



Geography Curriculum Overview



"The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map.
It's about understanding the complexity of our world." — Barack Obama



ST TERESA
of **CALCUTTA**
Catholic Academy Trust

Our Geography Learning Journey



Learning, Loving & Serving like Mary

What Makes a Good Geography Lesson?

1. Date, Learning Intention & Retrieval Review

Every lesson begins with pupils writing the date and the learning intention. A short retrieval task activates prior knowledge e.g., quizzes, mind map, vocabulary recall.

2. Pre-Teach & Revisit Key Geographical Vocabulary

Essential geographical vocabulary is introduced or revisited before new content. Use images, actions and examples to secure understanding of terms such as biome, erosion, tectonic plate, altitude, climate.

3. Explicit Teaching of New Content

New knowledge and skills are taught in clear, manageable steps. Use Kapow videos, slides, atlases, OS maps, globes and hands-on resources to model concepts such as mountain formation, biome comparison or energy sources. Key concepts are made explicit.

4. Guided Practice & Modelling

Teachers model how to complete geographical tasks e.g. interpreting climate graphs, annotating maps, comparing regions, explaining physical processes Pupils practise with support before working independently.

5. Independent Task

Pupils apply learning through meaningful, differentiated tasks, such as: map work, fact files, labelled diagrams, explanations of physical/human processes, comparisons of places. Pupils must produce their own geographical thinking and evidence.

6. Go Deeper

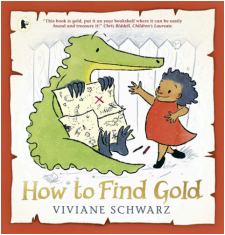
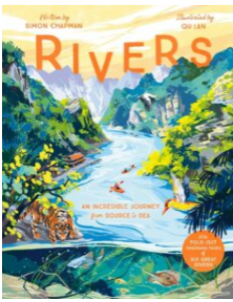
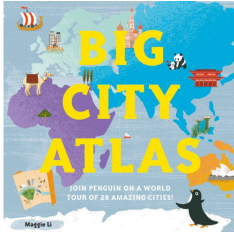
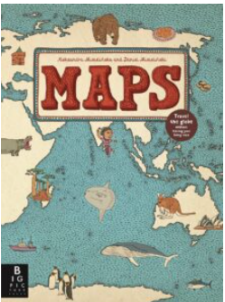
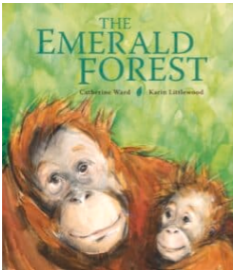
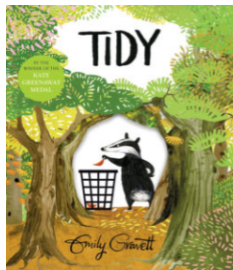
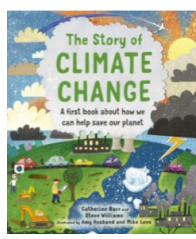
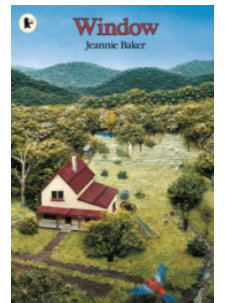
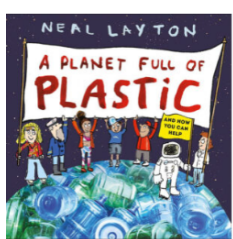
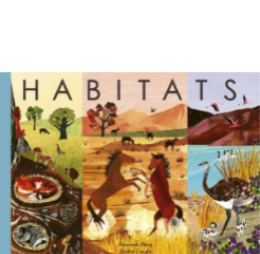
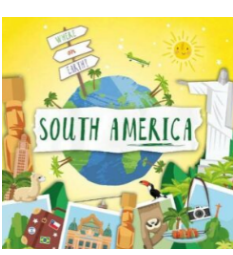
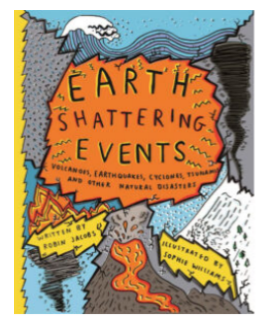
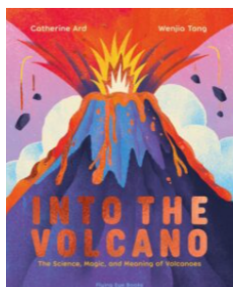
Pupils extend their understanding through deeper thinking tasks and enquiry questions, e.g.: "How would this place be different if it had a different climate?" "Why might people choose to live near a volcano?" Use higher-order geographical questions and link to Catholic Social Teaching, Gospel and British Values.

