

Geography at St Paul with St Luke



Intent

School's Vision: At St Paul with St Luke, CUSP Geography 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. CUSP Geography 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. CUSP fulfils and goes well beyond the expectations of the National Curriculum as we believe there is no ceiling to what pupils can learn if the architecture and practice is founded in evidence-led principles.

Geography Curriculum overview

As a key planning and teaching resource from January 2024, we are following the CUSP curriculum for geography. The structure of the CUSP geography has defined substantive concepts that are the suggested vehicle to connect the substantive knowledge. These are defined at the start of every study in the Big Idea.

Substantive knowledge - this is the subject knowledge and explicit vocabulary used to learn about the content. Common misconceptions are explicitly revealed as non-examples and positioned against known and accurate content as pupils become more expert in their understanding. Misconceptions are challenged carefully and in the context of the substantive and disciplinary knowledge. In CUSP Geography, it is recommended that misconceptions are not introduced too early, as pupils need to construct a mental model in which to position new knowledge.

SUGGESTED SUBSTANTIVE CONCEPTS IN GEOGRAPHY			
Locational knowledge	Place knowledge	Human and physical geography	Geographical skills and fieldwork
LOCATION Where a place actually is found. It helps us describe and remember where places are. Name and locate locations. Use absolute positioning system.	PLACE What a location is like. Describes the physical and / or human geography as well as the personal and cultural experience related to that place.	HUMAN GEOGRAPHY The interactions between people, places and the environment. The built environment. Effect of migration and settlement. The effect on the landscape and environment. PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY The natural shaping of the surface of the Earth as well as the physical process that create the environment. The natural environment. How a place is shaped naturally by physical processes. How the environment is impacted by human geography.	SKILLS AND FIELDWORK Using maps, globes and compasses, along with what you know to explain location, place and human and physical features associated with it. The collecting of information about people, places and the environment.

Disciplinary knowledge – this is the use of knowledge and how children become a little more expert as a geographer by Thinking Geographically. I draw upon the work of Cresswell, Lambert and Massey to offer suggestions about the discipline of geography.

SUGGESTED DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE - THINKING AS A GEOGRAPHER				
GEOGRAPHICAL ENQUIRY				
Place and Space	Scale and Connection (Relationship and interdependence)	Physical and human geography	Environment and sustainability	Culture and diversity (Uniqueness)
 Place Key idea is that place is its location and what it means to people. Places are influenced and shaped by the people who live there (ideas, emotions and beliefs). Space Location on the Earth's surface defined by latitude and longitude. Space is more general and does not have meaning.	 Scale To get a better understanding of locality compared to globality. Gives pupils a sense of Zooming in and zooming out. Connection How local places are connected when you Zoom in, and how they are connected to the wider locality when you Zoom out focusing on region / country / country / global. Relational perspectives There is more than one way of living - understanding the culture and 'the way people do things around here'. For example, how people in Nairobi live with animals, such as lions, making incursion into the city. How the Yanomami tribes take only what they need from the rainforest and live sustainably with little impact.	 Physical and human geography An appreciation of how places evolve and are shaped by physical or human geography. PAST How have physical processes and people influenced this place? PRESENT How are physical processes and / or people influencing this place? FUTURE What could this place be like in the future, given the influences by physical processes or people?	 Environment What is the environment like? Draws upon human and physical geography to help explain 'how did it get like that?' Makes us think about our ethical consumer habits and choices made about environmental impact. Sustainability An example of this could be considering the products we buy that have positively or negatively affected the environment or are causing increased pollution. What it means to be a responsible citizen, embracing global dimensions within a local setting.	 Culture The way people have done or do things around here. The way a place is shaped by human ideas and beliefs, and how physical processes have formed the place, over time. An understanding and respect for ethnicity and diversity through knowing more about other cultures and people. Diversity The differences between places from a human perspective, such as race, ethnicity, culture, belief, employment, wealth, connection. The difference between places from a physical perspective, such as climate, terrain, location (coastal or mountain), forest, desert, marine... Regional inequality For example, how Nairobi could appear to be a thriving city through publicity but by zooming in and looking more closely how poverty and slums are ever present within the setting of the city and wider communities.
Where is this place? Why is it here and not there?		What is it like?	How did it get like this? What could it be like in the future?	

