Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School

Geography Policy

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Philippians 4:9 'Whatever you have learnt, or received, or heard from me, or seen from me – put into practice.

Informed by the teachings of the Gospel, Our Lady of Hartley offers a rich, varied and inspiring curriculum that allows all children to reach their full potential. Community links are built into the curriculum to provide opportunities for broader educational skills that enhance children's understanding of real life experiences. Our engaging and purposeful curriculum means all learners are nurtured in God's love.

Our Lady of Hartley. Statement of Curriculum Intent.

Introduction

This document is a statement of the principles, aims and strategies for the teaching of geography at Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School.

Curriculum Intent

At Our Lady of Hartley, we believe that Geography is an important part of children's learning. It provides a means of exploring, appreciating and understanding the world in which we live and how it has evolved. Through Geography we explore the relationship between mankind and our planet and the interaction between living things and the natural environment. Geography 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.

Developing geographical skills is essential as children live in a world that will become increasingly accessible to them as they grow. With opportunities to travel and work in different cities and countries across the world, tomorrow's global citizens will benefit from an appreciation of the diversity all around us, at different scales and in different forms. In addition to learning to interpret geographical information e.g. in the form of maps, our aim is to develop children's ability to create their own lines of enquiry and to critically analyse sources of geographical information.

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.

Our intent is to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the aims and responsibilities for the learning and teaching of geography at Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School.

For teaching staff:

- 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.

For children:

- To develop a curiosity and love of learning through practical activity, investigation, exploration and discussion;
- To develop confidence in using an applying a range of geographical skills including map reading and the measurement of geographical features e.g. rainfall collected, air temperature.
- To ask pertinent geographical questions and develop lines of enquiry, particularly those involving an investigation into cause and effect.
- To consider the interaction of humankind and other living things with the physical environment both now and in the past.
- To develop an understanding of the impact of human activity on the Earth's ecological systems, key concepts such as sustainability and their own responsibilities in protecting the environment.

Parents and Carers

- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching geography.
- To attend and contribute to Parent Consultation Meetings.
- To support their children with geography activities requiring practice outside of normal school hours e.g. discussions about sustainability, visits to museums.
- To discuss their child's learning of geography with them and contribute to an ongoing dialogue about the world around us.
- To communicate and work with the school whenever further support is needed to develop their child's geographical skills and understanding.

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.

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 considering the different views and opinions people may have about the world around them. 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, for example the Grand Canyon.

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.

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 and Continuity

The majority of the children's learning in Geography takes place through our Mantle of the Expert work. Mantle of the Expert enables the children to learn in a context where their geographical knowledge and skills are acquired and used for a specific purpose – usually to complete a 'commission' issued to them by a 'client' in need of their expert help. On occasion, the children may 'step out' of their Mantle story to receive discrete teaching of a particular topic of geography. They will then return to the story in order to put their learning into action. Mantle of the Expert offers exciting and engaging opportunities to establish cross curricula links between Geography and other subjects such as history, mathematics and literacy, thereby strengthening the children's understanding of the interconnectedness within their learning. 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 curriculum planning

In planning for Geography, teachers consult the school's 'Geography content and progression of skills' document. This contains a sequence of subject-specific skills for Geography, aligned with the requirements of the National Curriculum. This document also frames some of the learning of geography in the context of the Mantle of the Expert 'commission' that provides an engaging and purposeful vehicle for the children's learning.

The 'Geography content and progression of skills' document provides a comprehensive guide to all of the skills and content that are required to be taught in each year group. In addition, it shows how these skills develop as a child progresses through the school and highlights some of the key links with previous learning in both geography and other curriculum subjects.

Medium and short term planning for each 'Mantle' is then stored alongside other subjects on our school network.

Assessment of progress and achievement

The impact of the geography curriculum is monitored by teachers in the following ways:

- Observation of the children demonstrating specific geographical skills.
- Assessment of the children's work in line with the school's feedback policy.
- Pupil discussions, both in-role as 'Experts' within their Mantle of the Expert commission and through peer discussions during discrete geography lessons.
- Pupil's own reflection and self-assessment of their learning.

Teachers record the children's acquisition of skills and knowledge on an assessment form at the end of each Mantle topic or unit of teaching.

The impact of the geography curriculum is monitored by the subject leader in the following ways:

- Monitoring of planning and children's work to ensure that progress is in line with the school's 'Geography content and progression of skills' document.
- Observation of lessons and discussions with children to ensure that the majority of geography learning is taking place within an engaging and enquiry-based framework of Mantle of the Expert.
- Monitoring of assessment recording sheets and discussion/target setting with teachers.

Principles of Teaching and Learning
Differentiation and SEN

We aim for all children to be able to access the geography curriculum and reach their full potential. We do this through careful planning and using a range of differentiated activities such as written, spoken and practical, through the 'Mantle of the Expert' approach to learning. Work for pupils will be delivered at an appropriate level through the use of a variety of different strategies including:

- Pupil directed tasks through whole class 'Mantle's'
- Teacher guided, open-ended tasks
- Clear objectives and interesting 'Mantle' topics to inspire pupil-led learning.

We recognise that planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding and competency as they move through the school.

Support for pupils with SEN follows the school policy. Individual children and small groups are supported in their learning in the following ways:

- Direct support from an adult (who is accepted by the 'Experts' as a member of their team during MofE topics).
- Support from another child (as colleague) within the Mantle commission
- Pre-learning of specific skills or knowledge prior to joining their team of 'Experts'.
- Use of learning-aids and resources as required.

Most able

Geography provides excellent opportunities to enhance the learning of gifted and talented pupils through the development of higher order thinking skills, creativity and self-expression. Pupils who show a particular talent for Geography will be identified by the class teacher. Additional challenge may be provided through the use of 'tensions' within the Mantle of the Expert approach to learning and by specific teacher-led and pupil-led activities.

Assessment and Recording

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 Feedback Policy.

Monitoring

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

Roles and Responsibilities

The subject leader works with the SLT to monitor quality of teaching and learning in Geography and supports teachers as required.

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, or leader, should plan the visit meticulously, with the pupils' safety and welfare paramount.