



SSMJ POLICY FOR Geography

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

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Role Geography Subject Leader

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another to be the best we can be.”*

Geography Policy

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1. Purpose of Study

At St Michael & St John's RC Primary School, Geography enables pupils to explore, appreciate and understand God's world. Through a carefully sequenced, enquiry-led curriculum, pupils learn about diverse places, people and environments, and develop the knowledge and skills needed to make sense of the world around them. Our curriculum reflects our Catholic values of **aspiration, love, respect, courage and unity**, encouraging children to act as responsible stewards of creation.

We follow the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Geography, enriched by the unique context of our local area and the interests and lived experiences of our children.

2. Aims

In line with the National Curriculum, we aim for all pupils to:

- Develop **locational knowledge** of globally significant places, including their physical and human characteristics.
- Understand **key geographical processes** and how they create variation and change over time.
- Become competent in **geographical skills**, including fieldwork, data collection, mapwork, digital mapping and GIS.
- Communicate geographical understanding confidently through **oracy**, maps, diagrams, numerical data and extended writing.
- Build curiosity, critical thinking and a lifelong interest in the world and its people.

3. Curriculum Intent

Geography is highly valued at SSMJ. Our curriculum:

- Celebrates the rich geography of our locality, including Clitheroe, the Ribble Valley, local rivers, recycling centres, and the ever-changing built environment.
- Promotes stewardship of God's creation, with explicit links to **Laudato Si'**, climate change and environmental responsibility.
- Is enquiry-driven: each unit centres on a **big question** that pupils investigate through practical fieldwork, research, discussion and analysis.

- Prioritises **vocabulary development** and **oracy**, enabling pupils to articulate geographical ideas clearly and confidently.
- Is trauma-informed, ensuring emotional safety, predictable routines, relational practice and inclusive access for all learners.
- Builds progression from EYFS to Year 6 through carefully mapped knowledge, skills and concepts.

4. Implementation

Curriculum Structure

Geography is taught in blocks across the year to allow depth of study. Each unit includes:

- A **big enquiry question**
- Key vocabulary
- A knowledge organiser
- Fieldwork opportunities
- Oracy structures (discussion, debate, drama, presentations)
- A final outcome answering the enquiry question

Teachers use the **Geography Progression Document** to ensure continuity and progression.

Teaching Approaches

Teaching is practical, engaging and child-centred. Lessons include:

- Fieldwork in the school grounds and wider local area
- Use of maps, atlases, globes, digital mapping and aerial photographs
- Problem-solving and real-world investigations
- Opportunities to explore current geographical issues (e.g., climate change, natural disasters, sustainability)
- Cross-curricular links with Science, English, Maths, Art, PSHE, R.E. and ICT
- High-quality texts to support geographical learning
- Purposeful use of technology to enhance understanding

Faith and Stewardship

Each year, pupils revisit **Laudato Si'**, reflecting on how we care for God's creation. Eco Warriors and Laudato Si' pupil groups enrich learning through action, advocacy and community involvement.

5. EYFS

In EYFS, Geography is taught through *Understanding the World*. Children:

- Explore their school and local environment
- Investigate different places and climates
- Learn about people, cultures and communities
- Develop early map-making skills
- Engage in fieldwork through continuous provision
- Learn how to care for God's world and their parish community

Learning is practical, hands-on and rooted in children's interests.

6. Key Stage 1

Children begin to:

- Develop awareness of the world and their place within it
- Use maps to locate continents, oceans, and the countries of the UK
- Identify human and physical features in the school environment and Clitheroe
- Explore a contrasting non-European country
- Observe weather patterns and seasonal changes
- Use simple compass directions
- Create simple maps using symbols and basic keys
- Ask and answer simple geographical questions

7. Key Stage 2

Children deepen their understanding of:

- The UK, Europe, North and South America
- Human and physical processes (rivers, mountains, settlements, land use, climate zones, biomes)
- How people, places and environments are interconnected

- How geographical knowledge is constructed from maps, satellite images, digital tools and fieldwork
- How to devise and investigate geographical questions
- How to make predictions and test simple hypotheses
- How to communicate findings clearly through maps, diagrams, presentations and extended writing

8. Fieldwork

Fieldwork is integral to our curriculum. All pupils take part in:

- Local environmental investigations
- Weather observations and data collection
- Studies of rivers, housing developments and recycling sites
- Mapping and surveying the school grounds
- Recording and analysing geographical data

Fieldwork builds independence, curiosity and real-world understanding.

9. Inclusion & Equal Opportunities

SSMJ is committed to an inclusive, trauma-informed Geography curriculum. We:

- Follow the **EEF 5-a-day principles** (explicit instruction, scaffolding, cognitive strategies, flexible grouping, technology)
- Adapt teaching to meet individual needs (SEND, EAL, PPG, HA)
- Use KWL grids, spider diagrams and pupil voice to ensure relevance
- Provide enrichment opportunities for all learners
- Deploy additional adults effectively to support progress
- Ensure every child can access fieldwork and practical learning

10. Assessment

Assessment is continuous and purposeful. Teachers use:

- KWL grids
- Enquiry outcomes
- Vocabulary checks
- Fieldwork evidence
- Book monitoring
- Lancashire Key Learning and End of Year Expectations

- Observations, questioning and feedback
- EYFS Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters guidance

Children reflect on their learning and compare their end-of-unit understanding with their starting points.

11. Planning & Resources

- Geography resources are centrally stored and organised by topic.
- Classrooms include accessible maps, globes, atlases and texts.
- Knowledge organisers support vocabulary, key concepts and retrieval.
- Planning documents include clear progression, cross-curricular links and local context.
- Teachers use high-quality sources including BBC Primary Geography, National Geographic Kids, Royal Geographical Society and the Geography Association.

12. Role of the Subject Leader

The Geography Lead will:

- Champion the subject across school
- Support and motivate staff
- Provide CPD and updates
- Monitor planning, books and teaching
- Ensure progression of knowledge and skills
- Maintain high-quality resources
- Promote pride in the local area
- Ensure the curriculum benefits all pupils, including disadvantaged learners
- Keep up to date with current pedagogy and best practice
- Lead ongoing improvement and development

13. Online Safety

Geography teaching follows the school's Online Safety and Safeguarding Policies. Pupils are taught to use digital tools safely, with explicit reference to **Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce**.

14. Parents & Community

We value strong partnerships with families and the wider community. Parents support Geography learning through:

- Homework tasks with clear purpose
- Contributions to Around the World Week
- Sharing expertise about local and global places
- Supporting fieldwork and community projects

15. Review Cycle

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequency if required.