



Saint Augustine Webster CVA's Subject Stories



Geography

“The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It’s about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents.”

— Barack Obama

At Saint Augustine Webster Catholic Voluntary Academy, our Geography curriculum is based on a desire to provide our children with knowledge and understanding of our rich and diverse **community** and the world within which we live. Teaching in Geography is linked to a clear progression of skills and development of knowledge rooted within the National Curriculum. Children will be introduced to a wide range of maps, atlases and globes, including computer mapping to enable them to locate countries and their features. Over time children will develop an extensive knowledge of our local area, the country in which we live, and the wider world. With high expectations for all, we promote support for each child to enable them to collect, analyse and present information about key physical and geographical features of the world.

The Geography curriculum teaches children to respect the cultural diversity of our world and our school community. As humans can have significant effects on our physical world. We aim to provide children with opportunities to learn about the impact that our choices have upon the future of our planet.

Learning in geography is linked into other curriculum areas, particularly History, ensuring it becomes an integral part of all learning.

Implementation

A guiding principle of our geography curriculum is that each study draws upon prior learning. For example, in the EYFS, pupils may learn about People, Culture and Communities or The Natural World through daily activities and exploring their locality and immediate environment. This is revisited and positioned so that new and potentially abstract content in Year 1 can be put into a known location and make it easier to cognitively process. Pupils in EYFS explore globes and world locations through their curiosity corners, making links to where animals live. This substantive knowledge is used to remember and position the locations of continents and oceans, with more sophisticated knowledge. High volume and deliberate practice are essential for pupils to remember and retrieve substantive knowledge and use their disciplinary knowledge to explain and articulate what they know. This means pupils make conscious connections and think hard, using what they know.

Our geography curriculum is built around the principles of cumulative knowledge focusing on spaces, places, scale, human and physical processes with an emphasis on how content is connected and relational knowledge acquired. It equips pupils to become ‘more expert’ with each study and grow an ever broadening and coherent mental model of the subject. This guards against superficial, disconnected and fragmented geographical knowledge.

Specific and associated geographical vocabulary is planned sequentially and cumulatively from Year 1 to Year 6. High frequency, multiple meaning words (tier 2) are taught and help make sense of subject specific words (tier 3). Each learning module in geography has a vocabulary module with teacher guidance, tasks and resources.

Our geography curriculum is planned so that the retention of knowledge is much more than just ‘in the moment knowledge’. The cumulative nature of the curriculum is made memorable by the implementation of Bjork’s desirable difficulties, including retrieval and spaced retrieval practice, word building and deliberate practice tasks. This powerful interrelationship between structure and research-led practice is designed to increase substantive knowledge and accelerate learning within and between study modules. That means the foundational knowledge of the curriculum is positioned to ease the load on the working

memory: new content is connected to prior learning. The effect of this cumulative model supports opportunities for children to associate and connect with places, spaces, scale, people, culture and processes.

In KS1 and KS2, Geography is taught in focused teaching sessions that sit within a curriculum sequence built around the principles of interleaving and spaced retrieval practice. This ensures full coverage across the whole school.

Impact

When pupils leave Saint Augustine Webster CVA, they will be independent learners with a rich geographical knowledge. They will be adept at categorising content and making connections within topics and other subjects. Pupils will be skilled at removing unnecessary information and organising how to present their learning in order to simplify complex information.

The implementation of this curriculum ensures that they will have developed learning Schemata that are not static. Since they will have been taught to regularly add new information and build on the foundations of prior learning, they will be skilled in organising how to assimilate new knowledge.

If you were to walk into geography lessons at Saint Augustine Webster's, you would see:

- High expectation for pupil outcomes
- Increasing depth of knowledge and understanding
- pupils returning to prior learning
- pupils learning to select, organise and integrate new knowledge with prior learning
- cumulative quizzing as a learning and assessment tool
- high quality worked examples
- sequential lessons building up technical skills and vocabulary in small steps
- guided practice leading to independent application
- children becoming proficient in locational knowledge
- a wide range of maps, atlases and globes, including computer mapping being utilised to enhance the learning outcomes of our children, across the curriculum.
- high quality images and diagrams supporting and scaffolding learning
- learning walls which support, celebrate and provide challenge
- a learning buzz as children engage in fieldwork, debate and question reasons for change
- collaboration, support and communication

Pupil Voice

Year 1 child *"I loved learning the song about the continents and looking at the globes."*

Year 4 child *"I really enjoy reading maps and atlases. I also like learning about countries around the world especially the different cultures."*

Year 6 child *"We have learnt a lot in geography so far this year. I enjoyed learning about Jamaica and their culture."*