



The Cornwall Independent School

British Values and SMSC in Geography



British Values

At The Cornwall Independent School, fostering mutual respect, understanding and a strong sense of community is central to school life. We recognise that modern Britain is made up of people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and experiences, and we prepare our pupils to live and contribute positively within this diverse society. British Values support the development of respectful, responsible and tolerant citizens who appreciate the rights, freedoms and viewpoints of others. The Cornwall Independent School is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued and protected from intimidation, extremism, radicalisation, or any influence that seeks to undermine their wellbeing, personal development or the values of a democratic society.

British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance, are important in geography because the subject helps students understand human societies, develop global citizenship, and recognise their responsibilities towards environmental stewardship. Through geography, learners explore diverse cultures, consider different perspectives, and understand how people and environments are interconnected, reinforcing these core values.

Democracy	Debating global issues: Students discuss topics such as resource allocation, local planning decisions, and social inequalities, learning how democratic processes ensure that different viewpoints are heard, considered, and respected. Participating in decision-making: Learners contribute their opinions on local geography projects, urban regeneration proposals, and school fieldwork choices, developing an understanding of how individuals can influence decisions that affect their communities.
The Rule of Law	Understanding environmental rules: Students explore laws that protect national parks, conservation areas, and international agreements on climate change. This helps them understand the importance of the rule of law in safeguarding environments and promoting sustainable development. Appreciating global regulations: Learners examine why different countries enforce specific environmental restrictions or planning laws, developing an understanding of how legal frameworks help manage resources, protect communities, and address global challenges responsibly.
Individual Liberty	Empowering student action: Through fieldwork and environmental studies, students are encouraged to make informed personal choices about recycling, conservation, and reducing their carbon footprint. This promotes individual liberty by enabling learners to take responsibility for their own actions and contribute positively to society and the environment. Freedom of expression: Geography lessons provide a safe and respectful environment for students to discuss and debate controversial geographical issues, such as climate change, migration, and sustainable development. This supports individual liberty by encouraging learners to express their views, consider different perspectives, and engage in informed discussion while respecting peers

**Mutual Respect and Tolerance of
those with different faiths and beliefs**

Valuing diverse landscapes and cultures: Students study contrasting localities in the UK and around the world, developing an appreciation of how different cultures, traditions, and belief systems shape people's relationships with the environment. This promotes mutual respect and tolerance by helping learners recognise and value diversity.

Collaborative learning: Group work and fieldwork encourage students to listen to one another, share ideas, and respect differing viewpoints on geographical issues such as migration, urban development, and environmental management. This helps students understand the importance of respectful discussion and cooperation.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education

At The Cornwall Independent School, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education is at the heart of our values and ethos. We believe in nurturing the whole child and encouraging every pupil to develop respect for themselves, others and the world around them. Through our commitment to kindness, empathy, integrity and responsibility, we foster a supportive and inclusive community where everyone feels valued and empowered to thrive.

We encourage pupils to embrace diversity, demonstrate tolerance, build resilience and reflect on their experiences and actions. By promoting these qualities, we help our young people become confident, compassionate and active citizens who are well prepared for life in modern Britain and able to make positive progress in every aspect of their learning and personal development.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education is highly relevant in geography because it connects physical processes and places with the experiences, values, and actions of people. Geography explores how individuals, communities, and nations interact with the environment and with one another, making it a natural vehicle for promoting global citizenship. Through the study of diverse cultures, environmental challenges, sustainability, and social issues, students develop empathy, respect, ethical awareness, and a deeper understanding of their role in an interconnected world.

Spiritual	Students' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material wellbeing	Geography fosters a sense of wonder about the natural world and the forces that shape it. • Awe and Wonder: Studying massive physical features like glaciers, volcanoes, and the Grand Canyon creates appreciation for Earth's power. • Interconnectedness: Learning how global ecosystems rely on delicate balances helps students feel connected to something larger than themselves. • Human Resilience: Exploring how communities survive in extreme environments (like deserts or polar regions) highlights the power of the human spirit.
Moral	Students' moral development involves students acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. They are able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop the knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them.	Geography forces students to confront ethical dilemmas regarding resource distribution and environmental choices. • Sustainability: Students debate the ethics of resource exploitation versus conservation, such as deforestation in the Amazon. • Global Inequality: Investigating the widening gap between high-income and low-income countries challenges students to think about fairness. • Climate Justice: Lessons reveal how greenhouse emissions from wealthy nations disproportionately impact poorer, vulnerable regions.

Social	Students' social development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities.	Geography examines how societies function, grow, and resolve conflicts over space and resources. • Urbanization: Students analyse how growing cities impact community living, housing shortages, and social division. • Migration: Learning about refugees and economic migrants builds empathy for why people leave their homes and how communities adapt. • Collaboration: Fieldwork requires teamwork, data sharing, and collective problem-solving in real-world environments.
Cultural	Students' cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and an ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. They acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways of doing things and curiosity about differences. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture.	Geography is fundamentally the study of different places and the diverse peoples who inhabit them. • Global Diversity: Students explore different religions, traditions, and lifestyles, breaking down stereotypes about foreign countries. • Multicultural Societies: Lessons on migration show how diverse cultures enrich local food, music, languages, and architecture. • Identity and Place: Exploring how local geography shapes a person's sense of belonging helps students understand their own cultural identity.

Geography plays a vital role in promoting both Fundamental British Values (FBV) and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. Through the study of people, places, and environments, students gain an understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance. At the same time, geography encourages learners to reflect on their place in the world, consider moral and environmental issues, work collaboratively with others, and appreciate diverse cultures and perspectives.

By exploring local, national, and global challenges, students develop the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become responsible, informed, and active citizens. Geography therefore provides a powerful framework for preparing young people to contribute positively to society while fostering a sense of stewardship for the planet and respect for the diversity of the world around them