

GEOGRAPHY

[Two-year curriculum overview](#) | [Mixed-age classes](#) | [National Curriculum links](#)

Our Geography curriculum encourages children to be curious about the world, understand how people and places are connected, and think like geographers through mapping, observation, enquiry and fieldwork. This booklet summarises the learning journey across Cycle A and Cycle B for our mixed-age classes.

Curriculum at a glance

Our curriculum follows a two-year rolling programme for mixed-age classes. Cycle A and Cycle B together ensure broad coverage, progression in knowledge and skills, and clear links to the National Curriculum.

CYCLE A

Phase	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Years 1/2	What is it like here?	What is the weather like in the UK?	What can you see at the coast?
Years 3/4	Why do people live near volcanoes?	Why are rainforests important to us?	Where does our food come from?
Years 5/6	What is life like in the Alps?	Would you like to live in the desert?	Where does our energy come from?

CYCLE B

Phase	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Years 1/2	Where am I?	Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place?	What is it like to live in Shanghai?
Years 3/4	Who lives in Antarctica?	Are all settlements the same?	What are rivers and how are they used?
Years 5/6	Why does population change?	Why do oceans matter?	Can I carry out an independent fieldwork enquiry?

How to read this document

Each unit includes key knowledge, key skills, key vocabulary and the most relevant National Curriculum links. The vocabulary shown is illustrative rather than exhaustive and highlights the most important disciplinary and substantive language pupils will meet.

These website summaries are designed to give families a clear picture of the learning journey across the two-year cycle while keeping the full detail of planning, pedagogy and assessment in school documents.

GEOGRAPHY

Cycle A | Years 1/2 · Key Stage 1

Cycle A Years 1/2 · Key Stage 1

AUTUMN What is it like here?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Our school and local area have identifiable human and physical features; places can be represented in maps and aerial photographs.

KEY SKILLS Identify landmarks in aerial photographs; make simple maps and keys; follow routes and investigate the school grounds.

KEY VOCABULARY aerial photograph · landmark · human feature · physical feature · map · route

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: place knowledge; human and physical geography; geographical skills and fieldwork.

SPRING What is the weather like in the UK?

KEY KNOWLEDGE The UK is made up of four countries with different locations and weather patterns; weather changes across days and seasons.

KEY SKILLS Locate the four UK countries and capital cities; observe, record and compare daily weather using simple equipment and charts.

KEY VOCABULARY United Kingdom · England · Scotland · Wales · Northern Ireland · weather · season · temperature

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: locational knowledge (UK); human and physical geography (weather); fieldwork.

SUMMER What can you see at the coast?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Continents, oceans and surrounding seas can be located; coastal areas have physical features and human uses, including tourism.

KEY SKILLS Use maps to locate oceans, seas and coasts; distinguish human and physical features; use observation to investigate a place.

KEY VOCABULARY continent · ocean · sea · coast · cliff · beach · harbour · tourist

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: locational knowledge (continents/oceans/UK seas); place knowledge; human and physical geography; fieldwork.

GEOGRAPHY

Cycle A | Years 3/4 · Lower Key Stage 2

Cycle A Years 3/4 · Lower Key Stage 2

AUTUMN Why do people live near volcanoes?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Earth structure, tectonic plates and processes explain volcanoes and earthquakes; people adapt to the benefits and risks of volcanic places.

KEY SKILLS Locate tectonic and volcanic areas; explain processes using diagrams; interpret maps and evidence about Mount Etna.

KEY VOCABULARY crust · mantle · tectonic plate · volcano · magma · earthquake · fertile soil

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: human and physical geography (volcanoes/earthquakes); locational knowledge; skills and fieldwork.

SPRING Why are rainforests important to us?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Tropical rainforests are ecosystems with distinct layers; the Amazon supports biodiversity and communities and is affected by human activity.

