



## Geography- The St. John's Approach

**Geography at St. John's builds on children's natural instincts to explore and look after the world around them, enabling them to flourish within and beyond our school.**



### Vision and Values

At St John's, our Geography curriculum will deliver a high-quality education where children attain high, achieve well and are inspired and enthused to find out about the physical and human world. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of geography, demonstrating our value of **Drive**, children will learn about places, people and the environment in a logical and progressive way, taking part in carefully thought out 'Field Studies'. Through the school value of **Identity** children explore their own locality and studying other localities, they will learn and master key geographical skills. Self-regulation of their learning will be promoted throughout. Furthermore, St John's children will strive to demonstrate these values and behaviour throughout their geographical learning and field studies, representing the school in their actions, representing the school in fieldwork, with good manners and respect for our environment we study and visit.

Through our Geography curriculum at St. John's, we will also nurture and encourage the children's natural curiosity; we will shape and direct it to transform the children into inquisitive, questioning learners, striving towards **Excellence** with a strong sense of **Character**. They will become children who look closely at the world around them and they will be able to interpret what they see. We will motivate and inspire them through **Teamwork** to find out about their world, both physical and human, so that they can take an active part in protecting this world as they grow up. As part of their knowledge of the effects of human geography and through our value of **Stewardship**, we will instil in children a sense of environmental responsibility, encouraging them to understand current environmental issues at a local, national and global level and begin to make a positive change.

### Rationale- Why we do what we do...

**The views of our stakeholders (children, staff, governors and parents) have been at the root of all decision making.**

\*All of the school's stakeholders were consulted in April 2019.

\*From this, it was evident that the overwhelming majority of people valued learning linked to the local area of Coventry

\*They also suggested that the children's knowledge and understanding of environmental issues was an important aspect of geographical learning

\*All stakeholders valued the immersive 'Topic' learning and enrichment opportunities- trips, visitors and 'wow' moments incorporating a range of subjects

**As a result of our stakeholders' views...**

1. In May 2019, we created a curriculum vision which is inclusive of all subjects.
2. From the curriculum vision, we created our vision for the teaching and learning of Geography.
3. We created a knowledge, skills and vocabulary routeway for Geography from Reception to Year 6, underpinned by the National Curriculum. Our Geography curriculum is designed progressively with a range of enrichment opportunities and 'real outcomes' to enhance learning, 'make it fun' and enable the children to make a positive difference.
4. We teach an immersive and holistic topic curriculum, which can be seen through specific geographical studies such as our Year 3 geographical study of North Africa to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of Egypt's history, giving context trade. **Furthermore, our Year 2 study of Weston-Super-Mare**

### How is Geography taught?

#### Timings and Timetabling

In Reception, Geography is taught as part of the 'People, Culture and Communities and 'The Natural World' aspects of 'Understanding the World'. It is taught through whole class, small group and 1:1 learning with a mixture of adult-led learning and some child-initiated learning with sustained shared thinking. Across the rest of the school, Geography is taught as part of our Topic curriculum alongside Art, History and Design and Technology. This is a deliberate decision in response to the Stakeholder views as well as the high priority we place on deepening knowledge. In order for children to be excited and inspired, it is important to us that they are fully immersed in the learning and can make links to other knowledge acquired- within Geography and across the curriculum, rather than seeing learning in isolation.

Within each year group, the timetabling of Geography is flexible, depending on the topic learning journey. However, the timings average to approximately 1 hour per week. This ensures breadth and depth of knowledge and secure knowledge retention and skills progression.

#### Geography- An Overview

In Reception, Geography comes under the 'Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities and the Natural World' aspects of the Early Years curriculum. From the very beginning of their school journey, children are encouraged to show care and concern for living things and the environment. They are provided with daily opportunities to explore our specially landscaped outdoor area and investigate the plants, animals and objects that they find there - they draw them, label them, ask questions about them, research them, make homes for them and follow their interests in learning more about them. Children begin to understand the beginnings of map work, looking closely at what they see, where it is and how to draw it accurately.

In key stage 1, the children begin by focusing on geography in their local area- including the geography of St. John's and Allesley Park. They then zoom out to look at geographical features of the U.K. and then 'zoom' out even further to begin to look geography in the wider world. By the end of Year 2, children have compared different Geographical locations and have started to learn about the positive and negative impact humans can have on the environment. They even 'make a positive difference' to the environment by completing acts of **Stewardship**.

As the children move into key stage 2, they build on their key stage 1 knowledge, vocabulary and skills in a progressive and logical sequence, with 'field studies' and 'real' outcomes enhancing the curriculum, ensuring knowledge 'sticks' and that the learning is meaningful and purposeful.

Enrichment is an important part of the Geography curriculum. There are a range of 'field studies' and trips which have been designed with a Geography focus. Throughout their time at St. John's, children also have the opportunity to be a part of our Eco-Squad. Their role is to look at ways to improve our school geographical environment, such as through improving our energy efficiency and reducing litter.

## Enrichment

Enrichment opportunities within and across all areas of the curriculum are important to the stakeholders at our school. Our research shows that although lots of children have been exposed to visits, the quality of these visits vary. For example, verbal feedback showed that although lots of children at our school may have visited parks and green spaces, the opportunities to 'dig deep' into the geographical knowledge are limited. Therefore our enrichment opportunities for Geography provide a clear purpose with plenty of opportunities for extension and challenge. They are relevant, age appropriate and inclusive to all.

