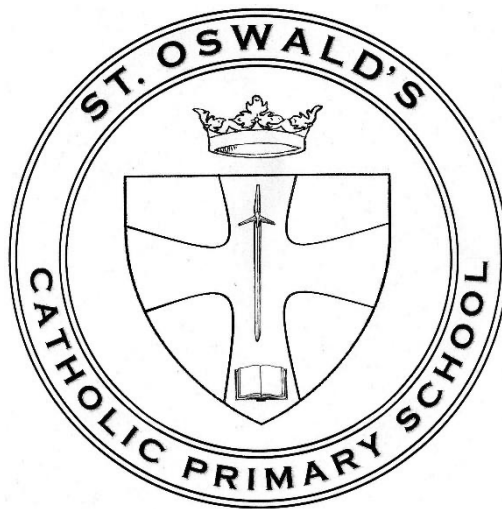


St Oswald's Catholic Primary School



Geography Policy 2025-2026

Approved by:	Approval date:	Renewal Date:
Standards Committee	September 2025	Autumn 2026

This Geography Policy is set within the context of the whole school aims and mission statement:

Together with Jesus,
We will Learn and Grow in Faith

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

Rationale

The school aims to:

- stimulate pupils' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface;
- foster pupils' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them;
- help pupils develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat;
- 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 ICT to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world;
- help pupils explore values and attitudes about complex issues;
- enable pupils to study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global;
- foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

Geography teaching aims to:

- Inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

- Equip pupils with 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.
- Develop a growing knowledge about the world to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments.
- Acquire geographical vocabulary, knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Enable children to learn and explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Objectives of Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage will focus on Understanding the World through exploring similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another.

Key Stage 1

Key Stage 1 pupils will focus on Locational knowledge, Place knowledge, Human and Physical Geography skills and fieldwork. Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They will 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.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas

Place knowledge

- understand 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

Human and physical geography

- 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
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
- key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather

- key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment

Key Stage 2

Key stage 2 will focus on Locational knowledge, Place knowledge, Human and Physical Geography and Geographical skills and where possible, fieldwork.

Locational knowledge

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- identify the position and significance of 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)

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America

Human and physical geography:

Describe and understand key aspects of:

- physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
- human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- 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.

Opening Worlds (See appendix for more details).

Continuity and progression

Long-term planning ensures that pupils meet new knowledge, gain new understanding and develop new skills appropriately. In addition, it ensures that pupils have sufficient opportunities to revisit this learning from time to time. Long-term planning gradually extends the content, for example by increasing the number of places and environments studied and through increasing depth of study (moving from simple, concrete ideas centred on our locality to increasingly complex and abstract processes, patterns and relationships). There is also a change in emphasis from local, small-scale studies to more distant, regional, national, continental and global scales.

Medium-term plans in years 5 and 6 encourage pupils to draw on a widening range of geographical skills and apply them selectively, accurately and independently. Progression in fieldwork is achieved by expecting pupils to increase their precision in recording data and use sophisticated methods of data analysis, for example, by using ICT.

Teaching and learning

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy in geography, 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; and link appropriately with the big question posed for each geography topic
- provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, puzzles and problem-solving;

- revisit prior learning each lesson so that children know more and remember more
- 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 and globes regularly in order to locate places being studied and make/use models to explore geographical patterns and processes;
- provide opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- encourage discussion so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- set high expectations and use National Curriculum age appropriate expectations 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 big questions, to determine the pupils' age appropriate expectations of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;
- expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports and accounts. Where appropriate, pupils make oral presentations of their work.

Teaching time

In order to achieve the objectives of the Geography Curriculum, the subject is taught for one hour every other week in Key Stage 1 (in rotation with History).

In Key Stage 2, Geography is taught as a separate subject once a week for an hour. Opening Worlds is the programme being used in Key Stage 2.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Geography is taught within a theme over a half term.

Organisation

In lessons, a variety of approaches will be used to ensure continuity and progression. Lessons will include a blend of whole class teaching, group work and individual work.

