

St Margaret's C of E Primary School



Explore policy 2026

Reviewer: Ellie Joice

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At St. Margaret's CE Primary School, our Christian vision **Created to Shine** and our values of **Love** and **Aspire** guide how we create a safe, respectful and flourishing learning environment. Through our Geography curriculum, we inspire children to develop a sense of curiosity, wonder and responsibility for the world around them. We encourage pupils to recognise their place within local, national and global communities, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to become thoughtful, compassionate and informed citizens who care for God's creation.

INTENT

Aims

The Geography curriculum at St. Margaret's CE Primary School is designed in line with the National Curriculum to develop pupils' curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, ensuring that this interest remains with them for life. Through a carefully sequenced progression of learning in locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, geographical skills and fieldwork, pupils build secure geographical knowledge alongside the skills needed to investigate, interpret and communicate their understanding in a variety of ways. They learn to evaluate geographical ideas and concepts through the Big Ideas of Geography—place, space, scale, change, diversity and sustainability—enabling them to make meaningful connections between people, places and environments. Our curriculum develops confident, inquisitive and reflective young geographers who can ask thoughtful questions, analyse evidence and understand the complex relationships between human activity and the natural world.

Principles

Geography, taught through our **Explore** curriculum in the Summer term, supports the wider aims of both our school vision and the National Curriculum by providing a carefully sequenced, high-quality curriculum that enables every child to develop knowledge, technical skills, understanding and confidence. Learning is rooted in meaningful project questions that provide purpose and context across the curriculum: ***What does it mean to belong?, If the world could speak, what would it say?, How would you deal with a disaster?, How can actions eventually change the world?, Where did it all begin? and what should be left in beautiful places?*** These enquiry questions act as a stimulus and a thread that weaves Geography into wider learning, encouraging pupils to make meaningful links across subjects while deepening their understanding of the world. Teachers follow a clear progression of skills and knowledge so that pupils revisit and build upon prior learning as they move through the school. Lessons include explicit teaching, opportunities for enquiry and investigation, practical fieldwork where appropriate, and time for pupils to reflect upon and refine their understanding. Assessment is continuous and purposeful, enabling teachers to identify strengths and next steps while supporting pupils to become confident, courageous and articulate young geographers. Through this approach, Geography becomes a meaningful, empowering and inspiring part of school life, enabling every child to **SHINE**.

IMPLEMENTATION

Roles, Responsibilities and Resources

The Geography Subject Leader is responsible for promoting high-quality teaching and learning across the school. This includes monitoring the implementation of the curriculum, supporting colleagues with planning and assessment, maintaining and developing resources, and ensuring that the curriculum remains ambitious, inclusive and aligned with the National Curriculum. The Subject Leader also identifies professional development opportunities and evaluates the impact of Geography through lesson visits, pupil voice, scrutiny of work and assessment information.

Class teachers are responsible for delivering the Geography curriculum through the Explore projects, ensuring lessons follow the agreed progression of knowledge and skills and meet the needs of all learners. They create engaging learning experiences, make effective use of assessment to inform future teaching and provide opportunities for pupils to apply their geographical understanding across the curriculum.

The school provides a range of high-quality resources to support learning, including maps, atlases, globes, digital mapping technology, aerial photographs, fieldwork equipment and carefully selected texts and artefacts. Resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they are relevant, accurate and reflect a diverse range of places, people and environments.

Organisation

Geography is taught through the **Explore** curriculum during the Summer Term. Each year group undertakes a carefully planned geographical enquiry built around a project question that provides purpose and context for learning. The curriculum has been carefully sequenced so that pupils develop geographical understanding progressively from their immediate locality to national and global perspectives, revisiting key concepts whilst building increasing depth of knowledge and understanding.

The Geography curriculum follows this progression:

- **Year 1:** A local study of **Angmering Village**, introducing pupils to their immediate environment through observations, simple maps and an understanding of what makes a place special.
- **Year 2:** The world's **rainforests**, with a focus on **Brazil**, comparing environments and exploring climate, biodiversity and human interaction with the natural world.
- **Year 3: Volcanoes and earthquakes**, studying tectonic activity through case studies of **Indonesia** and **Japan**, developing understanding of physical geography and natural hazards.
- **Year 4: Rivers and erosion**, including the study of significant European rivers, investigating how rivers shape landscapes and influence settlements.
- **Year 5: Cities and how they developed**, comparing **London, New York and Brasília**, exploring urban growth, settlement, land use and the relationship between people and place.
- **Year 6: National Parks**, studying our local National Park alongside examples from

around the world, considering conservation, sustainability and balancing environmental protection with human activity.

