St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Geography Policy

2025 – 2026

Learn to Love: Love to Learn

Our Mission

Learn to Love: Love to Learn

At St. Bernadette's Catholic School, you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.

Intent, Implementation & Impact

Intent

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is a beacon of hope and a place that offers children an education rich in wonder and memorable experiences. Through our diverse and inspiring curriculum our children learn to love and love to learn. Our Geography curriculum is designed to develop children's curiosity and fascination about the world that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

Children investigate a range of places – both in Britain and abroad – to help develop their knowledge and understanding of the Earth's physical and human processes. We are committed to providing children with opportunities to investigate and make enquiries about their local area of Yardley, Birmingham so that they can develop of real sense of who they are, where they are from and what makes their local area unique and special. We also develop the children's ability to apply geographical skills to enable them to confidently communicate their findings and geographical understanding.

Through high quality teaching, we develop the following essential characteristics of geographers:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like, both in the UK and the wider world;
- A comprehensive understanding of the ways in which land use changes based on the people who inhabit it.

- An enquiring geographical mind that is able to ask and answer relevant questions.
- The ability to reach clear conclusions, explain, and present their findings.
- A range of fieldwork skills as well as other geographical aptitudes and techniques.
- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in secure knowledge and understanding about current issues in society and the environment;
- A genuine interest in the subject and a real sense of curiosity about the world.

Implementation

We believe that the delivery of the Geography curriculum is as important as its design. Therefore, subject leaders have implemented the following:

- A knowledge organiser that outlines knowledge and skills, which all children can access. These documents also provide a tool for teachers to evaluate against.
- A progression of skills document which ensures that skills are developed in a logical sequence.
- A cycle of lessons, which carefully plans for progression and depth. Key knowledge and skills are revisited and repeated in order to ensure that they are embedded within long-term memory and are always building on what they have learnt before.
- A series of CPD in order to ensure that staff have effective subject knowledge and are confident with delivering high quality geography lessons.

Teachers have implemented/ ensured the following:

- High expectations for all pupils.
- Quality teaching which enables all pupils to understand key geographical concepts/ vocabulary and embed them in long- term memory.
- The fluent application of geographical skills, with independence.
- Assessing understanding and addressing misconceptions.
- The delivery of planning is based on assessment of the children's knowledge and driven by the emerging ideas/needs of the class.

- Organisation of trips and visiting experts who will enhance the learning experience.

Impact

Our Geography Curriculum is broad, high quality and accessible to all. It has been carefully crafted to enable the progression of both knowledge and skills.

Children will acquire vital knowledge, skills and gain the cultural capital that they need for the next stage of their educational journey. We also believe that we are equipping them with the essential knowledge to enable them to become responsible and conscientious global citizens.

The Nature of Geography

The national curriculum for geography aims 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.

Catholic faith

Geography at St Bernadette's is taught in line with the National Curriculum, with a strong emphasis on fostering respect for people, places, cultures, and the environment. Pupils are encouraged to value the diversity of human and physical geography across the world and to approach their studies with curiosity, compassion, and a sense of shared responsibility. This supports the Catholic ethos of our school, where respect, co-operation, peace, and care for others are central.

All of God's creation is sacred and reflects something of who God is. In Geography, this belief is central to our teaching. We aim to help pupils develop a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of people and places and to recognise their responsibility in caring for the world around them. As Christians, we are called to be stewards of the Earth, and this responsibility is woven throughout our geography curriculum.

The thread of **'Care of God's Creation'** runs through each geography unit, linking directly to the Catholic Social Teaching principles of:

- **The Common Good** – helping children understand how geographic decisions impact local and global communities, and encouraging them to act in ways that promote justice and equality.
- **Stewardship** – teaching children about their role in caring for the Earth, including how human activity affects the environment and how we can act responsibly to protect it.

Through these principles, children develop their environmental awareness and a deeper understanding of their role in building a fairer, more sustainable world. Geography at St Bernadette's is not just about knowledge of the world, but about shaping thoughtful, responsible global citizens who live out Gospel values in everyday life.

Planning and coverage

At St Bernadette's, we have designed a bespoke Geography curriculum based on the National Curriculum 2014. In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, planning has been developed by the Topic Co-ordinators, ensuring a consistent, coherent,

and high-quality approach to geography teaching across the school. This guarantees that pupils within the same year group—and across year groups—experience equitable access to a broad and enriching geographical education.

Whole School Overviews provide a clear picture of the geographical topics taught in each year group, ensuring that all content is aligned with national expectations and builds sequentially year on year.

Medium Term Planning follows a consistent format and includes:

- Statutory National Curriculum objectives
- Identification of common misconceptions
- Key geographical vocabulary
- Key questions and prompts for exploration
- Geographical concepts and fieldwork skills
- Human and physical geography content
- Links to map work, locational knowledge, and global learning

A strong emphasis is placed on geographical enquiry—pupils are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions, collect and analyse data, interpret geographical sources such as maps, photographs, digital tools, and satellite imagery, and draw conclusions based on evidence. They learn to investigate a range of locations, both local and global, and to consider environmental issues and human impact with a sense of responsibility and care.

Locational and place knowledge are key strands of the curriculum. Pupils build a secure understanding of the world's continents, oceans, countries, and regions, and develop their ability to compare and contrast physical and human features. Fieldwork opportunities are embedded throughout the curriculum to help children apply their geographical skills in real-world contexts, enhancing their spatial awareness and sense of place.

