

Rationale

At The Forwards Centre, we believe that geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which helps children to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world by provoking and providing answers to questions about the world around us as well as our place in it. We seek to inspire in children a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote the children's interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. The curriculum is designed to develop knowledge and skills that are progressive, as well as transferable, equipping pupils well for further education and beyond.

Contribution and Readiness

We ensure that our geography curriculum:

- Stimulates, motivates and engages pupils who may have missed significant parts of their education and who may have had a negative experience of learning, in order for them to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of the world around them.
- Encourages pupils to develop key holistic skills, such as problem-solving, critical thinking and collaboration, all of which contribute to a readiness for future challenges.
- Enables all pupils to experience academic success - ensuring that no child is disadvantaged due to their academic level, SEND need, what point on their educational journey they are at or what time in the year they arrive, by having a "climbing frame" to achieve clear ambitious end points.

Links to the National Curriculum:

- **Geographical Skills and Fieldwork:** Our children learn how to use maps, atlases and digital technologies. This develops their readiness by equipping them with practical skills to interpret and engage with the world.
- **Locational Knowledge:** Our children will explore local and global communities to foster a sense of global citizenship, and encourages them to contribute to discussions on environmental issues, sustainability and human geography.

Conduct and Morals

We ensure that pupils develop their own character attributes through the geography curriculum by:

- Embracing the essence of geography and how it naturally touches upon issues of environmental ethics, sustainability and global responsibility.
- Exploring how human actions impact the planet and encouraging pupils to reflect on their own moral conduct, and how they can play a role in protecting our world.

Links to the National Curriculum:

- **Human and Physical Geography:** Our children will explore the impact of human activity on the environment, such as deforestation and climate change to build an understanding of the ethical implications of our actions.
- **Understanding Place:** Our children will engage in discussions around fair trade, resource distribution and pollution, which allows them to reflect on their responsibilities as global citizens.

Celebrating Similarity and Difference

We ensure that pupils celebrate similarity and difference through the geography curriculum by:

- Learning to celebrate diversity in the human and physical world.
- Providing opportunities to learn about different cultures, countries and environments to allow children to develop respect and appreciation for the similarities and differences that exist in our global communities.

Links to the National Curriculum:

- **Place Knowledge:** Our children will compare an area of the UK with a non-European country to foster an appreciation for both the familiar and the unfamiliar, helping them to understand different ways of life as well as geographical features.
- **Human Geography:** Our children will learn about different cultures, traditions and different ways of living in varied environments to build a deeper respect for global diversity and interconnectedness.

Caring for Ourselves

We ensure that pupils learn to care for themselves through the geography curriculum by:

- Understanding our place in the world, both locally and globally.
- Exploring how environments can affect well-being and how sustainable living, including fair trade can improve the quality of life for themselves and others.
- Encouraging them to find their voice and to be confident to express their views.

Links to the National Curriculum:

- **Physical Geography:** Our children will learn about climate, weather and natural resources to understand how the environment can impact health and well-being, reinforcing the need to care for ourselves through environmental stewardship.
- **Sustainability:** Our children will learn to understand the importance of sustainable practices, including fair trade, encouraging them to take care of their immediate and global environments, which in turn supports self-care and well-being.

Culture and Creativity

We ensure that pupils learn about culture and creativity through the geography curriculum by:

- Exploring diverse cultures, landscapes and environments in imaginative and engaging ways.
- Ensuring that pupils can respond to their learning and express their thoughts and feelings in creative ways.

Links to the National Curriculum:

- **Geographical Skills and Fieldwork:** Our children will use creative approaches to learning, such as designing maps or constructing models of geographical features to develop imaginative thinking.
- **Exploration of Cultures:** Our children will engage in discussions about how culture and geography are interlinked by studying different countries, landscapes and environments, inspiring creative responses through art, storytelling or project work.

Curriculum Design

The Geography Curriculum at the Forwards Centre is designed and delivered with the personal development of children at the heart of its teaching. Each of the 'Forwards Centre 5' finds a natural home in geography, enriching both pupils' academic understanding and holistic growth. This aligns with the National Curriculum's emphasis on developing pupils as informed, responsible and engaged citizens of the world.

