



At St Mary's we champion every child to be the **best that they can be**. Our knowledge-led curriculum therefore endeavours to develop our children's **character**, **core skills**, **creativity** and sense of **community**.

Supported by our school's vision, ethos and position as a junior school, we believe that our specialist knowledge of the Key Stage 2 age range ensures **improving outcomes, opportunities and experiences for all our children**. To achieve this, we are aspirational for our pupils, instilling high expectations, the passion, perseverance and stamina to succeed.

Geography Policy

Ely St Mary's CofE Junior School

Written/reviewed by: Leah Mason

Date: 19th May 2021

Next review due by: May 2026

1. Introduction & Aims

Our Geography curriculum aims to provide opportunities for children to answer questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of place through a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, their place in it and our impact on it.

By the end of the key stage, children will learn about places globally, nationally and locally, applying progressive geographical vocabulary and map skills in the process.

1.1 Objectives

At Ely St Mary's we implement the National Curriculum for Geography 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.

"Championing every child to be the best that they can be"

Responsibility Excellence Spirituality Perseverance Energy Caring Tolerance

2. Procedures and practice

2.1 Teaching & Planning:

At St Mary's, we begin each Geography unit with a **challenge question** to promote **curiosity, research and discussion**. These questions also provide pupils with a context to apply their new learning, generating explanations and conclusions at the end of each unit based on findings and new subject knowledge.

Initially, the geographical focus takes on a **macro view of the world**, focusing on the continents, oceans, hemispheres and land masses. As the children progress through school on their learning journey, this macro view is refined and funnelled to focus on individual continents, countries, regions and specific geographical features such as rivers, mountains and volcanoes. This sequence equips pupils with a sound sense of location within the world first, so that any subsequent place knowledge can be **connected to the bigger, global picture**.

By the end of Year 6, children will have been exposed to the geography of their locality (Ely), surrounding region (UK and European countries), and contrasting locations within the wider world (North and South America, Polar Regions and India). The pupils' learning will not only develop their geographical knowledge, but also has great value in developing their understanding of the **worldwide community**: lifestyles, cultural traditions and international links e.g. trade.

2.2 Organisation:

Geography is taught as a discrete subject and is taught in a variety of ways across the school, sometimes in blocks of taught time (projects) or in short skills-based activities. Geography is also taught through fieldwork e.g. Educational Visits or walks around the local area. This approach enables staff and pupils to maximise the time and resources available to them to best effect.

A minimum of 3% curriculum time is allocated to History and Geography. Pupils will complete a minimum of 38 hours per year on these subjects, alternating History and Geography units each half term / across each school year. Pupils will therefore complete a minimum of 3 Geography units per year.

Children's work in Geography is recorded in pupils' Foundation Topic books. Where necessary, the Geography lead will collate examples of children's Geography work, including work on display, both for monitoring purposes and CPD.

2.3 Resources:

Geography specific resources are kept in the allocated cupboard in the Geography Leader's classroom. All classrooms have access to a large world map and smaller scale Ordnance Survey maps of the UK and the local area. Atlases are available for use as well as DigiMap for Schools.

2.4 Health and Safety:

When working with tools, equipment and materials, pupils are taught the appropriate health and safety procedures and understand the steps they should take to control risks.

At Ely St Mary's, the use of Geography specific equipment is supported by a Risk Assessment carried out by the class teachers delivering the relevant projects using the LGSS template. If any pupils are likely to cause injury to themselves or others, review and risk assess the pupils on an individual basis. Risk assessments should be checked by member of SLT and saved centrally on Sharepoint.

2.5 Equal opportunities:

Every child has the right to access the full Geography curriculum regardless of gender, race and ability.

Learning objectives, activities and adult support will be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils including those with SEND and higher attaining children. See both our SEND policy and our Most Able Policy.

Pupil Premium funding can also be allocated to facilitate disadvantaged pupils in accessing extracurricular opportunities and in subsidising enrichment trips, visits and experiences relating to Geography.