Our curriculum facilitates this disciplinary growth through consistent retrieval and spaced retrieval exercises, vocabulary development, and purposeful practice tasks. This research-orientated approach aims to deepen comprehension and ease the cognitive load on students by distributing learning across manageable intervals. Through this method, we aim to enhance engagement and facilitate a more profound understanding within and across historical modules.

Geography Curriculum breakdown

During the **Foundation Stage**, children engage with geography as part of the Early Learning Goal: Understanding of the World. Looking at where we live and talking about features we see on the way to school, (Shops, roads, parks, etc...)

- Exploring the school grounds to look at features of the environment.
- Discussing where extended family members live on a map, including our EAL families place of birth.
- Exploring Christmas traditions from around the world.
- Features of cities, man-made vs natural (Naughty Bus link)
- Learning London is the capital city
- Learning about Amelia Earhart – Oceans she flew across. Locating land and sea on maps,
- Black History week – Where did Rosa Parks live?
- Naming features of the world around us (farms, beach, woodland etc)

The ELG aspects include:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observations, discussions, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Explain some similarities, differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
- Exploring the Natural World around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them, and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read to them in class.

Practitioners must tailor their approach to meet the individual needs, interests, and developmental stages of each child under their care. By leveraging this understanding, educators can design engaging and stimulating experiences across all areas of learning and development, ensuring each child is challenged and enjoys their educational journey.

The sequence in KS1 focuses young children to develop a sense of place, scale and an understanding of human and physical geographical features. Later in KS1, children learn about the purpose and use of sketch maps as well as the key features they need to include. CUSP map skills and fieldwork are essential to support children in developing an understanding of how to explain and describe a place, the people who live there, its space and scale.

Initially, children study the orientation of the world through acquiring and making locational sense of the 7 continents and 5 oceans of the world. They extend their knowledge and study the countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom, along with the oceans and seas that surround us. Further studies support retrieval; children revisit these locations with more complex and sophisticated tasks later in the school year. Enhanced provision in the classroom and use of maps, globes and atlases is essential to form coherent schemata around the big ideas that explain how we know where a place is, and how to locate it. For young children, routes and maps can be made concrete in day-to-day experiences in the safety of their school grounds and classrooms.

Throughout KS1, pupils enhance their locational knowledge by studying and identifying human and physical features of places. To deepen this understanding and transfer concepts, pupils study contrasting locations throughout the world. The location of these areas in the world are deliberately chosen to offer culturally diverse and contrasting places. Pupils study the human and physical features of a non-European location in Africa, such as Nairobi. This is also complemented by a study of an indigenous tribe in the rainforests of Brazil and Venezuela. These two studies also offer rich opportunities to know, compare and contrast different cultures in two continents using the consistent thread of human and physical features.

Fieldwork and map skills are further developed with a study of the local area, using cardinal points of a compass. Maps are introduced through familiar stories as a way to communicate what the place and space is like. Pupils retrieve and apply knowledge about human and physical features in their local context. OS maps are introduced to pupils in KS1 using Digimap for Schools. Simple keys and features are identified and mapped locally to help begin to understand place, distance and scale. CUSP Geography gives pupils the knowledge they need to develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of place. Pupils study a variety of places – this helps them to connect different geographical concepts and gives them perspectives and opportunities to compare and contrast locations.