Please see below the 'Geography' Enrichment Overview:

Year groups	Enrichment	Term of Enrichment	Topic
Reception	<b>Visitor:</b> Mr Twigg (Site Services Officer) <b>Purpose:</b> To show interest in the lives of people who are familiar with them and different occupations and use talk to ask questions and clarify meaning ( <b>People, Culture and Communities</b> )	Spring Term	I need a hero!
	<b>Visit:</b> Field study around their outdoor area and the school grounds <b>Purpose:</b> To discuss the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another ( <b>The Natural World</b> )	Summer Term	Let's Explore!
Year 1	<b>Visit:</b> Field study around the local area <b>Purpose:</b> Begin to use observational skills and simple fieldwork to study the geography of the school and surrounding environment	Autumn Term	Coventry, St. John's and Me!
Year 2	<b>Visitor:</b> Mr Peter Wrigley from Aid 2 Africa Charity for the Waymark Christian Education Centre in Kenya <b>Purpose:</b> To explore key physical features of a hot country in the world	Spring Term	Saving the world
	<b>Visit:</b> Field study around Weston- Super- Mare <b>Purpose:</b> To use simple field work and observational skills to study the physical and human Geography of Weston -Super- Mare	Summer Term	Happy Holidays
Year 3	<b>Visit:</b> Botanical Gardens in Birmingham <b>Purpose:</b> To understand the geographical similarities and difference of physical geography of rainforests  <b>Parental Engagement:</b> Come and Share <b>Purpose:</b> To begin to understand the unequal distribution of food and wealth in today's world	Spring Term	Going Global!
Year 4	<b>Visitor:</b> WaterAid Charity representatives <b>Purpose:</b> To explore the distribution of natural materials- water focus	Autumn	Wild Water Adventure
Year 5	<u>Geography</u> <b>Visit:</b> Dovedale National Nature Reserve in the Peak District National Park <b>Purpose:</b> To use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features of an area using a range of methods including sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies <u>Design and Technology</u> <b>Visit:</b> Dovedale National Nature Reserve in the Peak District National Park <b>Purpose:</b> To evaluate appearance and functionality of a torch against their own design criteria. <u>Geography</u> <b>Parental Engagement:</b> Come and Share <b>Purpose:</b> To debate both sides of the argument relating to land-use and parents to decide on outcome through a vote	Summer	Building our Future
Year 6	<b>Visitor:</b> Virtual Reality Experience <b>Purpose:</b> To describe and understand key aspects of physical geography including volcanoes and biomes  <b>Parental Engagement:</b> Come and Share <b>Purpose:</b> To investigate tectonic plates and how earthquakes happen	Autumn	Catastrophe

### Geography– Opportunities for children to make a positive difference to the environment...

Year groups	Topic	Act of stewardship to make a positive difference
Reception	Let's Explore	Looking after the Reception area– watering plants, and looking after the school environment
Year 1	Coventry, St. John's and me!	Looking after the local area environment– litter picking in the area of Allesley Park
Year 2	Saving the world	Raising money to adopt an Endangered Animal and to support The Waymark Education Centre, Kenya
Year 3	Going Global	Promoting Fair Trade to the school community
Year 4	White Water Adventure	Raising money for Water Aid
Year 5	Building our Future	Promoting the effective use of the natural environment and the impact of humans changes to the school community
Year 6	Catastrophe	Raising money for the 'Disasters Emergency Committee'

## **Assessing Outcomes in Geography**

Assessing outcomes in Geography is rigorous and focused. Teachers regularly review learning and knowledge within and after lessons and adapt their teaching as a result.

In Reception, all children have a personalised 'Learning Journey' book which is used to record learning from all areas of learning across the year. Teachers use this evidence to ensure that all children are making progress and attaining well. Where children are not meeting expected standards, teachers provide additional support where appropriate.

On entry to Year 1, children discover and learn more about Geography. All acquired knowledge and experimentation of skills linked to Geography is recorded in topic books along with a copy of the final Geography outcomes. Teachers use the outcomes in topic books to assess ongoing attainment and progress.

Progress in skills and knowledge acquired over time is assessed by the teacher, in collaboration with the Geography Subject Leader. They do this by comparing the initial knowledge 'Drive' document, which is completed by the children independently, with their 'Vocabulary Glossary', 'Progress Pitstops', end of topic 'Knowledge Harvests' and 'Knowledge Quizzes'.

The Geography subject leader completes regular monitoring of attainment and progress through a combination of pupil voice, book monitoring and matching actual outcomes to intended outcomes as identified in the Geography 'National Curriculum– Knowledge, Skills and Vocabulary Routeway' document. From this monitoring, key actions are given to the teacher and are re-visited frequently.

The Geography subject leader then has a formal meeting with senior leaders to discuss outcomes and next steps. The Curriculum Senior Leaders use the information given to them to hold 'Curriculum Progress Meetings' each half term. These are in addition to the Maths and English Progress Meetings. These meetings identify and celebrate pupil progress and set agreed targets for narrowing any gaps in knowledge and skills.