7. Review, Reflect & Assess Learning

Lessons end with a short review. Use mini-whiteboards, exit tickets, quizzes or recap strategies. Pupils reflect on what they've learned and how it connects to previous lessons to strengthening long-term understanding.



Geography Recommended Booklist

 A girl with dark skin and hair is holding a map. The title 'MARTHA MAPS IT OUT' is written in large, bold, red letters. The author's name 'LEIGH MURRAY' is at the bottom.	 A girl is holding a map and a green crocodile is also holding a map. The title 'How to Find Gold' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'VIVIANE SCHWARZ' is at the bottom.	 A colorful illustration of a river flowing through a landscape with mountains and trees. The title 'RIVERS' is written in large, bold, orange letters. The author's name 'SIMON CHAPMAN' is at the top.	 A train is traveling through a landscape. The title 'EPIC ADVENTURES' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'SAM SEDGWICK' is at the top.	 A map of a city with various buildings and landmarks. The title 'BIG CITY ATLAS' is written in large, bold, yellow letters. The author's name 'MAGGI SI' is at the bottom.	 A tree with different colored leaves representing the seasons. The title 'SEASONS' is written in large, bold, white letters. The author's name 'HARVEY DRY' is at the bottom.	 A map of the United Kingdom with various landmarks and animals. The title 'The BIG BOOK of the UK' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'PAULY HARRISON' is at the top.	 A map of the world with various landmarks and animals. The title 'ATLAS' is written in large, bold, red letters. The author's name 'VICTORIA BIRCH' is at the top.
 A colorful illustration of various Indian landmarks and animals. The title 'India Incredible India' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JACKSON RILEY' is at the top.	 A map of the world with various landmarks and animals. The title 'MAPS' is written in large, bold, red letters. The author's name 'COLLEEN BARRETT' is at the top.	 A close-up illustration of a monkey's face. The title 'THE EMERALD FOREST' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'CAROLINE WARD' is at the top.	 A girl is holding a red object. The title 'There's a Rang-Tan in My Bedroom' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JAMES NATHAN' is at the top.	 A boy is surfing on a wave. The title 'CLEAN UP!' is written in large, bold, yellow letters. The author's name 'NATHAN BRYAN' is at the bottom.	 A girl is holding a blue plastic bag. The title 'ONE PLASTIC BAG' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'ISATOU CHERAY' is at the top.	 A dog is holding a shopping basket. The title 'TIDY' is written in large, bold, white letters. The author's name 'EMILY CROFT' is at the bottom.	 A landscape with a sun, clouds, and a river. The title 'The Story of CLIMATE CHANGE' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'COLLEEN BARRETT' is at the top.
 A hedgehog and a polar bear are shown. The title 'How to HELP a Hedgehog and PROTECT a Polar Bear' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A landscape with a house and trees. The title 'Window' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JEANNE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A group of people are shown. The title 'EARTH HEROES' is written in large, bold, white letters. The author's name 'LILY DILL' is at the top.	 A girl is holding a letter. The title 'Dear Greenpeace' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'SIMON JAMES' is at the top.	 A landscape with a waterfall and trees. The title 'Rhythm of the Rain' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'CHRISTOPHER BAKER' is at the top.	 A group of people are shown. The title 'OLD ENOUGH to SAVE the PLANET' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'NEAL LAYTON' is at the top.	 A group of people are shown. The title 'A PLANET FULL OF PLASTIC' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'NEAL LAYTON' is at the top.	 A sun, clouds, and a rainbow are shown. The title 'MEET THE WEATHER' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'CAROL ANN' is at the top.
 A landscape with various animals. The title 'HABITATS' is written in large, bold, white letters. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A landscape with a river and trees. The title 'AMAZON RIVER' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'SANDRA FRANCES' is at the top.	 A map of South America with various landmarks and animals. The title 'SOUTH AMERICA' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A boy is exploring a landscape. The title 'The GREAT EXPLORER' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'CHRIS JUDGE' is at the bottom.	 A landscape with ice and penguins. The title 'ANTARCTICA' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A landscape with a volcano and earthquakes. The title 'EARTH SHATTERING EVENTS' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.	 A volcano is erupting. The title 'INTO THE VOLCANO' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'CATHERINE AID' is at the top.	 A raindrop is shown. The title 'Once Upon a Raindrop' is written in a stylized font. The author's name 'JANE FARRAR' is at the top.