In Lower Key Stage 2, As pupils begin KS2, fieldwork and map skills are revisited with the intercardinal points of a compass points being introduced to elaborate on the knowledge pupils already have around cardinal points. This substantive and disciplinary knowledge is utilised to support a study of the UK, focusing on regions, counties, landmarks and topography. This study demands analysis and pattern seeking to identify the features of the UK. Further retrieval studies are designed to support conceptual fluency around physical and human features. Cause and effect are also developed through geographical reasoning. An example of this is the interrelationship between physical terrain of the northern regions of the UK and the lower lands of East Anglia, that are covered in glacial deposits. Further studies are undertaken to elaborate fieldwork and map skills through a sharper focus on OS maps.

Pupils elaborate and expand their understanding of human and physical features and apply it to the study of rivers. To enable accurate location of places around the globe, pupils study absolute positioning or reference systems through latitude and longitude. Substantive knowledge is acquired and used to apply their new understanding to mapping and locational skills. An in-depth understanding of latitude and longitude is used by pupils throughout KS2.

Complementing studies on location and position is the focus on the water cycle. It offers explanation and reasoning about physical processes as well as why certain biomes have specific features in specific global locations. Pupils study geographical patterns across the world using latitude of locations to explain why places are like they are. Further river studies revisit substantive knowledge and these are applied to the River Nile and the Amazon River as a precursor for future learning in other subjects.

Further fieldwork and map skills are introduced to enrich pupils' disciplinary knowledge of locations and places. Cultural awareness and diversity are taught specifically within learning modules. Examples include European studies, as well as studies of countries and people in Africa, and North and South America.

A deliberately planned study focusing on the environmental regions of Europe, Russia, and North and South America draws attention to climate regions and is the precursor to studying biomes in UKS2.

In Upper Key Stage 2, The study of Biomes and Environmental regions builds upon world locations, latitude and longitude studies. World countries and major cities are located, identified and remembered through deliberate and retrieval practice, such as low stakes quizzing and 'Two things' tasks. The study of biomes is revisited deliberately to ensure the content is remembered and applied.

In upper KS2, the study of 4 and 6 figure grid references supports prior learning of reference systems and brings an increased accuracy to mapping and fieldwork skills. Again, this knowledge is designed to be interrelated and connected to the retrieval study of biomes and environmental regions. Terrain is studied through contour lines and OS map skills and fieldwork. More advanced mapping skills using OS maps are studied and applied, with pupils using the accumulation of knowledge skilfully to analyse distribution and relationships. Route finding and decoding information through maps offers challenge through increasingly complex orienteering and mapping tasks.

Pupils take part in geographical analysis using patterns and comparison of both human and physical processes as well as the features present in chosen locations. This abstract concept is made concrete through studying and comparing the Lake District, the Tatra mountains of Poland and the Blue mountains of Jamaica. Physical processes such as orogeny and glaciation are acquired to explain significant change over long periods of time. The concept of a physical process is revisited through a study of Earthquakes, mountains and volcanoes. This depth study allows pupils the opportunity to have a more sophisticated knowledge of physical processes and make connections about how the environment has been shaped, as a result.

Settlement, trade and economic activities are the focus of a study that draws upon the Windrush generation module in CUSP History. This develops an increasing knowledge about migration and the factors that push people away or draw people towards settlements. Within these studies, pupils make relational connections between settlements and physical or human features. Settlements such as ports or major world cities are studied to explain the reasons why certain places are populated and why. Disciplinary knowledge supports pupils to reason and explain the effect of change on a place, drawing on prior substantive knowledge that they can retrieve and reuse.

Teaching of Geography

How do our pupils learn Geography?

Geography lessons should be dedicated a two-hour slot each week, alternating with Geography units as needed. While history topics may or may not directly align with the overall curriculum theme, the focus remains on imparting key historical vocabulary and fundamental concepts through an inquiry-based approach, centred around a 'big question'.

