



## SSMJ POLICY FOR Geography

---

*Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.*

Written by A. Russell

Role Geography Subject Leader

Date policy agreed 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

Reviewed and Updated 21<sup>st</sup> September 2025

Date to be reviewed 21<sup>st</sup> September 2028 or earlier if required

*“Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.”*

### **Geography Policy**

## Contents

1. The Purpose of Study in Geography
2. Aims
3. Subject Statement (Intent, Implementation and Impact)
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Assessment
6. Planning and Resources
7. Organisation
8. EYFS
9. KS1 and KS2
10. Field work
11. Equal Opportunities
12. Inclusion
13. Role of the Subject Leader
14. Online Safety
15. Parents

The Purpose of studying Geography:

At SSMJ we follow the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Geography. Our Geography topics consider the children's faith, which is at the heart of our curriculum, their interests, as well as the context of the local area. The Geography curriculum at SSMJ is carefully planned and structured to ensure that current learning is linked to previous learning and that the school's approaches are informed by current pedagogy. The curriculum ensures key skills are developed and embedded. This ensures children learn more and remember more.

Aims:

In line with the national curriculum 2014, the curriculum at SSMJ 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.

Intent:

Geography is held in high regard at SSMJ. The teaching of Geography allows children to appreciate, understand and utilise the diverse culture, history and geography of our unique environment, which celebrates the schools' own geography and the context of the local area. The Geography curriculum at SSMJ makes full use of resources within the immediate and wider local area, including the school field and garden, Clitheroe, local rivers and recycling centres. This enables children to develop a deep understanding of the rich Geography of their locality. The curriculum takes into account recent news events to encourage children to become more knowledgeable about God's world. The Geography curriculum is at the centre as it looks closely with our faith and ensuring we take care and responsibility for God's world.

Implementation:

Geography is taught in blocks throughout the year, so that children achieve depth in their learning. Teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each topic and consideration has been given to ensure progression across topics throughout each year group across the school. (See whole school Geography

progression document.) This ensures key skills are continuously embedded and developed. By the end of year 6, children will have a knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Cross curricular outcomes in Geography are specifically planned for with strong links between the Science curriculum, English, Maths, Art, PSHE, R.E, Forest School and ICT. Opportunities throughout the year are linked specifically to climate change for example Laudato Si' week (May). There are two pupil voice groups (Eco Warriors and Laudato Si') that are closely linked to our Geography topics and children take part in different activities throughout the year linked to the work of these two groups.

Where possible teachers use texts to support their Geography study and use the website Geographical Association to support their planning. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use computing in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in applied geographical activities, for example research of a local environmental problem, or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue such as Climate Change and Laudato Si'.

Each year, we revisit Laudato Si' to encourage children to consider how we can look after God's creation. For we believe

'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.'

Psalm 24:1.

Geography also actively promotes speaking and listening skills. Teachers are encouraged to use discussion, drama and role play to explore Geographical issues. At the end of a Geography unit children answer the line of enquiry through a piece of writing. This could include presenting a report back to the rest of the class.

The local area is also fully utilised to achieve the desired outcomes with extensive opportunities for learning outside the classroom. This includes fieldwork in the school grounds including; observing the weather and measuring rainfall and observing the ever changing Clitheroe with new housing developments. Within our knowledge-rich approach, there is a strong emphasis on people and the community of our local area.

When appropriate teachers plan an 'Around the World Week' where the children will investigate and learn about another country. This week further promotes looking at and creating maps, learning about other cultures, trying world foods and investigating and researching famous artists/ sculptors from that country before creating their own. It celebrates and appreciates diversity and promotes our social, moral and cultural values.

Planning is in line with the national curriculum. Teachers' lesson design is informed by national agencies e.g. through the school's membership of the Geography Association.

### Additional Provision

Consideration is given to provision for our most able children as well as support for SEND children in line with the school's commitment to inclusion. SSMJ follow that 5 a day policy (EEF) to ensure SEND pupils are given high priority. At SSMJ we appreciate each child for their individuality and understand teaching and learning in Geography may need to be adapted to suit those individual needs.

### Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) follows the Early Years Curriculum 2025 which aims for all children in reception to have an 'Understanding of the World; People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World' by the end of the academic year. Children develop and enhance their skills and knowledge throughout the year building on prior learning each time an element is revisited. The EYFS overview of the curriculum takes into account the local area and

making the most of those resources so children are firmly grounded within their local community.

### Impact

Outcomes in Geography books evidence a broad and balanced Geography curriculum and demonstrate the children's acquisition of identified key knowledge.

Children begin a new topic with a quiz or KWL grid to identify what children already know. The children are given an enquiry question which covers the whole unit of work. They have an opportunity to raise questions about what they would like to find out about to help them answer the enquiry question. They then review the agreed sub question and are actively encouraged to identify their own target areas, with support from their teachers. Children also record what they have learned comparative to their starting points at the end of every topic.

Emphasis is placed on analytical thinking and questioning which helps pupil's curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Through this study, pupils learn to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Our Geography curriculum also engages members of the community in children's learning and provides positive role models from the community for children to learn from.

### Teaching and Learning

Across the whole school, there are four key geographical learning strands that the children will explore over the course of their education at SSMJ: (See Geography overview in appendices)

Locational knowledge

Place knowledge

Human and physical geography

Geographical skills and fieldwork

As pupils develop these skills in a range of contexts, so too will they develop the ability to be independent learners, using the key geographical skills they

have gained to have a deeper understanding about the world and the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Learning from these strands helps children to foster an enthusiasm and sense of curiosity about the world, encouraging pupils in their first steps towards being life-long learners.

The learning intention for each lesson is taken from the national curriculum 2014 and children are guided towards this within each lesson through the use of a success criteria. Teaching and learning in Geography is supported by a variety of resources, including BBC Primary Geography, National Geographic kids, Royal Geographical society, Lancashire County Council's Key learning, End of Year Expectations and the Geography Association's online platform. Outdoor learning/ field work is planned for throughout the school and programmes of work are embedded with key knowledge, which itself has been mapped, along with key skills, to support affective assessment and ensure progression across the school. Where children are taught in mixed age classes the teaching and learning covers the national curriculum requirements for their year group and key stage.

Assessment:

The National Curriculum states that:

'By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant (Geography) programme of study.'

Children's attainment is assessed and recorded at the end of each year using the Lancashire end of Year Expectations. This is used in conjunction with the Lancashire Key Learning document (progression in knowledge, skills and understanding.)

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Key geographical knowledge is taught to enable and promote the development of children's locational and place knowledge, knowledge of physical and human features of the world, enquiry and field work skills.

Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

Monitoring and observation;

Differentiation;

Quality questioning

## Providing effective feedback

### Assessment

It is the subject leader's role to keep a portfolio of evidence.

(See Assessment policy for more details.)

Within EYFS staff conduct Teacher Assessments to map out children's skills using the guidance from Development Matters 2023 and Birth to Five Matters. Gaps in learning are consistently identified and targeted through 1:1 or small group interventions which ensures children have firm foundations in Geography and children's individual needs are addressed.

### Planning and Resources:

Existing Geography resources, including Geography boxes, are stored centrally and are organised into topic themes. The library contains a good supply of Geography books to support children's individual research.

Class teachers are encouraged to have a table for each of the Geography schemes of work where books and other resources such as maps, globes and atlases are displayed and easily accessible for children.

Teachers have identified the key knowledge that is being taught, as well as the skills that are being developed across each subject, and these are recorded on the Geography Overviews, Sequence of Learning and short term planning. Knowledge organisers allow children to have a 'Quick Reference' of key learning and allows key skills to be embedded. Key vocabulary and links to the school's context are also outlined. Cross curricular outcomes are also identified prior to teaching and these are evidenced through outcomes of work, as well as being stated explicitly in planning.

### Organisation:

At SSMJ, we follow a sequence of lessons within each unit which is blocked. This allows children to fully access the curriculum and receive sessions targeted for that cohort of children. The overviews ensure children have access to a wide range of topics to obtain a wider vision of the world they live in but the sequence of learning and short term planning allows for targeted teaching to ensure all children's needs are met and key skills are embedded.

