



# Geography Policy

**'Rise above the ordinary'**

**2025 onwards**



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DIOCESE OF  
SHEFFIELD  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST

# Geography Policy

## School Vision and Values

### Our Vision

We will work as a whole school community to support and deliver a high quality, nurturing and respectful learning environment that inspires all of our children to rise above the ordinary. Our school is committed to being an environment that is open to the spirituality of children.

We will encourage all children to understand and adapt positively as active citizens and courageous advocates – to participate and make a difference in the diverse world in which we live.

Through our high standards of teaching and personalised learning, within a broad and balanced ambitious curriculum, we prepare our learners to make a positive contribution towards society and enjoy future success.

### Our Mission “Rise above the Ordinary”

At St. Mary’s we provide a welcoming, safe and happy school where everyone is respected and listened to; a school where we take pride in ourselves and our achievements, enabling children to become confident and successful learners.

We aim to rise above the ordinary and promote excellence by providing a positive, inclusive environment for learning and growth. Inspired by our faith in God, and together, we aim for each child to become the best version of themselves in mind, body and spirit. Our Theological Rationale further encapsulates what we believe in.

Our geography curriculum is informed by the *Developing Experts* scheme, which supports a knowledge-rich, enquiry-based approach to geography. The scheme ensures clear progression in both substantive and disciplinary knowledge, enabling pupils to build a secure understanding of places, people and environments over time.



# St Mary's Vision for Geography

At St Mary's, geography is understood as a way of exploring and understanding God's wonderful creation: diverse, interconnected and rich in beauty, pattern and purpose. Every child is a unique individual, made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and therefore of infinite worth. Through geography, we seek to enable all pupils to flourish, develop curiosity and compassion, and recognise their role as responsible stewards of the world God has created (Genesis 2:15; Psalm 24:1).

Guided by our RISE values – Respect, Inspire, Support and Exceed – our geography curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and carefully sequenced so that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, can make strong progress from their starting points. Geography at St Mary's helps pupils develop a secure sense of place, an understanding of people and environments, and an appreciation of the interconnected nature of the world.

Our vision for our children:

- Respect the world God has created, developing a sense of awe and wonder for diverse places, environments and cultures, and understanding their responsibility to care for creation (Psalm 104:24–25).
- Be inspired to ask geographical questions, think critically about the world and use appropriate geographical vocabulary, skills and tools to explain their understanding, recognising that God equips them to learn and grow (Philippians 2:13).
- Be supported to develop resilience and confidence when exploring new ideas, interpreting information and making sense of complex global issues, learning from mistakes in a safe and nurturing environment and working collaboratively so that all can succeed (Philippians 3:14).
- Be challenged to exceed expectations by making meaningful connections between physical and human geography, across the wider curriculum and with real-life global issues, building cultural capital and understanding that all things are held together in Christ (Colossians 1:17).
- Develop strong geographical knowledge and skills as a secure foundation for enquiry, analysis and informed decision-making, enabling pupils to engage thoughtfully and responsibly with the world.

The *Developing Experts* scheme supports our aims by providing high-quality, well-sequenced units that promote deep understanding, rich vocabulary development and opportunities for geographical enquiry.

As a Christian community, we place high value on relationships, respecting the dignity of every learner and supporting one another through encouragement and collaboration (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Teaching and assessment are used purposefully to identify misconceptions, inform next steps and ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to succeed and exceed their own expectations.

Our vision is that every child will leave St Mary's as a confident, curious and responsible geographer who uses their God-given gifts wisely (1 Peter 4:10), equipped with the knowledge, skills and values needed to contribute positively to society and live as salt and light in the world (Matthew 5:13–16).

## Aims

Through the teaching of geography, we aim to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop a positive attitude towards geography, building curiosity, confidence and enjoyment in learning about the world.
- Acquire secure knowledge of places, physical and human geography, and key geographical concepts.
- Develop geographical skills, including map work, fieldwork, data interpretation and use of geographical vocabulary.
- Think critically and ask thoughtful questions about places, environments and global issues.
- Understand the relationships between people and the environment and the impact of human activity on the world.
- Make meaningful connections within geography and across the wider curriculum.
- Progress from their individual starting points, with high expectations for all pupils, including those with additional needs and those working at greater depth.
- Work collaboratively and respectfully, valuing different perspectives and developing strong communication skills.

Assessment is used effectively to identify misconceptions, inform planning and provide timely support or challenge so that all pupils can succeed and exceed expectations.

Through geography, we seek to inspire pupils to use their God-given talents wisely, developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to contribute positively to society and live out our Christian values.