Geographical Skills and Enquiry

	Locational & Place Knowledge	Human & Physical Geography	Geographical Skills & Fieldwork
Nursery	· Notice and talk about features of their immediate environment (e.g., trees, buildings, weather). · Begin to use simple positional language such as <i>next to</i>, <i>behind</i>, <i>in front of</i>. · Recognise simple differences between places (e.g., park vs. street).	· Observe natural materials and weather changes. · Talk about what they see in their environment (e.g., puddles, leaves, shadows). · Begin to understand that environments vary.	· Explore maps in stories and play (e.g., treasure maps). · Begin to draw simple representations of places (e.g., their home). · Use simple directional language in movement and play.
Reception (ELG)	· Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation and discussion. · Identify familiar places in their community (school, shops, park).	· Talk about similarities and differences between natural and built environments. · Begin to identify simple physical features (hill, river, forest) and human features (house, road, shop).	· Draw simple maps with basic symbols. · Use positional and directional language more confidently. · Observe and record simple environmental features (weather, plants, buildings).
Year 1 & 2	· Name and locate the four countries of the UK and their capital cities. · Identify the UK on a world map. · Begin to locate continents and oceans. · Compare a small area of the UK with a contrasting non-European location. · Describe key features of these places using simple geographical vocabulary.	· Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns. · Use basic vocabulary for physical features (beach, cliff, river, mountain) and human features (town, port, farm).	· Use simple maps, globes, and aerial photographs. · Create simple maps using symbols and a basic key. · Use simple fieldwork techniques: observing, asking questions, tallying, and recording.
Year 3 & 4	· Locate and name European countries and major cities. · Identify key physical features such as major rivers and mountain ranges. · Begin to understand latitude, longitude, the Equator, Northern/Southern Hemispheres. · Study a region of the UK and compare it with a region in Europe. · Describe how physical and human features give places their character.	· Understand climate zones, biomes, and vegetation belts · Describe key aspects of rivers, mountains, volcanoes, and earthquakes. · Identify land use patterns and how they change over time.	· Use maps with increasing accuracy, including 4-figure grid references. · Interpret a wider range of maps (OS maps, thematic maps). · Conduct fieldwork using measurement (e.g., traffic counts, weather data). · Present findings using charts, labelled diagrams, and basic digital tools.
Year 5 & 6	· Locate major world countries, focusing on North and South America. · Understand key geographical lines: Tropics, Arctic/Antarctic Circles, Prime Meridian. · Identify time zones and understand how they work. · Compare regions in the UK, Europe, and the Americas. · Analyse how physical and human processes interact to shape places.	· Explain climate zones, biomes, and vegetation belts in more depth. · Understand economic activity, trade links, and distribution of natural resources. · Describe and explain physical processes such as river formation, coastal erosion, and tectonic activity.	· Use OS maps confidently with 6-figure grid references and scale. · Interpret complex maps, aerial photos, and digital mapping. · Plan and conduct fieldwork independently: collecting, analysing, and presenting data. · Communicate findings using graphs, digital presentations, and detailed maps.

Geography in Nursery (Understanding of the World)

		
My Environment	Weather	People and Places
Big Question: <i>What makes our school special and how can we look after it?</i> Objectives: · What can we see in our school grounds? · Where are things in our classroom and outdoor area? · What is natural and what is made by people? · How do we use our outdoor area? · How can we take care of our school?	Big Question: <i>How does today's weather change what we do?</i> Objectives: · What is the weather like today? · How does the weather make us feel? · What clothes do we need for this weather? · How does the weather change our outdoor area? · How can we stay safe and healthy in different weather?	Big Question: <i>What makes the places we visit important to us?</i> Objectives: · What places do we go to every day? · What makes our home special? · What places do people help us in? · How are places different from each other? · How can we show respect and kindness in the places we visit?
		
Journeys	Nature Detectives	Different Places
Big Question: <i>Where can we go and how do we get there?</i> Objectives: · Where do we go on journeys? · How do we travel to different places? · What do we see on the way? · How do we stay safe on a journey? · What makes a journey fun or special?	Big Question: <i>What can we discover when we look closely at nature?</i> Objectives: · What can we find when we look closely outside? · How do plants and animals look different? · What sounds can we hear in nature? · How can we look after living things? · What makes nature amazing?	Big Question: <i>How are other places similar to or different from ours?</i> Objectives; · What does our place look like? · What do other places look like? · How are these places the same? · How are these places different? · How can we show respect for people who live in different places?

