

## Map skills

As Ofsted stated, in good quality geography teaching "Maps at a variety of scales are used frequently as a matter of routine and are an intrinsic part of learning geography. This ensures that children have a good spatial awareness and are very secure in their ability to locate the places they are studying." Using maps regularly and in a variety of ways is at the heart of St.Alban's geography curriculum. At St.Alban's, staff have identified the key components of mapping and recognise the small steps of progression in each of these areas. The essential elements of mapping that we focus on are:

- **Using and interpreting maps**
- **Drawing maps**
- **Position and orientation**
- **Symbols**
- **Digital mapping**

To help supplement the teaching of these skills, we use DigiMaps, an award-winning online mapping service supporting the cross-curricular teaching of geography. In recent years, there has been a significant shift in the way maps are used and accessed in everyday life, as many people are moving away from paper maps and instead use digital data on computers and mobile phones. We therefore think it is essential that students are able to access a variety of maps, including digital mapping, to prepare them for later life in today's world.



## Map skills






Children will encounter the same map of the world proudly displayed in their classrooms every year from Year Two right up until Year Six. This is so that children become increasingly familiar with the resource and new learning is not hindered by having to simultaneously interpret a different map. The classroom maps are regularly referred to and used as a teaching tool throughout the school week. The maps are not solely used within geography lessons but also, in other subject areas when relevant. For instance, if children were learning about the Moroccan explorer "Ibn Battuta" in their history lessons, teachers would use the classroom map to highlight where in the world Morocco is. This encourages children to make pertinent connections between subject areas and helps to further embed their locational knowledge.



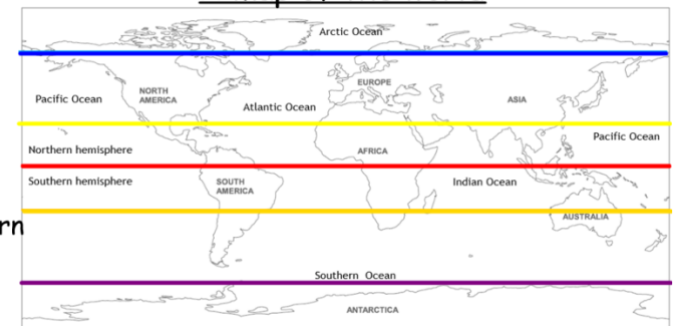
Our classroom maps.

An example of the completed map that children will be familiar with before leaving St.Alban's.

### Key

-  - Equator
-  - Arctic circle
-  - Antarctic circle
-  - Tropic of cancer
-  - Tropic of Capricorn

### A map of the world



Pupils are provided with a world map in Year Two which, like scholars, they return to and build upon each year with new learning. In Year 2, children memorise the 7 continents and 5 oceans and they label these on their world map. In Year 3, Children add a red line across the middle of their world map to represent the equator. The colour red was intentionally chosen to symbolise the high temperatures experienced by countries on/or near the equator. Year 4 children learn that north of the equator is called the Northern Hemisphere while south of the equator is the Southern Hemisphere. This information is again added to their maps. In Year 5, children add a blue line to represent the Arctic circle and a purple line for the Antarctic circle. Finally, in Y6 children add a yellow line to represent the Tropic of Cancer and an orange line to represent the Tropic of Capricorn. A key is used from Y3 upwards to explain what each different colour line signifies. These maps are always stuck into the front of pupils' geography books and are regularly reviewed.