## Why is Geography Important?

Geography is important because it helps children understand the world God has created and their place within it. At St Mary's, geography is valued as a subject that nurtures curiosity, compassion and responsibility.

Geography is important because it:

- **Develops understanding of the world**

Geography helps pupils learn about diverse places, landscapes, climates and cultures, fostering a sense of global awareness and respect.

- **Builds critical thinking and enquiry skills**

Pupils learn to ask questions, analyse information, interpret data and make informed judgments about complex global issues.

- **Supports learning across the curriculum**

Geography links closely with science, history, mathematics and computing, supporting skills such as data handling, observation and reasoning.

- **Promotes responsibility and stewardship**

Geography encourages pupils to consider environmental issues, sustainability and their responsibility to care for God's creation.

- **Builds cultural capital**

Understanding the world helps pupils engage confidently with current affairs, future learning and life beyond school.

- **Reflects the beauty and diversity of creation**

Within a Christian vision, geography reveals the richness, diversity and interconnectedness of God's world.

At St Mary's, geography is taught as an ambitious, inclusive and carefully structured subject that supports pupils' academic, social and spiritual development.

## How Geography is Taught at St Mary's

Geography at St Mary's is taught through a carefully sequenced curriculum from EYFS to Year 6, aligned with the National Curriculum. Knowledge and skills are built progressively to ensure pupils develop a secure understanding of places, concepts and geographical enquiry.

Topics are organised to develop strong substantive and disciplinary knowledge, with learning revisited over time to support long-term retention. Links are made within geography (physical, human and locational knowledge) and across the wider curriculum to support real-life understanding.

Geography is taught through regular, dedicated lessons, with opportunities for fieldwork, outdoor learning and enquiry-based activities where appropriate.

## **Planning**

Teachers plan geography lessons to include:

- Clear learning objectives linked to National Curriculum expectations
- Development of key geographical knowledge and vocabulary
- Opportunities for enquiry, reasoning and discussion
- Use of maps, images, data and first-hand experiences
- Appropriate challenge and support to ensure high expectations for all

Planning is informed by ongoing assessment and pupils' prior learning.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Geography teaching at St Mary's promotes curiosity, discussion and critical thinking. Teachers model geographical language, use high-quality resources and encourage pupils to explain and justify their ideas.

Learning is inclusive and ambitious. All pupils access the same core learning, supported through:

- Visuals, maps and models
- Targeted questioning and scaffolding
- Pre-teaching or intervention where necessary
- Additional challenge for pupils working at greater depth

Pupils with SEND are supported through appropriate differentiation and reasonable adjustments, ensuring equal access to learning

## **Resources**

A wide range of high-quality resources support geography teaching, including:

- Atlases, maps and globes
- Aerial photographs and satellite images
- Digital mapping tools and ICT
- Data sets, diagrams and fieldwork equipment
- Vocabulary displays and working walls

Resources are used consistently to support progression and independence.

# How We Check Progress in Geography

## Assessment Methods

Assessment in geography is ongoing and purposeful, including:

- Formative assessment through questioning, discussion and work scrutiny
- Feedback identifying strengths and next steps
- Pupil voice to evaluate understanding and attitudes
- Low-stakes quizzes to support retrieval
- Summative assessments to support teacher judgement

Assessment informs planning and ensures all pupils make progress from their starting points.

## Monitoring

Geography is monitored through:

- Book scrutiny
- Lesson visits and learning walks
- Pupil discussions
- Data and progress analysis discussed at pupil progress meetings

Monitoring is carried out by the Geography Subject Leader and senior leaders to inform development and professional learning.

## Reporting

Progress in geography is shared through:

- Ongoing feedback to pupils
- Termly and annual reports to parents
- Parent consultations

Reporting celebrates achievement while maintaining high expectations.

## How We Review Geography at St Mary's

The impact of the geography curriculum is measured by pupils' ability to:

- Retain and apply geographical knowledge and skills
- Think critically and ask meaningful questions
- Show curiosity, respect and responsibility for the world
- Make strong progress from starting points
- Be well prepared for the next stage of education

Evaluation draws on assessment data, monitoring evidence and pupil voice.

# Evaluation

## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Geography Subject Leader**

- Providing strategic leadership for geography
- Ensuring curriculum coverage and progression
- Monitoring teaching, learning and assessment
- Supporting staff development
- Keeping up to date with national developments

### **Class Teachers**

- Planning and delivering high-quality geography lessons
- Assessing progress and adapting teaching
- Providing feedback and support
- Maintaining high expectations

### **Senior Leaders**

- Monitoring standards and outcomes
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met
- Supporting subject leadership and professional development