2.6 Assessment:

Assessment is based on a combination of teacher assessment and pupil self-evaluation in Geography. Feedback is offered verbally and through live marking/feedback during lessons. During a unit, teachers will document pupils' strengths and next steps to be addressed through further teacher planning and input – see the schools Feedback Policy.

Annually, staff will use the Upper and Lower Key Stage 2 progression grid to benchmark pupils against, recording each pupil's individual attainment level on Pupil Asset according to whether they are working towards/ at/ above the age-related expectation.

Both unit-based feedback and annual assessments inform teacher comments in children's end of year reports to parents.

Most able learners in Geography are recorded as 'exceeding' on Pupil Asset. These pupils are identified by and supported to develop a selection of the following characteristics:

- Understand concepts clearly; can apply this understanding to new situations to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions
- Understand geographical ideas and theories; apply them to real situations
- Communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word, in ways that are appropriate to task and audience
- Learn subject-specific vocabulary and use it accurately
- Reason, argue and think logically
- Able to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences
- Use and apply mathematical principles and formulae to solve geographical tasks and problems
- Identify their own geographical questions and sequence investigations
- Understand, and able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships
- Enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information
- Competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required
- Well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and life in different places
- Wide-ranging general knowledge about the world and topical issues
- Able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another
- Creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solutions

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation:

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the subject lead for Geography and Heads of Phase/Year.

The quality of Geography will be evaluated through lesson drop ins, pupil voice, work sampling.

The link Geography school governor will support the monitoring of this subject area at least annually (e.g. via our Governor Day).

3. Contribution of Geography to other subjects in the curriculum

3.1 STEAM

Geography plays an important role within the STEM curriculum. Throughout many of the CREST awards, the children are encouraged to consider geographical themes. For example, within the **Sustainable Solutions** topic, pupils are encouraged to consider the burning of fossil fuels and how this links to the rise in greenhouse gases and climate change. Similarly, within the **Stop The Spread** topic, pupils are involved in designing and building a hand washing device for a school in Kenya. These and other discovery units encourage children to draw on their geographical skills and knowledge as they explore a range of global issues through a STEM-based approach.

2021/22 all pupils will have the opportunity to achieve a Crest Award, SuperStar or Discovery Award, which will offer and inspire further opportunities for pupils to collaborate and apply STEAM-based knowledge, ideas and skills.

3.2 English

Geography lessons promote key English skills of reading and writing both naturally and explicitly. For example, skimming and scanning information and explanation texts. Pupils also have opportunities to revisit and consolidate written genres and the associated language and features across the Geography curriculum by writing non-chronological reports, persuasive texts and through discussions about topical world issues e.g. coastal erosion or renewable energy. Pupils are taught the meaning, the use and spelling of technical and specialist vocabulary, too.

Some Geography units are also inspired by children's books such as Lost and Found or The Great Kapok Tree.

3.3 Humanities

Geography lessons are designed to develop pupils' understanding and skills to make connections within and across year groups, to explain how Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time – whilst understanding our impact on the world and their place within it. History teaching is an integral part of their learning, shaping pupils' knowledge of when key events happened in the natural and human world.

3.4 PSHE

Geography activities are used to encourage pupils to recognise and value their own and other people's opinions, actions or decisions. Geography activities also help pupils to reflect on how these decisions affect or influence the environment and society. For example, when studying Alaska to consider the question 'Why is the polar bear in peril?' Or to consider 'What is the journey of our food to our plate?' Pupils are encouraged to recognise the need to consider the views of others and explore the opinions and views of people within a range of different cultures who live in a range of places across the world.

4. Concluding notes

4.1 Consultation

This policy and the Geography curriculum was written by Leah Mason and Andrew Hopper, leaders for Geography education, in consultation with:

- Teaching staff & LGB representatives – Professional Development Meeting February 2020
- Governors – Governor Day monitoring visit January 2020, subsequently February 2022 (virtually)

4.2 Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the subject leader responsible for Geography.

4.3 Links to other policies

- Full Geography Coverage Map and Progression of Skills can be found in the Ely St Mary's Curriculum Document here: <https://www.elystmarys.org.uk/web/overview/503308>
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Most Able Policy
- Feedback Policy

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