographer increase in complexity and level of challenge as detailed above and are used as the starting point for all planning of content delivery and learning and teaching enquiries;
- There is increasing breadth and scale of study through the curriculum moving progressively from personal experiences to local, regional, national and global perspectives informed by the guidance of the National Curriculum;
- The curriculum becomes progressively more complex developing from discrete facts and bodies of information to conceptual awareness and generalised knowledge about more abstract ideas;
- The mastery and application of geographical tools and skills occurs in more precise and complex contexts;
- The focus of what pupils learn becomes gradually more issues based enabling them to explain links, patterns and processes and be more informed and mature in their thinking and self-reflection in terms of recognising the importance of attitudes and values about contested matters;

For further detail please refer to the St Margaret's Geography Progression of skills and knowledge document which can be found in the Google drive in the Geography leadership folder.

--

Geography Curriculum map

Please refer to the St Margaret's Geography Curriculum map document which can be found in the Google drive Geography leadership folder.

Examples of Geography planning

For examples of long term, medium term, short term planning, collectables and resources in our school please refer to the Google drive folders.

Policy review date

September 2025