### EYFS:

Early years explore geographical themes and content through the Understanding of the World strand of the EYFS curriculum. This involves guiding children to

make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities such as investigating their school environment, researching different environments eg chilly places, conducting simple fieldwork and drawing simple maps and plans. They will be able to explain similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and where appropriate maps. Children are taught about Laudato Si' and how to care for God's World and the parish community.

Within EYFS lessons are taught through a mixture of 1:1 session, small group sessions and whole class teaching. Children will also develop the skills and knowledge taught during these sessions through Continuous Provision activities ensuring learning is embedded. Where possible visits around the local community take place so the children have a secure knowledge of their local environment and how to take care of it.

KS1:

During Key Stage 1, children begin to develop an awareness of the world. Children start to ask and answer simple geographical questions. They explore maps locating the world's seven continents and five oceans as well as the four countries and capitals of the United Kingdom as well as surrounding seas. They are introduced to both human and physical features of the school's environment and then of Clitheroe and other areas of the UK. Through the use of atlas', books and ICT, children make observations about features of a contrasting Non-European country. Children use field work to explore the seasons, weather patterns and environmental issues. Children explore and identify seasonal and daily weather patterns and use simple compass directions. Children begin to create their own maps using a range of media including symbols.

KS2:

Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils should continue to develop their curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. Children will use geographical language to identify and explain key aspects of human and physical features and patterns and make links between people, places and environments. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their location and place knowledge. They should regularly address and devise geographical questions when investigating different places and environments. In upper Key stage 2 children should make predictions and test

simple hypotheses about events, places and geographical issues. Children will begin to understand how our knowledge of the world is constructed from a range of sources including ordinance survey maps, digital maps, globes and satellite images and continue to create their own.

## Fieldwork

Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching, and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry. All of the children will carry out investigations into the local environment including the study of housing developments, rivers and recycling sites. We also give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site.

## Equal Opportunities:

At SSMJ Primary school, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, special educational needs or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate affirming attitudes towards others. Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how deeper learning and further challenge can be provided for and demonstrated by children who require further challenge.

## Inclusion: (eg EAL/SEN/PPG/Provision for HA)

All pupils are entitled to access the Geography curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs. At SSMJ we follow the 5 a day principle (EEF) ensuring high quality teaching benefits children with SEND. (Explicit Instructions, Cognitive and metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible groupings and the use of technology) This supports and includes all children. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential.

Through the use of KWL and spider diagrams, teaching takes account of the children's own interests to ensure subject relevance to all individual learners.

Opportunities for enrichment are also fully utilised, to ensure a fully inclusive and engaging Geography curriculum and this is supported through a number of links with places of interest in the immediate and wider locality which engage the children further through practical learning activities.

The Role of the Subject Leader:

The Subject Leader's responsibilities are:

To ensure a high profile for the subject .

To support, guide and motivate teachers arranging CPD if needed.

To deliver training related to the subject and provide updates to SLT.

To keep up to date with current developments in the subject.

To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.

To budget for any new resources.

To model the teaching of Geography.

To lead colleagues in creating a stimulating learning environment for teaching and learning.

To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.

To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported, by SLT

To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of Geography

To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview.

To ensure that the Geography curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment.

To ensure that the Geography curriculum takes account of the school's context, promotes children's pride in the local area and provides access to positive role models from the local area to enhance the geography curriculum

To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.

## Online Safety

In all subjects, as a school, we ensure children are provided with the opportunity to become the best they can be. This is through a progressive curriculum that inspires and innovates students to experience Geography in its greatest sense. At SSMJ, we understand Online Safety is paramount in an ever changing world. We continue to ensure all children are safe in education and, following closely the Online Safety Policy. In Geography we ensure children are appropriate in their Conduct, Content, Contact and Commerce. This is also in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Educations Act.

## Parents (Including Homework):

We, at SSMJ, actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of Geography. The annual Around the World Week involves the whole school; it has helped to establish greater involvement with parents and the wider community to share their knowledge and expertise of our local area and the wider world. Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children with Geography based homework.

Geography homework tasks are well communicated and have a clear purpose, often providing children with the means to research and explore a subject to support their classroom work.