Whole school planning in Geography is monitored by the Topic Co-ordinators to ensure high standards are consistently upheld. Monitoring focuses on the progression of geographical thinking, the use and understanding of subject-specific vocabulary, and the retention of key knowledge and skills. Regular reviews of

planning, teaching, and pupil outcomes ensure that our Geography curriculum remains rigorous, reflective of current best practice, and relevant to the diverse and changing world our pupils inhabit.

Organisation

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the Geography curriculum at St Bernadette's is built upon a topic-based system encompassing the key strands of locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, and geographical skills and fieldwork. It is composed of prescribed topics ranging from Year 1 to Year 6 and is structured as a spiral curriculum—one that allows pupils to revisit core geographical concepts and skills at progressively deeper levels. This approach prevents unnecessary repetition while ensuring that key knowledge and enquiry skills are regularly practised, deepened, and retained. Our goal is to provide a progressive, balanced, and broad geography curriculum that prepares pupils to understand the world around them, both locally and globally.

Our bespoke geography planning has been carefully designed to build on pupils' prior knowledge and to support the retention of core geographical knowledge and enquiry skills. Each unit includes prior learning checks and targeted flashbacks to help pupils connect previous learning with new content. Every lesson begins with three flashback activities focused on:

- Vocabulary
- Prior geographical learning
- Geographers, places, or case studies previously encountered

These activities serve several key purposes:

- Support the transfer of knowledge into pupils' long-term memory
- Act as a pre-teach mechanism for important concepts and subject-specific terminology
- Address misconceptions before they develop

- Enable more meaningful links between new and prior learning, enhancing comprehension as topics progress

At St Bernadette's, we believe that vocabulary plays a vital role in helping pupils to access and engage deeply with geographical concepts. As such, vocabulary development is placed at the forefront of our geography teaching. Each geography lesson includes:

- Dual coding of key terms (visuals + words)
- Partner talk opportunities to practise and apply new vocabulary

This consistent and research-informed approach helps pupils to build a strong foundation of geographical knowledge and language, enabling them to think critically, communicate confidently, and develop a secure understanding of the world in which they live.

Assessment

At the end of each geography unit, children complete a short pop quiz designed to assess their understanding and retention of key geographical knowledge. These quizzes help to consolidate learning and identify areas that may need further reinforcement.

The results of each quiz are recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, enabling staff to track individual and class progression over time. This data provides valuable insights into how well pupils are retaining geographical knowledge and grasping key concepts such as place, location, scale, and human-environment interaction.

Subject coordinators regularly monitor this information to ensure consistent progression across year groups and to identify any trends or gaps in learning. This process supports effective planning, targeted support, and ongoing refinement of the teaching and learning of geography across the school.

At the end of the year, three books from each class (one representing AA, A, and BA attainment levels) are kept as a record of pupils' work and progress in

geography. These serve as a valuable reference for moderation, curriculum review, and the celebration of pupils' learning journeys.

Reporting to parents

At St Bernadette's, we make use of BlueSky to celebrate and share the geographical learning experiences of our pupils with parents and the wider school community. In Geography, teachers are encouraged to regularly share updates on units, learning journeys, and pupil work. These updates can be found using **#stbernsgeography**.

This platform allows us to showcase:

- The places, environments, and geographical features pupils have been exploring
- Fieldwork activities and map-based investigations
- Enquiry questions and key lines of geographical investigation
- Pupils' reflections, comparisons of regions, data collection, and creative geographical responses

It also provides parents with a valuable opportunity to see what their children have been learning, encouraging continued conversations, celebration, and engagement with Geography at home.

Geography reports are included in the pupil's end-of-year topic reports, providing an overview of their progress, understanding, engagement, and development of geographical thinking and skills across the year.

Resources

The school provides a wide variety of geography resources, including key stage-specific atlases, globes, books, digital map services, and other digital learning tools. All of these play a vital role in delivering a rich, engaging, and high-quality geography curriculum that inspires curiosity and deepens understanding of the world.

A comprehensive record of available geography resources is accessible to all staff, ensuring materials are used effectively to support a wide range of geographical topics and learning experiences. These resources are carefully selected to align with the National Curriculum and are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure accuracy, quality, and relevance to current global and local issues.

Geography resources, such as maps, reference materials, and teaching aids, are clearly labelled and stored in the central geography cupboard. This allows for easy access and effective organisation, supporting staff in delivering consistent and well-resourced geography lessons throughout the school.

All children and staff are encouraged to care for and respect these resources to ensure they remain in good condition and accessible for future learners.

Equal opportunities

All geography experiences at St Bernadette's are planned with the school's commitment to equal opportunities firmly in mind. Geography is taught in a way that ensures equality for all pupils, regardless of gender, faith, background, or ability, and is fully aligned with St Bernadette's Equal Opportunity Policy.

All pupils are given equal access to the full geography curriculum, including practical learning experiences such as fieldwork, map work, data collection, and place-based studies. Where required, pupils with SEND are provided with additional support to enable them to fully engage with geography lessons. If participation in a specific lesson is not appropriate for a pupil due to reasons related to any protected characteristics, the content will be adapted to meet their needs, and alternative arrangements will be put in place, including additional support where necessary.

The school is also committed to challenging and extending more academically able pupils through enrichment opportunities. These may include independent research projects, critical thinking tasks, comparative studies, and extended enquiry work. Teachers ensure that geography provision is also adapted for children with English as an Additional Language, using visual aids, simplified language, and practical activities to ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible for all learners.

Revised by Topic Co-ordinators Z Boron & R Wayne

Revised May 2025