♥ Catholic Social Teaching and British Values Links:

Children will learn to appreciate and care for the people, places and natural world around them, which reflects key principles of Catholic Social Teaching such as dignity, solidarity, the common good, the option for the poor, peace, creation and environment, the dignity of work and participation. They will also develop an understanding of British Values by showing respect for different places, people and communities, recognizing how rules keep us all safe, and learning how kindness, responsibility and shared spaces help everyone to flourish.

Geography in Reception (Understanding of the World)

		
Our Local Area	Homes Around the World	Seasonal Changes
Big Question: <i>What can we find in our local area and why is it important?</i> Objectives: - To notice and name important places in our local area. - To describe what we can see on a short local walk. - To identify natural and human-made features around us. - To talk about how people use and care for our local area. - To create a simple map showing places that are important to us.	Big Question: How do people's homes show what their lives are like? Objectives: - To talk about what makes our own home special. - To explore different types of homes from around the world. - To compare homes in hot and cold places. - To understand that families live differently depending on where they are. - To create a simple model or picture of a home from another place.	Big Question: How do the seasons change the world around us? Objectives: - To observe signs of the season in our environment. - To describe how the weather changes across the seasons. - To explore how plants and animals change with the seasons. - To talk about how our clothes and activities change in each season. - To record seasonal changes using drawings, photos, or simple charts.
		
People in Our Community	Land, Sea & Sky	Exploring the World
Big Question: How do people help make our community a better place? Objectives: - To identify people who help us in our community. - To talk about the places where people work and help others. - To understand how different jobs support our community. - To explore how we can help others in small ways. - To create a role-play area showing community helpers.	Big Question: What can we see on the land, in the sea, and in the sky? Objectives: - To name things we find on land, in the sea, and sky. - To sort objects and animals into land, sea, and sky groups. - To explore how different environments look and feel. - To talk about how people use land, sea, and sky and how we can be stewards of God's creation. - To create artwork or models showing these three environments.	Big Question: What can we learn about the world by exploring maps and stories? Objectives: - To explore simple maps and talk about what they show. - To follow a simple route on a map or story map. - To learn about different places through stories and pictures. - To compare a place from a story with where we live. - To create our own simple map or story journey.

♥ Catholic Social Teaching and British Values Links:

Children will learn to notice, value and care for the people, places and natural world around them which reflects key principles of Catholic Social Teaching, including human dignity, solidarity, the common good, the option for the poor, peace, care for creation, the dignity of work and participation. They also begin to understand British Values by showing respect for different homes and communities, recognising how rules keep us safe, and understanding how kindness and responsibility support everyone. Children will learn to appreciate their local area, recognise differences in the wider world, and understand their role in caring for creation and supporting others.

Geography in Year 1 & 2

		
Our School & Local Area (Cycle A)	The United Kingdom (Cycle A)	The Coast (Cycle A)
Big Question: How does Radcliffe (local area) meet the needs of the people who live here? Objectives: - To identify key places in our school and local area and describe what they are used for. - To recognise human and physical features in the local environment and look at these symbols on a map. - To explore how people travel around and use the local area. - To understand how our local area provides services that people need. - To create a simple map of the local area using symbols and a basic key.	Big Question: What makes each part of the United Kingdom unique? Objectives: - To name and locate the four countries of the UK and their capital cities on a map. - To identify key landmarks from each UK country. - To explore physical features that make each part of the UK special. - To compare similarities and differences between the four nations. - To describe what makes the UK a united group of countries.	Big Question: What would we see and experience at the coast? Objectives: - To identify physical features of the coast such as beaches, cliffs, rocks and the sea. - To describe what the coast is like using simple geographical vocabulary (waves, sand, pebbles, tide). - To recognise how people use the coast for work and leisure. - To use simple maps and photographs to spot and talk about coastal features. - To compare the coast with where we live by identifying similarities and differences in human and physical features.
		
