

WESTFIELD PRIMARY

Geography Policy

Updated November 2025

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This Policy was reviewed by Miss E Townson



Geographical understanding fires children's curiosity and imagination about who we are, where we have come from, where we live and where we might be going next. It helps children make sense of our place in the world and is central to their development as informed, active and responsible citizens. Children are supported to understand the physical world and the society in which they grow up. They study local, regional and world environments. They learn about the impact of their actions on the planet and understand the importance of developing a sustainable future. Children are involved in field studies out of school on both day and residential trips.

We aim:

- to enable children to identify their place in the local environment
- to develop children's understanding of how their environment affects them and how they affect it
- to make children aware of the ways in which their local area relates to the rest of the U.K. and the wider world
- to encourage curiosity about people in other places and to celebrate similarities and differences between people
- to enable children to understand how their physical environment came about
- to develop skills of observation, deduction, interpretation and recording of data
- to develop skills that enable children to read and use maps, understand weather charts and interpret simple statistics

Each phase team teaches topics that ensure progression through the key stages. The content is in accordance with the requirements of the Geography National Curriculum.

Key Stage 1

Pupils are encouraged to develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They are taught basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils are taught about:

Locational knowledge

- name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom and a small area in a contrasting non-European country

Human and physical geography

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
 - key physical features, including beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
 - key human features, including city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language (for example, near/far; left/right) to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of the surrounding environment

Key Stage 2

Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and South America. This includes the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. Pupils develop their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils are taught about:

Locational knowledge

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries and major cities
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers) and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of the human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country and a region within North or South America

Human and physical geography

- describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - human geography, including types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four- and six-figure grid references, symbols and keys (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans, graphs and digital technologies

Teaching and Resources

All staff are responsible for supporting the delivery of the Geography curriculum. Most geography work takes place in the classroom; however, many units involve studies conducted in the school grounds, in the local area or on field trips to provide a wider range of experiences. Resources include reference books, aerial photographs, maps, charts, DVDs and computer software. These are arranged by topic and kept in labelled storage boxes in the Resource Room.

Inclusion

All children have access to the Geography curriculum. Materials will be simplified where necessary and additional support provided for less able pupils. More able pupils will be expected to undertake work of a more complex nature. Geography in both key stages is taught as part of the creative curriculum. Links will be made with Science, Mathematics, History, Literacy, PSHE and Art and D.T.