KEY SKILLS Locate the Amazon; interpret climate and biome maps; compare forests and investigate human impacts using evidence.

KEY VOCABULARY biome · tropical rainforest · ecosystem · vegetation · deforestation · indigenous peoples

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: physical geography (climate zones, biomes, vegetation belts); human geography; regional study of South America.

SUMMER Where does our food come from?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Food is grown and traded across different environments; food miles, imports and fair trade influence people and places.

KEY SKILLS Map food origins and trade routes; compare local/global supply; investigate school food sources and make evidence-based judgements.

KEY VOCABULARY import · export · trade · food miles · distribution · seasonal food · responsible trade

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: human geography (trade, land use, resources); locational knowledge; geographical enquiry.

GEOGRAPHY

Cycle A | Years 5/6 · Upper Key Stage 2

Cycle A Years 5/6 · Upper Key Stage 2

AUTUMN What is life like in the Alps?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Mountain environments have distinctive climate, relief and land use; tourism shapes settlements and landscapes in the Alps.

KEY SKILLS Locate Alpine countries; interpret maps of land height; investigate recreation locally and compare land use with Innsbruck.

KEY VOCABULARY The Alps · mountain range · climate · tourism · recreational land · land height

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: locational knowledge (European region); physical geography (mountains); human geography (land use).

SPRING Would you like to live in the desert?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Hot deserts are arid biomes with distinctive physical processes; people adapt to opportunities and challenges of desert environments.

KEY SKILLS Locate major deserts; analyse climate information; compare ways that people use and adapt to desert landscapes.

KEY VOCABULARY arid · desert · biome · erosion · mesa · salt flat · vegetation · adaptation

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: physical geography (climate zones, biomes, vegetation belts); place and locational knowledge.

SUMMER Where does our energy come from?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Energy may come from renewable and non-renewable resources; production and consumption create social and environmental impacts.

KEY SKILLS Map energy sources and distribution; analyse evidence; investigate local energy use and evaluate sustainability.

KEY VOCABULARY energy source · renewable · non-renewable · hydropower · wind power · fossil fuel · emissions

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: human geography (natural resources, energy); fieldwork; locational skills.

GEOGRAPHY

Cycle B | Years 1/2 · Key Stage 1

Cycle B Years 1/2 · Key Stage 1

AUTUMN Where am I?

KEY KNOWLEDGE We live within nested geographical places: school, locality, country and world; maps represent familiar spaces with symbols.

KEY SKILLS Locate UK countries; use north, south, east and west and simple directional language; draw maps and use a key.

KEY VOCABULARY place · country · United Kingdom · compass · north · south · east · west · symbol · key

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: locational knowledge (UK); geographical skills and fieldwork (maps, compass directions).

SPRING Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place?

KEY KNOWLEDGE World locations have different climates; equatorial and polar regions have contrasting characteristics; Kenya and polar places can be compared.

KEY SKILLS Locate continents, equator-related hot areas and polar regions; use maps and observations to compare weather and environments.

KEY VOCABULARY continent · climate · desert · polar · savannah · temperature · globe

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: locational knowledge (continents); place knowledge (contrasts); human and physical geography (climate).

SUMMER What is it like to live in Shanghai?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Shanghai is in China, Asia; its human and physical characteristics can be compared with those of our locality.

KEY SKILLS Use world maps and aerial photographs; identify land use; collect local evidence and draw a simple comparison map.

KEY VOCABULARY Asia · China · Shanghai · city · skyscraper · transport · urban · rural · land use

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS1: place knowledge (UK/non-European comparison); locational knowledge; geographical skills and fieldwork.

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Cycle B | Years 3/4 · Lower Key Stage 2

Cycle B Years 3/4 · Lower Key Stage 2

AUTUMN Who lives in Antarctica?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Antarctica has extreme polar conditions; latitude and location affect climate and human activity.

KEY SKILLS Locate Antarctica and use latitude/longitude; interpret sources about polar expeditions; collect comparative fieldwork evidence.