Weather & Seasons (Cycle B)	Hot and Cold Climates (Cycle B)	A Non European Small Area Study (Cycle B)
Big Question: How does weather affect what people wear, do, and build? Objectives: - To observe and record daily weather patterns. - To identify the four seasons and their key features. - To explore how weather affects what people wear and do. - To understand how weather influences buildings and homes. - To compare seasonal weather in the UK with another country.	Big Question: How does living in a hot or cold place change how people live? Objectives: - To locate hot and cold places on a world map. - To identify the weather and climate in hot and cold regions. - To explore how animals adapt to hot and cold environments. - To compare how people live in hot and cold places. - To describe how clothing, homes, and activities change with climate.	Big Question: What is life like for children living in Calcutta and how is it different from ours? Objectives: - To locate the chosen place on a world map. - To identify key physical and human features of the area. - To explore what daily life is like for children living there. - To compare this place with where we live. - To describe how the environment shapes the way people live.

♥ Catholic Social Teaching, Gospel and British Values Links:

Children develop an understanding of their local area, the wider United Kingdom and contrasting environments such as the coast. Through exploring how places meet people's needs, recognising diversity across the UK and learning how to care for natural environments, they begin to live out key principles of Catholic Social Teaching, including human dignity, solidarity, the common good, participation, the dignity of work and care for creation. At the same time, they deepen their understanding of British Values by showing respect for different communities, recognising the importance of rules for safety and fairness, and appreciating how kindness, responsibility and shared spaces help everyone to flourish.

Geography in Year 3 & 4

		
Antarctica (Cycle A)	Rainforests (Cycle A)	The Water Cycle (Cycle A)
Big Question: What makes Antarctica unique and why should we protect it? Objectives: - To locate Antarctica on a world map and identify the continents and oceans around it. - To describe Antarctica's climate and explain why it is one of the coldest, driest places on Earth. - To explore the animals that live in Antarctica and understand how they are adapted to survive. - To investigate how scientists study Antarctica and why research there is important for the whole world. - To explain why Antarctica needs protecting and how human actions (pollution, climate change) can affect this fragile environment.	Big Question: Why are rainforests so important to us and how should we protect them? Objectives: - To identify where the world's rainforests are located using maps and globes. - To describe key features of a rainforest such as climate, layers, plants and animals. - To explain why rainforests matter for oxygen, habitats, climate and people. - To understand how waste and human activity affect rainforests including deforestation, pollution and over-consumption. - To suggest ways we can help protect rainforests through reducing waste, recycling and making responsible choices.	Big Question: How does water travel around our world and why must we look after it? Objectives: - To describe the stages of the water cycle using simple vocabulary such as evaporation, condensation and precipitation. - To explain where our water comes from and how it moves through mountains, rivers, clouds and rainfall. - To identify different types of water sources such as lakes, rivers, seas and reservoirs. - To understand how wasting water affects the environment and why we must use water carefully. - To suggest ways we can save water at home and in school to protect our planet.
		
A UK and European Study (Cycle B)	Food Journeys (Cycle B)	The Place We Call Home (Cycle B)
Big Question: How do physical and human features give places their character? (link to Rome) Objectives: - To identify the key physical and human features of a chosen UK region. - To identify the key physical and human features of a contrasting European region. - To compare similarities and differences between the two regions. - To explain how physical features influence human activity in each region. - To describe how a region's character is shaped by its landscape, climate, and people.	Big Question: Where does our food come from and why is Fairtrade important? Objectives: - To identify where different foods come from by locating countries on a world map. - To describe how climate affects the food we can grow in different parts of the world. - To understand how food travels from farms to shops and into our homes. - To explain what Fairtrade means and how it helps farmers and workers around the world. - To recognise how our choices can support Fairtrade and make food production fairer for everyone.	Big Question: How can we use fieldwork and maps to understand our local area more deeply? Objectives: - To use maps of our local area, including simple 4-figure grid references to find key places nearby. - To interpret OS and digital maps of our town to identify landmarks, routes and land use. - To carry out fieldwork using measurements such as traffic counts, noise levels or weather observations. - To record what we discover about our local area using charts, labelled diagrams, sketches and notes. - To present our findings about the local environment using digital tools and clear explanations.
♥ Catholic Social Teaching and British Values Links: Children learn that the world is interconnected and that people, places and creation deserve care. This reflects Catholic Social Teaching principles such as Care for Creation, Human Dignity, Solidarity, and Rights and Responsibilities. They develop an understanding of how their actions can impact others locally and globally, including through ideas such as fairness and global trade (e.g. Fairtrade). They also develop British Values by showing respect for different communities, understanding fairness and justice, and recognising the importance of making responsible choices that support everyone.		