Learning activities may consist of:

- Group work
- Teacher led work/ power points
- Relevant discussion at class, group and individual level
- Independent work/ extended writing activities
- Mapping skills (using atlases, grid references, OS maps and symbols, Digimap, etc.
- Research activities (using reference books, atlases, globes, Google Maps, Google Earth, 360° virtual tours)
- A chance for groups to communicate findings in a variety of ways including the use of ICT
- Fieldwork, where possible

Within a class there will be a wide range of abilities, from those who are more able to those who have special educational needs. The class teacher will use the adaptive teaching approach to ensure all children in the class are appropriately challenged.

Planning

Geography planning is the responsibility of individual teachers and should be used to:

- Identify a 'big question'
- Set clear objectives
- Identify key vocabulary
- Ensure work is matched to pupil's abilities and interests
- Ensure progression, continuity and subject coverage throughout the school
- Lead to the answering of the 'big question' as an assessed piece of work

Medium term planning is created by teachers and monitored by the geography subject leader on a termly basis. Monitoring feedback is shared with senior management and is given to teaching staff so that the relevant changes can be made.

Teachers should try to implement cross curricular links of literacy and maths within Geography where it is possible. There should be evidence of extended writing tasks planned and taught in Geography lessons.

Assessment

Formative assessment will take place in geography within each lesson. Teachers will make a record of this when evaluating lesson plans.

Medium term planning should include a big question, which the children need to answer both before and after the topic has been taught. The children will be assessed based on their ability to answer the big question at the end of each topic. This assessment may be carried out as a synoptic task or extended writing task: such as a news report, recount, speech, information leaflet, tourist booklet etc.

Long term assessments will take place towards the end of the school year to assess and review pupil's progress and attainment. These assessments will be drawn from teacher assessment and medium-term plan assessments (from the big questions.) This will be recorded on Arbor. Teacher assessments will be analysed by the Geography Subject Lead.

Resources

The resources available include: reference books, textbooks, teacher prepared materials, pictures, photographs, maps and atlases, globes, large PVC maps of the world/Europe/UK and online sources such as Google Earth and Google Maps.

All classrooms should display a relevant map, according to the location they are studying. Atlases and a globe should also be readily available in classrooms.

Resources will be kept in the geography resource cupboard and sometimes in classrooms. Resources available in the geography cupboard will be checked regularly by the geography subject leader.

ICT

ICT will be used in various ways to support teaching and motivate pupils learning. ICT involves the computer, and audio-visual aids, CD-ROMs and DVD' and digital map referencing software. The school sets of laptops/iPads may be used to enhance lessons and enable children to find information from the internet and other programs to support their learning. An awareness of internet safety will be paramount on such occasions.

Display

Each classroom should have a Geography display with key geographical vocabulary taken from the vocabulary progression document. The display should be used as a working wall. Evidence of map work/ skills taught/ fieldwork could be displayed.

Geography displays should be regularly updated and relevant to the topic current being taught. The geography subject leader will carry out termly learning walks to monitor geography displays in classrooms/ shared areas.

Management of Geography

Role of the Subject leader

The role of the geography subject leader is to;

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in geography throughout the school.
- Support colleagues in the development of planning and assessment.
- Carry out termly monitoring of a selection of children's geography books and teacher's planning across the school
- Monitor progress in geography and advise the head teacher on action needed.
- Conduct work sampling, pupil voice, teacher feedback forms and moderation, regularly focusing on the different aspects of teaching and learning.
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for geography.
- Keep up to date with developments in geography education through attending courses and reviewing relevant information/ data and disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate.
- Liaising with staff about local fieldwork that could take place (based on topics being taught in year groups)

Appendix 1

Opening Worlds

Key Stage 2 will follow the Opening Worlds humanities programme to tackle two closely linked types of content, each dependent on the other, for History and Geography. Opening Worlds is a highly inclusive approach, which rapidly impacts on literacy through systematic introduction and revisiting of new vocabulary.

Lessons will be delivered following the ten practical teaching strategies and techniques to promote high-leverage teaching:

- Pre-teach key vocabulary
- Practise storytelling
- Don't ask one, ask five
- Pronounce new words in different contexts
- Pupils pronounce new vocabulary
- Retrieval practice
- Secure fluency
- Use core knowledge
- Secure pace
- Avoid guessing games

This policy will be reviewed and updated biannually.

Last reviewed by Curriculum & Standards Governors committee

Last reviewed by Mrs Townley – Geography subject lead, Autumn 2025