

Geography at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



Geography Curriculum Rationale 2023

At OLA we are geographers! We want our children to love geography. We want them to have no limits to what their ambitions are and grow up wanting to be cartographers, town planners, conservationists or weather forecasters. We want them to embody our core values. We all believe that: “if you believe you will achieve and succeed”. The geography curriculum has been carefully crafted so that our children develop their geographical capital. We want our children to remember their geography lessons in our school, to cherish these memories and embrace the geographic opportunities they are presented with! Bringing geography alive is important at OLA Community Primary School.

Curriculum Intent

The geography curriculum promotes curiosity and a love and thirst for learning. It is ambitious and empowers our children to become independent and resilient – like all curriculum areas.

We want to equip them with not only the minimum statutory requirements of the geography National Curriculum but to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We want our children to use the vibrancy of our great city to learn from other cultures, respect diversity, co-operate with one another and appreciate what they have. We achieve this with British Values and our mission statement placed at the heart of everything we do. This often feeds into the geography curriculum. We enrich their time in our school with memorable, unforgettable experiences and provide opportunities which are normally out of reach – this piques their interests and passions. Examples include Liverpool City Sightseeing Tours to look at our famous local landmarks, visits to National Trust Parks that included activities such as orienteering. Examples of such sites include Formby Squirrel Reserve, Croxteth Hall, Speke Hall, Martin Mere, Eyrdig House. In the Early Years and KS1 pupils thoroughly enjoy walks in their locality enabling them to enhance their locational awareness and begin using their geographical skills and make first-hand observations of both the physical and human features within their locality. Pupils also enjoy studying seasonal changes and weather patterns and have made their own rain gauges to record rainfall in our area.

Curriculum Implementation

The geography curriculum has been carefully built and the learning opportunities and assessment milestones for each year group crafted to ensure progression and repetition in terms of embedding key learning, knowledge and skills. We believe that our pupils need to be actively involved in making sense of their learning and therefore an enquiry approach was implemented, encouraging higher-order thinking and allowing our children to explore in a way that is meaningful to them. Within each year group, geography strands are revisited in a progressive manner.

Geography subject specific characteristics, which we expect the children to demonstrate, have been developed and shared with all stakeholders. These characteristics underpin all work in geography and form a focal point for display areas and provide a common subject specific vocabulary for staff and pupils. These characteristics are:

- **An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like.**
- **An excellent understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected and how much human and physical environments are interrelated.**
- **An extensive base of geographical knowledge and vocabulary.**
- **Fluency in complex, geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques.**
- **The ability to reach clear conclusions and develop a reasoned argument to explain findings.**
- **Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity as shown in interpretations and representations of the subject matter.**
- **Highly developed and frequently utilised fieldwork and other geographical skills and techniques.**
- **A passion for and commitment to the subject, and a real sense of curiosity to find out about the world and the people who live there.**
- **The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment.**

We empower our staff to organise their own year group curriculums under the guidance of our subject leaders. Teachers are best placed to make these judgements. Staff develop year group specific long-term curriculum maps which identify when the different subjects and topics will be taught across the academic year. The vast majority of subjects are taught discretely but staff make meaningful links across subjects. They link prior knowledge to new learning to deepen children's learning. Our children are taught the right, connected knowledge.

Our short-term plans are produced on a weekly and daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each lesson, identifying engaging activities and resources which will be used to achieve them.

We encourage staff to teach a weekly geography lesson every other half term. This helps to ensure sufficient time is allocated to geography and that geographic subject matter can be revisited frequently. We believe that by crafting our curriculum this way, we improve the potential for our children to retain what they have been taught, to alter their long-term memory and thus improve the rates of progress they make.

Curriculum Impact

We use both formative and summative assessment information in every geography lesson. Staff use this information to inform their short-term planning and short-term interventions. This helps us provide the best possible support for all of our pupils, including the more able. The assessment milestones for each phase have been carefully mapped out and further broken down for each year group. This means that skills in geography are progressive and build year on year.

Our staff use geography formative assessment grids to systematically assess what the children know as the topic progresses and inform their future planning. These formative assessment grids then inform summative assessment judgements for each topic.

Assessment information is collected frequently and analysed as part of our monitoring cycle. This process provides an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education in geography. A comprehensive monitoring cycle is developed at the beginning of each academic year. This identifies when monitoring is undertaken. Monitoring in geography includes: book scrutinies, lesson observations and/or learning walks, pupil/parent and/or staff voice.

All of this information is gathered and reviewed. It is used to inform further curriculum developments and provision is adapted accordingly.

At OLA Primary School, we are GEOGRAPHERS!