Geography in Year 5 & 6

		
Mountains Around the World (Cycle A)	North and South American Biomes Study (Cycle A)	Sources of Energy (Cycle A)
Big Question: How do mountains shape our planet and the lives of the people who depend on them? Objectives: - To locate the world's major mountain ranges using maps, atlases and digital tools. - To explain how different types of mountains are formed including fold, fault-block, volcanic and dome mountains. - To investigate how climate and altitude affect life on mountains including vegetation belts and animal adaptations. - To explore how people live, travel and survive in mountain environments through global case studies (e.g., Nepal, Andes, Alps). - To evaluate the risks and benefits of mountain environments including tourism, avalanches, climate change and conservation.	Big Question: How do the biomes of North and South America compare, and what can they teach us about life on Earth? Objectives: - To locate major biomes in North and South America using maps, atlases and digital tools. - To describe the climate characteristics of key biomes such as rainforest, tundra, desert and grassland. - To compare biodiversity by examining how plants and animals adapt to different environments. - To investigate how humans interact with these biomes including land use, conservation and environmental challenges. - To evaluate the importance of protecting diverse biomes and suggest ways people can act as responsible stewards of creation.	Big Question: Where does our energy come from and how can we use it responsibly? Objectives: - To identify different sources of energy including fossil fuels, wind, solar, hydro and nuclear. To explain how renewable and non-renewable energy sources work and compare their advantages and disadvantages. - To understand how energy reaches our homes through power stations, the National Grid and local distribution. - To explore the environmental impact of energy use including pollution, carbon emissions and climate change. - To suggest ways we can reduce energy use at home, in school and in our community to protect the planet.
		
Forces That Shape Our Planet (Cycle B)	Coasts and Oceans (Cycle B)	Understanding Migration (Cycle B)
Big Question: How do Earth's powerful forces shape the landscapes and lives of people around the world? Objectives: - To explain how tectonic plates move and how this creates mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes. - To locate major volcanoes and earthquake zones using world maps, atlases and digital tools. - To describe how volcanoes erupt and earthquakes occur using accurate scientific vocabulary. - To investigate how natural disasters affect people and places through real case studies (e.g., Nepal, Iceland, Hawaii). - To evaluate how communities prepare for and respond to natural hazards and propose ways to reduce risk.	Big Question: What can we do to protect our coasts and oceans in a changing world? Objectives: - To explain how physical processes shape coastlines including erosion and deposition. - To investigate how climate change affects coasts and oceans such as rising sea levels, storms and warming seas. - To analyse how humans use and impact coastal environments through tourism, fishing, development and pollution. - To evaluate the effects of ocean pollution including plastics, chemicals and waste on marine life and ecosystems. - To propose sustainable actions to protect coasts and oceans at local, national and global levels.	Big Question: How does geography help us understand why people become refugees and how communities can respond? Objectives: - To locate countries and regions affected by migration and displacement using maps, atlases and digital mapping. - To explain key physical and human geographical reasons why people move, including forced migration. - To describe and compare the journeys refugees take using geographical sources such as maps, images and data. - To investigate how different countries, including the UK, respond to and support refugees. - To explain how migration can change and shape communities, recognising diversity and shared responsibility. - To identify ways people can contribute positively to their community by welcoming and supporting others.

♥ Catholic Social Teaching and British Values Links:

Across these units, children deepen their understanding of the world while learning to value people, places and the environment. By exploring mountains, biomes, energy, natural hazards, coasts and migration, they develop a sense of human dignity, solidarity, the common good, care for creation and global responsibility, reflecting key principles of Catholic Social Teaching. At the same time, they strengthen their understanding of British Values by recognising diversity, respecting different communities, understanding how rules and shared responsibilities keep people safe, and considering how individuals and societies can act with fairness, compassion and responsibility.

Useful Geographical Links and Resources

 [Primary Resources for Schools | National Geographic Kids](#)

 [Have Fun Exploring Our Planet With BBC Earth Kids | BBC Earth](#)

 [Primary resources, homework help and online games - BBC Bitesize](#)

 [Free, time-saving teacher resources | Oak National Academy](#)

 [Go Jettters - CBeebies - BBC](#)

 [World Map / World Atlas / Atlas of the World Including Geography Facts and Flags - WorldAtlas.com](#)

 [OpenStreetMap](#)

 [Mapcarta - The Open Map](#)

 [Topics - Internet Geography](#)

 [Primary Geography resources for teachers](#)

 [BBC Weather - Home](#)

 [https://explore.osmaps.com/](#)

 [https://www.oddizzi.com](#)

 [https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources](#)