Learning is organised through enquiry, discussion, fieldwork and investigation, allowing pupils to apply their knowledge to increasingly complex geographical questions whilst developing confidence as independent learners.

Planning and content

Planning is informed by the National Curriculum and follows the school's carefully sequenced progression of substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills. Each Explore project builds upon previous learning so that pupils revisit important geographical concepts whilst broadening their understanding of different places, environments and global issues.

Every unit is centred around a meaningful enquiry question, encouraging pupils to investigate, analyse evidence and communicate informed conclusions. Lessons include explicit teaching of new knowledge, opportunities for practical enquiry, fieldwork where appropriate, map work, digital technologies and collaborative discussion. Vocabulary is carefully planned and revisited so that pupils develop increasingly precise geographical language throughout their primary education.

Teachers use ongoing formative assessment to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching and ensure pupils are secure before moving on. Retrieval activities are regularly incorporated to strengthen long-term memory and enable pupils to make meaningful links between previous and current learning.

Links with other subjects

Geography is an integral part of our broad and balanced curriculum and makes purposeful links with many other areas of learning. Through the Explore projects, pupils develop and apply knowledge across subjects, making learning more meaningful and coherent.

Links are made with English through reading, discussion and extended writing; Mathematics through data handling, scale, coordinates and map skills; Science through the study of weather, climate, ecosystems and environmental change; History through understanding how places have developed over time; Computing through digital mapping and research; and Art and Design through observational drawing and the interpretation of landscapes. Opportunities are also provided to explore themes within Religious Education, PSHE and Collective Worship, encouraging pupils to consider stewardship, sustainability, diversity and their responsibilities as global citizens in light of our Christian vision.

Knowledge and skills

The Geography curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure progression in both substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills from Year 1 to Year 6.

Pupils develop secure knowledge across the four strands of the National Curriculum: **locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, and geographical skills and fieldwork**. Beginning with the familiar environment of their local community,

pupils gradually expand their understanding to encompass the United Kingdom, Europe and the wider world through increasingly sophisticated geographical studies.

As they progress through the school, pupils learn to:

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital mapping confidently;
- carry out fieldwork, observations and data collection;
- interpret aerial photographs and a range of geographical sources;
- ask and answer geographical questions through enquiry;
- compare places and environments;
- understand interactions between physical and human geography; and
- communicate geographical ideas using appropriate vocabulary, maps, diagrams and written explanations.

Throughout every project, pupils explore the Big Ideas of Geography—**place, space, scale, change, diversity and sustainability**—allowing them to think critically about how people and environments influence one another and to develop as informed, responsible global citizens.

The big ideas of Geography are defined as follows:

Place

KS1: A place is somewhere we can go or see. It has physical features (e.g., hills, rivers, beaches) and human features

KS2: A place is a location with distinctive physical and human characteristics shaped by natural processes and human activity.

Space

KS1: Space is how things are arranged- where features are and how far apart they are.

KS2: Space refers to the arrangement of people, environments, and features.

Sustainability

KS1: Sustainability means looking after our world so it stays healthy.

KS2: Sustainability is about using resources responsibly so people today and in the future can live well.

Scale

KS1: Scale means how big or small something is.

KS2: Scale refers to the level at which geography is studied — local, regional, national, or global.

Diversity

KS1: Diversity means that people and places can be different.

KS2: Diversity refers to the variety of people, cultures, environments, and ways of life across the world.

Change

KS1: Change means things can become different over time.

KS2: Change refers to how places, environments, and communities develop over time due to physical processes (e.g., erosion, volcanoes, climate) and human actions (e.g., building, farming, transport).

Wider opportunities

Our Explore projects are enriched through meaningful, memorable experiences that deepen geographical understanding and enable children to express themselves, share their learning and celebrate their achievements. These experiences help pupils make connections between classroom learning and the real world whilst developing a greater appreciation of local, national and global environments.

Wherever possible, each year the group enhances its learning through visits, visitors and practical fieldwork linked directly to its geographical enquiry. These first-hand experiences enable pupils to observe geographical features, collect data, ask questions and apply their classroom learning in authentic contexts. Recent examples include **Year 1's visit to Angmering Village** to investigate the local area and **Year 6's fieldwork study at Highdown Hill**, where pupils explored landscape features and carried out geographical investigations.

The curriculum also encourages pupils to engage with current environmental issues, sustainability and stewardship, reflecting our Christian vision of **Created to Shine** by developing respect and care for God's world.

