

# St. Paul's CE Primary School



## Geography Overview

***'Through the love of God, we protect our school community. Together we trust, hope, persevere and flourish on life's great adventures.'***

***"The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together."***

***Barack Obama***

### **Geography Rationale**

At St. Paul's CE Primary School, we aspire for the Geography curriculum to be planned and delivered in a dynamic, visual and active way. We implement this by ensuring that each Geography lesson builds on a breadth of skills. The four most fundamental being graphicacy, oracy, numeracy and literacy. We believe that these key components all play a pivotal role in equipping pupils with the geographical knowledge and skills required to become informed and active citizens in the 21st century.

The Geography curriculum is first introduced to pupils in Reception, through 'Understanding the World'. From Year 1 to Year 6 the scope of each unit increases, expanding from the pupils' local environment to the wider world. Place studies start local and increase in scale to regional, national and global, allowing for revisiting, developing and challenging ideas and concepts. At St Paul's every class is named after a borough in Bradford. As the pupils progress throughout each primary phase, they begin each academic year by conducting an 'Our Bradford' study on their class borough, which changes every year. This practice will in turn give pupils' a well-rounded and extensive knowledge of Bradford. We aim to give the children a rich and meaningful curriculum that positively influences their identity, sense of belonging and global citizenship.

### **Geography – Intent**

It is important that the Geography curriculum at St, Paul's CE is ambitious and personalised to each cohort of children. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively providing the necessary knowledge and skills for the pupils' future to empower them to take their role as informed and active citizens in the 21st century. Pupils' will be taught the geographical knowledge and skills that they can use in everyday life. Its emphasis not just on geographical knowledge but also on skills and concepts. The geography that makes up our world is fascinating and we hope to teach it in a way that evokes pupils' natural curiosity and leaves them with a thirst for more knowledge to help them flourish on life's great adventure. Our curriculum has the same challenging academic ambitions for all pupils. They all work from a shared starting point to answer the same key questions. Due to pupil's active participation in the design of the curriculum, we encourage the children to come up with their own key questions and tailor the units of work around these, making it a truly bespoke curriculum that meets our pupil's needs.

By providing a starting point accessible to all pupils, they can make their own progress along a geographical journey, some getting further than others. The progression sequence helps facilitate this as it extends geographical knowledge, understanding and thinking. Long term plans follow the progression sequence below.

- **Observe** (through fieldwork and use of photos, artefacts, maps, etc.)
- Acquire appropriate **geographical vocabulary**.
- Use the vocabulary through **geographical talk**.
- Use the vocabulary to **describe** (e.g. geographical features, photos and events).
- Use the vocabulary to **compare** (e.g. geographical features, places and events)
- Ask geographical **questions**.
- Give **reasons** for observations and answer questions.
- Give **explanations**.
- **Observe:** Use first-hand, pictures, videos and maps, using and developing visual literacy skills to acquire geographical vocabulary that is relevant and necessary.
- **Describe:** Demonstrate that the vocabulary has been acquired, using talk (then possibly annotating, labelling and writing).
- **Compare:** Identify similarities and differences.
- **Reason:** Give/suggest reasons for similarities and differences identified.
- **Explain:** Explain a higher level or in more depth than 'give/suggest' reasons'.
- **Answer key questions:** To what level can the pupil answer the key questions? In their answer are they describing, comparing, giving reasons, explaining, or posing more questions?

## **Geography – Implementation**

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that non-specialist teachers have the necessary aids to deepen their own subject knowledge, as we believe that the teacher's knowledge and understanding is pertinent in regards good outcomes for all pupils. We use the Rising Stars scheme of work to support the planning and delivery of the Geography curriculum. St Paul's has identified the core geographical knowledge and skills that the children need to succeed. Our bespoke curriculum uses a breadth of teaching approaches, appropriate to the content and the desired learning outcomes are used to engage all pupils and enable them to not just acquire knowledge but to apply it in meaningful contexts. Appropriate discussion is recommended as a means of checking pupils' geographical learning systematically, identifying misconceptions and providing immediate feedback. Questions and tasks to stretch and challenge the most able pupils are incorporated where appropriate. The Rising Stars scheme of work is an excellent starting point. However, each teacher adapts it, breaks it down and adds in lessons so that pupils can deepen their newfound knowledge and skills within a relevant context.

Revisiting ideas and concepts in different, more challenging, contexts in later units, using varied assessments and the inclusion of quizzes are all designed to help pupils remember content and integrate new knowledge into their evolving conceptual framework. Pupils working above expectations are expected to undertake activities with greater independence and to be provided with some opportunities to make choices on how they learn and can communicate their knowledge.

Quality resources and materials are provided online to support the geography curriculum and are sequenced towards the accumulation of skills, knowledge and understanding pupils' futures. There is emphasis on visual literacy in the use of questioning of these resources, as geography is essentially a visual subject. The focus throughout is on contextualised geography, using real, named, localities and environments which can be located on appropriate maps, and avoiding stereotypes. Illustration of the variation in features (not all cliffs are white like those at Dover) is given wherever possible to overcome this.

Visual literacy is important; it has been referred to as 'graphicacy'. Graphicacy is the pictorial communication of spatial information. It is a life skill needed to understand maps, diagrams (such as flat-pack furniture assembly, car maintenance, electrical wiring and plumbing) and photographs (such as choosing a holiday destination or clothing from a catalogue) that features too little in the primary curriculum. To support pupils with the development of this skill, Geography working walls have a variety of relevant pictures, maps and diagrams, which are frequently changed.

An enquiry approach is used as a shared experience, with key and supplementary questions, to encourage curiosity, geographical thinking, exploration and research, and to combine relevant knowledge with skills. This mitigates against a didactic approach and encourages teaching and learning to become a joint pupil / teacher adventure. Pupils will often discover that some of the questions have more than one answer, some of which are better than others. This is particularly true when environmental issues are discussed, and experts propose different solutions. Pupils can explore how 'real world' decisions are made.

## **Impact**

The impact of St Paul's. CE Geography curriculum is evidenced through the pupils' use and understanding of the identified geographical vocabulary and their association of with relevant images of features. It is evidenced by the use and outcomes of the varied activities, assessments and quizzes provided.

It is also demonstrated by the pupils' ability to show progress along the 'observe, use geographical vocabulary to describe, compare, given reasons and explain what they are learning about' sequence, and in their acquisition, application and transferability of geographical skills.

In particular, it is evidenced by the pupils' ability, willingness and confidence in addressing each unit's key question, giving an ability-indicative response focusing on geographical vocabulary, skill and concepts.