We recognise that many pupils at the Forwards Centre may face challenges with literacy, but we place significant emphasis on developing reading fluency and confidence within geography. Geography lessons incorporate diverse texts, including atlases, diagrams, information sheets, maps and case studies. Pupils are encouraged to read aloud and decode geographical terminology, improving their fluency and confidence with subject-specific vocabulary. For children with lower reading ages, additional support is provided through peer support, phonics interventions and the use of accessible materials, such as word and sound mats. This ensures all pupils can engage with geographical content.

Geography provides a unique opportunity to inspire interest through high-quality texts about the world. For example, pupils read engaging extracts about natural disasters or cultural differences, which not only improve reading skills but also encourage curiosity and engagement.

Overall, our approach ensures that pupils, regardless of their starting points, are given the tools and encouragement to read with greater fluency and confidence within the context of geography.

Curriculum Intent

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Green Room Cycle A	Geography Our School		Geography Our Country			Geography Beside the Seaside
Green Room Cycle B		Geography What's the Weather Like?	Geography Magical Mapping			Geography What a Wonderful World!
Blue and Burgundy Room Cycle A			Geography Extreme Earth			
Blue and Burgundy Room Cycle B	Geography Rivers and Mountains				Geography Exploring Europe (including the UK)	
Purple Orange Yellow and Turquoise Room Cycle A			Geography The Amazing Americas			
Purple Orange Yellow and Turquoise Room Cycle B	Geography Our Changing World				Geography Planet Earth including Biomes	

Assessment and Progress in Geography

At the Forwards Centre, we believe that regular assessment is crucial to learning because it provides both staff and pupils with valuable insights into understanding and progress. It helps identify strengths and areas for improvement, guiding teaching strategies and the personalised support given to our pupils. Additionally, assessments help to ensure that learning intentions are met and that pupils are developing the skills and knowledge necessary for future success.

Because of the diverse needs of our pupils, we measure progress on an individual basis. Pupils often arrive with gaps in their education, but through targeted interventions and adaptive teaching, they demonstrate substantial improvement in their geographical knowledge and skills. For example, many pupils progress from limited locational knowledge to being able to identify continents, oceans, and key countries confidently.

For every topic in geography, the mid-term plans set out the new knowledge and skills that pupils should acquire. During the term, teachers use a range of formative and summative assessments to systematically check pupils' understanding and to establish what new knowledge and skills they have acquired.

Every term teachers are asked to record any formative or summative assessments against the key knowledge objectives on the Insight system for the units of work that they have delivered.

We begin each unit with a pre-knowledge check to assess prior knowledge. Regular low-stakes quizzes, verbal questioning, and practical activities help track ongoing progress against 'I know' and 'I can' statements, interpreted from the National Curriculum. Most pupils show improvements in understanding key concepts such as physical and human geography, map skills, and environmental sustainability.

End-of-unit checks often reveal significant gains in both knowledge and critical thinking skills.

We believe that geography provides a platform for pupils to connect with real-world topics like climate change, urbanisation and cultural diversity, which encourages a sense of purpose and relevance. Local area studies help pupils build pride in their surroundings and develop a sense of place, which is critical for their social and emotional development. When we see our children developing personally, we know that they are doing well.

Despite barriers such as disrupted prior education, we equip pupils with the tools to succeed. Progress might be slower for some, but the tailored curriculum ensures every pupil experiences success in geography, often leading to increased engagement across other subjects.

For pupils who have been with us for a longer period of time, their work shows clear progress in the complexity and depth of responses both verbally and written. Although outcome data is not comparable year-on-year due to the ever-changing nature of our cohort, tracking data shows measurable improvements in key geography milestones, such as locational knowledge, map skills, and understanding human-environment interaction.

Feedback from pupils indicates increased enjoyment and understanding of geography.

This holistic approach ensures our pupils do well in geography relative to their personal starting points and prepares them for reintegration into mainstream settings or future learning pathways.