At the end of each Explore project, pupils participate in a **Celebration Exhibition**, where families are invited to view and celebrate the children's work. These showcases provide opportunities for pupils to present their geographical learning, explain their enquiries and reflect upon their achievements, promoting confidence, communication and pride in their learning.

Inclusion and Extension

At St. Margaret's CE Primary School, we believe that every child has the right to access a high-quality Geography education and to fulfil their potential. Learning is carefully adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, ensuring that everyone can participate, succeed and develop confidence as young geographers.

Teachers provide appropriate scaffolding, practical resources, visual prompts, vocabulary support and adult guidance where needed, whilst maintaining high expectations for all learners. Pupils with SEND receive appropriate adaptations to enable them to access the curriculum and demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways.

Appropriate challenge is provided through open-ended enquiry, higher-order questioning, independent research and opportunities to apply geographical thinking in unfamiliar contexts. Pupils who demonstrate particular strengths are encouraged to extend their learning through leadership opportunities, deeper investigation and wider reading.

Health and Safety

Health and safety is an integral part of the teaching of Geography, particularly during fieldwork and off-site visits. All educational visits are planned in accordance with the school's Educational Visits Policy and appropriate risk assessments are completed before activities take place.

Teachers ensure pupils understand how to behave safely when undertaking fieldwork, using equipment or working in unfamiliar environments. Appropriate supervision is maintained at all times, and staff ensure that activities are inclusive, well organised and accessible to all pupils. Where digital technologies or online mapping resources are used, pupils are expected to follow the school's Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies.

Through careful planning and clear expectations, pupils are able to participate safely and confidently in geographical learning both within and beyond the classroom.

IMPACT

Monitoring and evaluation

The impact of the Geography curriculum is monitored regularly to ensure that pupils develop secure geographical knowledge, disciplinary skills and a genuine curiosity about the world. Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through a range of monitoring activities, ensuring that the curriculum remains ambitious, inclusive and effectively implemented across the school.

The Geography Subject Leader has responsibility for leading, developing and promoting Geography throughout the school. This includes:

- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through lesson drop-ins, learning walks and professional dialogue;
- carrying out book scrutinies to evaluate progression, curriculum coverage and pupils' application of geographical knowledge and skills;
- gathering pupil voice to evaluate children's understanding, engagement and attitudes towards Geography;
- reviewing planning and assessment information to ensure consistency and progression across year groups;
- auditing and maintaining resources to support high-quality teaching;
- identifying priorities for development within the School Development Plan; and
- supporting colleagues through coaching, guidance and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The Subject Leader works alongside senior leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and identify areas for improvement. Staff are provided with ongoing CPD through staff meetings, subject updates, collaborative planning and the sharing of effective practice. Where appropriate, external training and local authority or trust networks are used to further develop subject knowledge and curriculum expertise.

Geography is accessible to every child through high-quality adaptive teaching and an inclusive curriculum. Teachers maintain high expectations for all pupils whilst providing appropriate support to enable every learner to succeed. This may include the use of visual

resources, practical activities, pre-teaching of vocabulary, scaffolded tasks, adapted questioning, additional adult support and carefully selected resources to meet individual needs. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are supported to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers, with adaptations made to remove barriers to learning whilst preserving the integrity of the curriculum.

Pupils who demonstrate particular aptitude or interest in Geography are challenged through deeper enquiry, independent research, leadership opportunities, higher-order questioning and opportunities to apply their knowledge in unfamiliar contexts. This ensures that all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential and embody our school value of **Aspire**.

The success of the curriculum is evident through pupils who can confidently use geographical vocabulary, apply their knowledge to unfamiliar situations, think critically about geographical issues and communicate informed opinions about the world around them. They demonstrate curiosity, resilience and respect for diverse places, people and environments, reflecting our Christian vision of **Created to Shine**.

Reporting to parents and governors

Parents and carers are kept informed of pupils' progress in Geography through annual written reports, parent consultation meetings and opportunities to celebrate learning throughout the year. Celebration Exhibitions at the end of each Explore project provide families with the opportunity to engage with pupils' geographical enquiries, view their work and recognise the progress they have made.

The Geography Subject Leader reports to senior leaders and governors on the effectiveness of the curriculum as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation cycle. Reports may include findings from monitoring activities, examples of pupils' work, assessment information, curriculum developments, enrichment opportunities and priorities for future improvement. This ensures governors are able to fulfil their strategic role in supporting and challenging the continued development of Geography across the school.

Through regular evaluation and strong subject leadership, we ensure that our Geography curriculum continues to inspire pupils to become knowledgeable, thoughtful and responsible global citizens who are equipped to understand and care for God's world, enabling every child to **SHINE**.