

Geography at St Michael's School

At St Michael's we want our children to love Geography. We want them to be curious about the world around them, to develop their geographical skills as they progress through the school and to have hands on experiences to deepen their Geographical knowledge.

Intent

The geography curriculum has been carefully crafted so that our children develop their geographical knowledge and skills. Early in their learning journey, when the children first start to look at the world around them e.g. as they are running through a field or paddling in rivers they are busy asking questions developing their geographical knowledge and sparking their curiosity. As our children progress through our school, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. We want them to have respect for the world around them so that in their daily lives they can make a conscious effort to protect it.

We achieve this by providing a rich, diverse curriculum, underpinned by our school's core values of Respect, Honesty and Love, enabling every member of the school community to have a 'Lifetime Love for Learning'.

Implementation

The Geography curriculum is organised into four key concepts: locational knowledge; place knowledge; human and physical geography; geographical skills and fieldwork. Throughout their journey through Geography at St Michaels', children revisit these concepts to continually build on their prior knowledge and skills. We aim to ensure that they have the opportunity to make links within the Geography curriculum to develop their understanding. We believe that through our teaching of Geography, we are helping our children to understand what being a geographer is all about. Our Geography teaching will teach children about the connections between places, environments, people, space and scale and how these effect one another. We do this through an enquiry approach, which allows children to use their curiosity, and knowledge they have already learnt to apply it to different contexts.

Children start their Geography journey in Reception. They learn through the environment, which enables them to make sense of their physical world and their community around them. Through exploring their natural world, children in our Reception will experience a strong sense of place. They will use their growing geographical knowledge in their play e.g. taking the train to Antarctica.

Whilst in KS1, and through continuous provision, children begin their enquiry approach to learning through exciting themes such as 'Why doesn't anyone live on the moon?' They will begin to use their inquisitiveness and natural wanting to know more about the world, to draw upon the knowledge they have already gained. They will cover the key concepts, as listed above, many times throughout their time in KS1, to ensure the knowledge they have gained has been committed to their long term memory. Having been taught a particular skill or concept, children will have the time to embed what they have learnt. For example, when the children have studied coordinates they then have opportunities to explore this learning in their play and when making maps of their classrooms. Their

learning through KS1 builds the foundations of knowledge that they will need to further deepen their understanding of the world in KS2.

In KS2, children extend their geographical knowledge and draw upon their experiences of Geography from KS2 to further develop their enquiry skills. These open-ended questions allow children to come to their own open ended conclusions. For example, through the question 'Why doesn't the UK have tropical rainforests?', children will use maps, locational and place knowledge, to extend their knowledge and understanding beyond what they already know. They do this through discovering the awe and wonder of the world, not just what's around them in the UK, but in Europe, North and South America as well. Children begin a unit with their question of enquiry and are taught through small steps to work towards answering their question.

As a school, we have strong links with Ramsbury Estate to provide incredible opportunities for the children to use fieldwork and to gain an understanding of what being a geographer is like. Ramsbury Estate is an amazing environment with supportive staff, which enables children to study rivers, practise orienteering and learn about the local land use. At St Michaels', our School council are also involved in making our school more eco-friendly and ensuring that Geography is an intrinsic aspect of our school.

Teachers are provided with a Curriculum Map and Knowledge Webs to ensure all children are progressing in their historical learning skills. The Knowledge Webs identify what knowledge and skills to assess and how to do this.

Impact

At St Michael's School, children develop a deep knowledge, understanding and appreciation for their local area and the global context of their local lives. Children can critically examine their own values and attitudes, respect the individual liberty of others and recognise their responsibilities and contributions as citizens of their local area, country and wider global community. They are equipped with geographical knowledge and skills to be well prepared for their next steps in education and learning for life and to have the conviction to be actively involved in the world in which they live.