

Geography in the Early Years at St Columba's

'A high quality geography education should inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.' DfE (2013)

At St. Columba's school, we aim to engage and motivate the children, encouraging them to see the world through the eyes of young geographers.

The **Early Learning Goals** at EYFS guide the children to make sense of their physical world and their community by exploring, observing and finding out about people, places, technology and the environment. Enabling pupils to take on the role of a geographer is an important consideration when planning for the seven areas of inter-connected learning and development that make up the [EYFS framework](#).

In particular the area entitled '**Understanding the World**' presents the opportunity for our children to reflect on the events and routines that they and their peers experience. They should be given the opportunity to formulate questions to investigate the similarities and differences that exist and be encouraged to discuss these with interest and sensitivity.

The **National Curriculum's** areas of knowledge, understanding and skills describe geography's richness, scope and potential very well. **Fieldwork** is a mainstay in the education of a geographer and is specifically identified in the curriculum document as an activity that deepens understanding. Our school has a unique environmental and social context whose investigation and exploration can open a window to the wider world and the complexities it holds. Many of the 'memorable moments' of a child's primary school education come from the first-hand, hands-on experiences of being a geographer. The inclusion of fieldwork is an essential element that enables pupils to connect with a place, community or environment and it doesn't even have to be beyond walking distance. Through role-play the children can learn experientially about the different environments that different professions operate in and explain why some things happen the way they do in both the physical and human world.

We aim to embed learning through playing and exploring, developing opportunities for active learning and for creating and thinking critically.



The areas of study have been carefully chosen taking into account our geographical location on Walney Island, Cumbria, the ELG and the desire to inspire geographical thinkers and learners. Teachers in the early years will be familiar with the Geography National curriculum and will see where the attainment targets fit in with the ELG, specifically in Understanding the World.

National Curriculum attainment targets;

Human geography, physical geography, map and fieldwork skills, place knowledge and location knowledge

The use of **maps** in Early Years geography can be key to pupils' continuing understanding of their local area and the wider world. By combining map skills and art, children learn to recognise patterns and features in the landscape, both human and physical.

Resources:

Globes – inflatable, plastic (a range of ...)

Maps – outlined / painted on the ground, wall posters (simple UK / World) see <https://www.geography.org.uk/teaching-resources/base-maps>

Making 'messy maps' see <https://www.teachitprimary.co.uk/resources/f/mapping-skills-and-fieldwork/making-messy-maps/17572>

Barnaby Bear – see <https://www.geography.org.uk/teaching-resources/early-years-and-primary-resources>

Books – ‘Oh, The Places You’ll Go!’ (Dr. Seuss)

‘Journey (Journey Trilogy 1)’ by Aaron Becker

‘You Choose’ by Pippa Goodhart and Nick Sharratt

‘Collins First Atlas’ (Collins Primary Atlases)