KEY VOCABULARY Antarctica · polar · latitude · longitude · ice shelf · iceberg · climate zone

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: locational knowledge (latitude/longitude/hemispheres); human and physical geography (climate).

SPRING Are all settlements the same?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Settlements vary in size, location and land use; rural and urban places have different characteristics, including differences between local areas and New Delhi.

KEY SKILLS Classify settlements; interpret land-use maps; gather local evidence and compare settlement patterns.

KEY VOCABULARY settlement · village · town · city · urban · rural · residential · commercial · land use

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: human geography (settlements/land use); place knowledge (UK and elsewhere); fieldwork.

SUMMER What are rivers and how are they used?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Rivers form part of the water cycle; river features, processes and human uses vary along their course.

KEY SKILLS Locate major rivers; label source, tributary and mouth; use maps and observation to investigate local water features.

KEY VOCABULARY water cycle · evaporation · precipitation · tributary · meander · source · mouth · floodplain

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: physical geography (rivers/water cycle); locational knowledge; geographical skills and fieldwork.

GEOGRAPHY

Cycle B | Years 5/6 · Upper Key Stage 2

Cycle B Years 5/6 · Upper Key Stage 2

AUTUMN Why does population change?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Population distribution and change are influenced by births, deaths, migration and social, economic and environmental factors.

KEY SKILLS Read population maps and data; explain patterns; evaluate push and pull factors and compare places.

KEY VOCABULARY population density · migration · birth rate · death rate · push factor · pull factor

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: human geography (settlements/economic activity); locational knowledge; geographical data interpretation.

SPRING Why do oceans matter?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Oceans influence life and ecosystems; the Great Barrier Reef is affected by pollution, warming and other pressures.

KEY SKILLS Locate ocean regions; analyse environmental evidence; investigate impacts and assess responses to threats.

KEY VOCABULARY ocean current · coral reef · coral bleaching · microplastics · overfishing · marine protection

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: physical geography; human impact on environments; locational knowledge; geographical enquiry.

SUMMER Can I carry out an independent fieldwork enquiry?

KEY KNOWLEDGE Geographers formulate questions, select evidence and methods and use findings to explain patterns in the local area.

KEY SKILLS Plan an enquiry; collect, record and analyse fieldwork data; use digital mapping and present justified conclusions.

KEY VOCABULARY fieldwork · enquiry · qualitative · quantitative · sample · GIS · evidence · conclusion

NATIONAL CURRICULUM KS2: geographical skills and fieldwork (observation, measurement, recording, presentation, digital mapping).

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Progression through the curriculum

Locational knowledge

Children progressively widen their mental map of the world. In Years 1/2 they begin with the local area, the UK and the continents and oceans. In Years 3/4 they study regions such as Antarctica, the Amazon and major world rivers. In Years 5/6 they work with more complex regional studies including the Alps, deserts, oceans and patterns of population change.

Human and physical geography

Pupils build secure knowledge of weather, coasts, settlements, trade, energy, climate zones, biomes, rivers, mountains and oceans. They learn how human choices and physical processes interact, and revisit ideas such as sustainability, land use and environmental impact in increasingly complex contexts.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

Across both cycles, pupils observe, ask questions, use maps and aerial photographs, collect and record data and present findings. Fieldwork begins with simple local observations in Key Stage 1 and develops towards comparative studies, map interpretation and increasingly independent enquiry in Key Stage 2.

Vocabulary progression

Vocabulary is carefully sequenced from core terms such as map, weather, coast and city to more specialised language including biome, irrigation, tributary, renewable energy, population density and climate change. This helps pupils think, talk and write like geographers.

National Curriculum coverage

The overview reflects the main Geography National Curriculum strands: locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, and geographical skills and fieldwork. Teachers use the school's detailed progression documents and Kapow planning to ensure full statutory coverage.