Various teaching and learning styles are employed to achieve our principal aim of fostering children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in geography. This includes whole-class instruction, individual or group activities, and inquiry-based research tasks. Whenever feasible, students are encouraged to engage with atlases, compasses and world maps, census data, and utilise IT tools to enhance their learning experience and prepare them for their future technology use. A wide array of resources, such as maps, books, pictures, and firsthand evidence, are provided to support learning. Additionally, role-play, discussions, and presentations allow students to actively participate and share their findings with the class.

Real-life geographical experiences, like museum visits, local walks or visits from professionals, are integrated into the curriculum whenever possible to provide students with authentic learning opportunities. Recognising the diverse abilities within each class, learning tasks are scaffolded to match the challenge level to individual students' capabilities. This differentiation is achieved through varied strategies, including task complexity, expected outcomes, and peer or adult support.

How do we display our geographical learning in the classroom?

Each working wall includes the learning journey for that unit, along with relevant vocabulary, select images, and the previous lesson's worked example, modelled by the teacher.

Cross-curricular links

English

Nonfiction writing (such as recounts and non-biological reports). Through discussions, debates, and the articulation of their findings and viewpoints, students hone their oral communication skills in history lessons. They further refine their writing abilities by composing reports, projects, and recording historical information. Encouraged to pose questions about the past and articulate their answers, students actively engage in historical inquiry and dialogue.

Mathematics

Graphs, collecting data and using compasses.

History

History led topics, e.g. investigating historical sites and buildings include elements of geography, e.g.

Castles, local history study, Great Fire of London.

Computing

Children use ICT to record, present and interpret historical information/data, to review, modify and evaluate their work, and to improve its presentation. Children learn how to find, select, and analyse information on the Internet and on other media. They also use e-mail to communicate their historical findings with experts.

Implementation

Vocabulary

Vocabulary forms a key part of our curriculum. Therefore, subject specific Tier 2 and Tier 3 words are identified in each module. Supporting pupils in the acquisition of knowledge, through the use of key concepts, terms, and vocabulary, provides opportunities to build a shared and consistent understanding. Knowledge organisers, glossaries and displays, along with regular recall and revision, will be used to support this approach.

Knowledge organisers

Accompanying each module is a Knowledge Organiser which contains key vocabulary, information and concepts which all pupils are expected to understand and retain. Knowledge notes are the elaboration and detail to help pupils acquire the content of each module. They support vocabulary and concept acquisition through a well-structured sequence that is cumulative. Each Knowledge Note begins with a learning question which focuses on the key content to be learnt and understood. Knowledge Organisers and Knowledge Notes are dual coded to provide pupils with visual calls to aid understanding and recall.

Resources

Our Geography modules are underpinned by high quality texts which support wider curriculum reading. We encourage pupils to access these high-quality texts to support their learning and develop their skills in accessing information from a range of sources.

Our Geographers will be given a variety of experiences both in and out of the classroom, where appropriate, to create memorable learning opportunities and to further imbed knowledge. We also aim to make use of resources within the immediate and wider local area enabling children to develop a deep understanding of the history of their locality.

Impact

Pupils make more sense and deeper understanding of the substantive concepts and knowledge by using what they know through disciplinary knowledge. Use the Disciplinary Geography Maps to identify the opportunities to think hard and use the substantive content in a disciplinary manner by thinking like a geographer.

Assessment

Class teachers will complete the school's 'teacher judgement' ranking assessment sheet for Geography. Staff will make a judgement against the expectations for the year group at KS1, lower KS2 and upper KS2, placing the initials of the children in the boxes: working towards; expected; greater depth.

Monitoring

In line with our monitoring timetable, the subject leader for Geography will carry out a deep dive. This will involve gathering evidence on the curriculum intent, implementation and impact through

- a review of planning
- work scrutiny
- pupil interviews
- observing classroom practice.

This will be done in collaboration with senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The intent of the deep dive is to seek to interrogate and establish a coherent evidence base on the quality of Geography education at St Paul with St Luke