



Geography Policy 2023 - 2024

St. Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

Intent

A high-quality Geography education should inspire a sense of awe and wonder in the natural world. It should develop a solid sense of place and space: from their immediate locality through to comparative case studies of EU and non-EU locations. Pupils should gain 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, interconnected and change over time. Case studies, of increasing challenge as pupils progress through the key stages, then provide opportunities to synthesise prior learning through a range of key geographical themes.

Implementation

The Geography Curriculum at S.M.I.T.H is designed in line with the unique character of the school and the area it is located. Threaded through the curriculum, from Nursery through to Year Six, are curricular strands which run through the whole Geography Curriculum. They provide the basic 'grammar' for Geography and clearly defined progression or subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding. These strands are:

Locational Knowledge; Place Knowledge; Physical Geography and Processes; Human Geography; Natural Resources and Land Use; Sustainability; Mapping Skills; Weather and Climate; and Interdependence

Teaching and Learning

Locational knowledge: In EYFS, the children start to develop awareness of their locality (school, home, park). In KS1, awareness of the locality will be developed with a local area study and knowledge of the UK's countries, capital cities and the surrounding seas, then widening to continents, equatorial and polar regions. Widening the UK knowledge in Lower-KS2 with study of counties; vegetation belts and climate zones building on general learning in KS1. In Upper-KS2, biomes complete the understanding of climate and vegetation; deepening locating skills with time zones and latitude and longitude, locating using 6-figure grid references; and using historical maps in land use studies over time.

Place knowledge: In KS1 there will be a continual focus on our locality (Aigburth to Liverpool) to understand the geographical similarities & differences of the human and physical features of contrasting locations (Liverpool and Grasmere). Later in the key stage (Y2) these UK locations are contrasted with a non-European country (Kenya – Nairobi; farms in the valleys of Mount Kenya) looking at types of settlements and ways people live/everyday life. LKS2 continue contrasting studies with Aigburth & UK counties (focus: leisure and recreation), wider European focus through a case study on settlement/land use (La Palma); later- contrasting our locality with Mediterranean and specifically Bologna, and land use comparisons of rural areas on outskirts of cities (Altcar/Hightown farming area/Bologna vineyards). UKS2 focuses on the Americas, deepening local knowledge and expanding European knowledge through comparative study. Case studies provide opportunities to synthesise prior learning through a range of key geographical themes.

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Physical Geography and Processes: EYFS/KS1 - develop firm understanding of defining features/sequencing of the seasons – local/UK focus. By the end of KS1, a Kenya focus study will link prior learning around weather, climate and farming – looking at food production, and consumption by UK. More complex physical processes are delivered in LKS2, complemented human interaction (floodplains). UKS2 builds on and complements learning done in LKS2 re. physical processes: wider understanding of erosion within a USA case study; and pulling together the issues of farming, trade and human-physical interaction with the Y6 global trade topic.

Human Geography: The key concepts of settlement and land use are continually revisited. EYFS begin with identifying human features in their immediate and local area; KS1 embed firm understanding categorising human and physical features; later in KS1, human geography is explored through settlements, land use and farming – comparing, contrasting human geographical features; Lower-KS2 builds on this through case studies in La Palma and Bologna (Mediterranean), tourism in the UK. In Upper-KS2, additional themes including population, economic activity and trade broaden the knowledge of human geography, as well as the adaptability to different challenges – population density, pollution, climate extremes and changes.

Natural resources and land use: In KS1 the children are introduced to locations which are not cities, in Y2 a rural, farming settlement in Cumbria and later the hugely important agricultural sector producing enormous amounts of food in Kenya. This is complemented with Las Palmas case study including banana farming in Y3. Vegetation belts and Mediterranean case study in Y4 widens understanding. Green energy study in Y5 considers the use of natural resources for renewable energy, with Y6 studying some of the less desirable elements of natural resource mining and inequalities around fair trading.

Sustainability: To complement the SMSC curriculum, there is a deliberate focus on the environment and social responsibility. In KS1, this begins with the children developing an appreciation for their locality, enjoying the positives and acknowledging areas for improvement. Y2 begin to look at the importance of climate and reliability of hot/cold location. LKS2 look at how significant geographical processes influence human activity in those areas. UKS2 widen the understanding further by observing and understanding environmental issues caused by human behaviour.

Mapping skills: EYFS introduce the children to zoomed in aerial views of the local area, identifying school, home and some immediate features. KS1 progress to reading aerial views (local area landmarks focus), further progressing to use 4-point compass points and 4-figure grid references by the end of Y2. LKS2 progresses to 8-point compass points, using a range of maps including topographical, embedding use of 4-figure grid references, measuring straight OS map distances, knowing and using more OS symbols, developing reading lines of latitude and longitude. By the end of UKS2, children can read 6-figure grid references; children should also be aim to be using the above skills with automaticity.

Weather and climate: In KS1 children will initially learn to observe and record local and national daily weather, by the end of Y2 possessing a simple understanding of 'climate' associated with the equator and the poles. In Lower-KS1, children will develop their understanding of climate through climate zones and vegetation belts, and the processes of the water cycle in the context of floodplains and the Mediterranean. In Upper-KS2, the children will learn how humans shape the natural world for their own purposes, harnessing green energy as well as natural resources, and balancing the need for these resources with the significant impact it has on many areas of the environment.

Interdependence: From EYFS, awareness of social cohesion is built through understanding and appreciation of the roles of people who help us. In KS1, the children identify key landmarks in their local settlement and ability to walk/travel to them easily and safely. LKS2 develops this with a case study on needed play facilities locally. Y2 and Y4 complement learning on dependence on overseas food production and the farming climates, as well as for attracting tourism. UKS2 focuses more on



global interdependence – impact of climate change and effects of mining or natural resources.

EYFS

Early Years explore geographical themes and content through the Understanding of the World strand of the EYFS curriculum. This involves guiding the children to develop 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.

Equal Opportunities

At St Michael in the Hamlet, 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. Support for specific individuals is considered and planned for, with separate steps taken to provide challenge for deepening learning.

Inclusion

All pupils are entitled to access the Geography curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs and we use a range of strategies in line with the school's inclusive ethos. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also 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 to help all children achieve in line with their potential. Opportunities for enrichment are used to offer a fully inclusive and engaging curriculum. Field visits are written as an integral part of each topic meaning off-site learning is always focussed and relevant.

Impact

Outcomes in Geography books evidence an engaging, relevant and challenging Geography curriculum and suitable progression of knowledge, skills and understanding. Prior learning is regularly reviewed through 'recall' activities. As an enquiry-based curriculum, the children showcase their learning by answering the focus question, applying their learning through writing and use of maps, diagrams etc. 'Sticky' knowledge is also assessed through a short knowledge-based assessment. A whole-school termly challenge, looking at natural geographical phenomena, is used to deepen the impact of the subject across the school. Comments and thoughts are collected from every class and used to demonstrate the sense of awe and wonder for the subject.

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:

- Learning walks, including live-learning questioning of children in class.
- Assessing learning against topic enquiry questions, at the end of usually six defined objectives.
- Providing effective feedback and opportunities for consolidation and deepening understanding.
- Book moderation and pupil voice help to ascertain knowledge and understanding from study, as well children's attitudes to Geography as a subject.

Reviewed: May 2024

Next review date: May 2025

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