

Our Lady's RC Primary School



Geography Policy

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Person Responsible	Geography Lead
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Signed:	<i>N. Rafferty</i>	(Person Responsible)	Date: 4.9.2025
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Signed:	<i>G. M. Massingham</i>	(Chair/Governor)	Date: 4.9.2025

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

Our Core Values

During Summer 2023 workshops, we revisited both our Mission Statement and Core Values. This involved everyone in discussion, reflection and prayer about the values, Mission and Aims of our Catholic school. There was a calling to all to re-commit to our purpose and to work together to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of Our Lady's



During the workshops, the feedback from parents, and the views expressed by the children during sessions played a prominent role in the decisions we made.

Our Mission Statement is:

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

Faithful

Positive

Safe

Nurturing

Forgiving

Fair

Respectful

Honest

NURTURE

The School's six nurturing principles sum up our practice and theory. They underpin the context, organisation and curriculum.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives



Our Mission is represented by this design. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts** and Christ- **the Cross**

Catholic Life of the School- Geography

At Our Lady's RC Primary School, we recognise that geography provides valuable opportunities for children to understand their place in the world and to develop characteristics that make them informed and responsible citizens. We also recognise that Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship prepares children for life in the 21st century. Throughout our geography curriculum, we ensure that there are various opportunities to address issues that are happening in our world and we provide children with the skills that will allow them to make a positive change in response to 'Laudato Si'. One example of this is our 2041 schools project where we teach the children from EYFS up to Year 6 about the ever-changing landmark, Antarctica. We empower pupils to be part of vital initiatives, through detailed plans and well informed activities so that they can live out Catholic values and become responsible citizens to protect our world.

Intent, Implementation and Impact

At Our Lady's, our geography curriculum is designed with a clear intent: to develop pupils' rich **substantive knowledge** of places, environments and geographical processes, alongside strong **disciplinary knowledge** that teaches them how geographers think, question and investigate the world. Through the **Opening Worlds** programme, pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 follow a carefully sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum that builds deep understanding over time. This structured approach ensures that pupils are motivated, challenged and increasingly confident in using geographical vocabulary, interpreting information and making connections across themes, locations and scales.

The implementation of our curriculum centres on high-quality teaching rooted in the Opening Worlds materials, which provide explicit instruction, rich texts and well-designed resources. Lessons are cumulative, enabling pupils to revisit and extend prior knowledge in meaningful ways. In Key Stage 2, each year group has a planned **fieldwork opportunity** embedded within at least one unit, allowing pupils to apply disciplinary skills such as mapping, observing, measuring and analysing real-world data. These hands-on experiences strengthen pupils' understanding and bring classroom knowledge to life.

The impact of this approach is seen in pupils' secure retention of core geographical knowledge, their ability to talk with confidence about the world, and their growing skill in geographical enquiry. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils at Our Lady's are well-prepared for further study, equipped with both the substantive and disciplinary foundations needed to understand and evaluate the increasingly complex geographical issues they will encounter.

Geography in EYFS

In Early Years, Geography is taught through 'Understanding the World'. The curriculum is planned so that children are guided to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, children are provided with opportunities to listen to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains.

Geography curriculum planning

At Our Lady's, geography curriculum planning is grounded in the Opening Worlds scheme, using its carefully sequenced materials to ensure clear progression of knowledge, skills, concepts, and vocabulary across year groups. Every new unit begins with a cover sheet that outlines the key concepts and essential vocabulary, supporting pupils in building secure foundations before moving deeper into the content. Practical resources are used whenever appropriate, especially during fieldwork, to enrich learning and enable pupils to apply geographical skills in real contexts. Each year group has its own fieldwork opportunity, woven purposefully into their units, and teachers are encouraged to use the fieldwork guidance on the Opening Worlds website for ideas and best practice. Fieldwork will be evident in books (where appropriate) and indicated with a 'Fieldwork sticker' in the top corner.

Thoughtful adaptations are made for SEN pupils, with resources modified as needed, including the use of Widgit symbols to reduce writing load and support understanding, ensuring all children can access and succeed in geography.

Cross-curricular links

Geography at Our Lady's is enriched through strong cross-curricular links with both literacy and mathematics. The Opening Worlds programme provides substantial opportunities for pre-teaching and explicit vocabulary instruction, enabling pupils to use ambitious geographical language confidently in discussion and writing. This supports the development of high-quality written outcomes, as pupils learn to structure explanations, justify conclusions, and describe processes with precision. Mathematics is woven naturally into geography through problem-solving tasks such as interpreting maps and scale, analysing data, reading graphs, and comparing measurements. These links strengthen pupils' understanding in both subjects while helping them apply their skills in meaningful, real-world contexts.

Inclusion

Geography at Our Lady's is planned and taught with a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring every child can access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. Teachers provide learning opportunities that reflect the needs, strengths and targets of all pupils, including those with SEND, disabilities, those who are disadvantaged, and those who are working at greater depth. High expectations are set for every learner, with tasks thoughtfully adapted through scaffolded content, tailored resources and flexible outcomes. We recognise that pupils come with diverse experiences and starting points, and teaching is designed to build on these positively. To support children who may find extended writing challenging, visual supports such as Widgit symbols are used to reduce writing load while maintaining high cognitive demand. Through careful planning, responsive teaching and inclusive resources, we ensure that all pupils can participate fully and achieve success in geography.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process throughout the duration of a topic in Geography. At the end of each topic, class teachers assess each child as being either working towards, at expected or greater depth in Geography. This is a combination of formative and summative assessments. We aim to give all children opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of Geography through a range of activities; ensuring that all children are given equal opportunity to be a Geographer. Assessments are used to plan future work, to provide the

basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to share with parents through their annual report. Teachers endeavour to provide teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to think creatively, explore and develop ideas, and try different approaches.

Monitoring

Geography is monitored by the coordinator and is carried out regularly through:

- Monitoring of pupil's books
- Informal discussions with staff
- Learning walks
- Lesson observations

Geography Lead: Katie Rafferty

SMSC in Geography

Geography at Our Lady's makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Through exploring the diversity of people, places and environments, pupils develop curiosity, appreciation and respect for the wider world and their place within it. Geography encourages reflection on how human actions impact the planet, helping pupils consider moral responsibilities such as sustainability, fairness and stewardship. Collaborative fieldwork and enquiry-based tasks promote social skills, teamwork and shared problem-solving. Cultural understanding is deepened as pupils learn about different communities, traditions and ways of life, fostering tolerance and global awareness. Across the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to think deeply, discuss openly and form thoughtful views about the world they share with others.