



# West Byfleet Junior School

## Geography Policy

### Statement of intent

West Byfleet Junior School recognises the importance of geography education in teaching pupils about the world around them. This policy will ensure the school complies with the national curriculum and help pupils have a solid grounding in geography and a strong understanding of worldwide cultures and the environment. Our school aims in geography:

- We want children to not only develop an understanding of the area, and indeed the world, in which they live but also to embed a life-long interest and sense of responsibility for their environment.
- Children should have an understanding of where they live within the world and how this affects their lifestyle and surroundings and how this compares to others in other countries.
- We want children to have specific knowledge about the world – ‘knowing where’s where’, locations, physical features and human features.
- We want children to have the skills necessary to explore the world for themselves – for example reading both traditional and digital maps, collecting and processing data and to encourage their natural curiosity to explore and discover.
- We want children to be aware that across the world, people’s lives have similarities and differences. The way people live their lives is partly dependent on the geography around them.
- We want children to understand that the world is an interconnected place – what happens in any part of the world affects the rest of it. Global links connect places together (e.g. trade).

This intent is implemented through the planning, delivery and assessment of the geography curriculum.

We share a ‘one-line rationale’ with children which summarises our aims to help the children understand why we learn about geography:

*“We learn geography because having an understanding of the world around us, and how and where we and others fit into it, is essential.”*

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Policy: Geography  
Governor Committee: C and L  
Nominated Staff Lead: Geography Leader

Status: Non- Statutory  
Review cycle: Annual  
Date of next review: Summer 2026

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) 'National curriculum in England: geography programmes of study'
- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Educational Visits and School Trips Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring a broad and balanced geography curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's geography curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's geography curriculum is implemented consistently.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to the geography curriculum.
- Ensuring all pupils are appropriately supported.
- Appointing a member of staff to lead on the school's approach to teaching geography.

The geography subject leader will be responsible for:

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for geography.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of geography, providing support for staff where necessary.

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- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all geography resources.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Advising on the contribution of geography to other curriculum areas.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Liaising with the geography lead about key topics, resources and supporting individual pupils.
- Ensuring that all relevant statutory content is covered within the school year.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this at the end of the year.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the geography lead or a member of the SLT.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary to teach the subject effectively.

The Inclusion Leader and SENCO will be responsible for:

- Liaising with the geography leader to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Advising/training staff on how to support the needs of pupils with SEND.

### 3. The National Curriculum

The national curriculum will be followed for all geography teaching.

During Years 3-6, pupils will be taught to:

#### Locational knowledge

- Locate countries around the world, using maps to focus on Europe 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 UK, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (e.g. hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time.

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- Identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Arctic and Antarctic Circle, and the Greenwich Meridian and other time zones.

### **Place knowledge**

- Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the UK, a region in another European country, and a region in North or South America.

### **Human and physical geography**

- Describe and understand key aspects of:
  - Physical geography: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle.
  - Human geography: 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 or 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 Ordnance Survey maps) to build knowledge of the UK and wider world.
- Use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using methods including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technology.

Coverage of the national curriculum is not the extent of our school curriculum - it is the minimum requirement. We go above and beyond the national curriculum in the following ways:

- We teach more complex ideas in UKS2 such as sustainability, green careers and the future world. These help to prepare the children for geography which requires higher level thinking and their reflection on the impact of their actions readying them for secondary school.

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- We teach more specifically about biomes (Y3) and refer back to these biomes in all future topics, where a link can be made, to give children a better idea of what biomes are.
- We include more than one comparison study as comparing lots of different places allows children to understand that people's lives have similarities and difference.

The curriculum is specific to our school and context in the following ways:

- We cover areas from all across the world and often children will have connections to some of these countries.
- We cover West Byfleet and the local area in Year 3.
- We cover Woking and the wider Surrey county; understanding landmarks and attractions (as part of tourism) in Year 5.
- We learn about and visit the Basingstoke Canal in Year 4.
- We visit the River Thames to carry out fieldwork.
- We carry out a lot of fieldwork in our local area of West Byfleet.

#### **4. Cross-curricular links**

Where possible, the geography curriculum will provide opportunities to establish links with other curriculum areas. This includes:

##### **English**

- Pupils' writing skills are developed through recording their planning and findings.
- Year 3 book focus 'Flotsam' with a link to oceans and the coast.
- Year 6 book focus 'The arrival' with a link to migration and global trade.

##### **History**

- Pupils use their locational knowledge to identify different areas of the world they study in history.
- Pupils consider changes through time in the local area, linking back to Stone Age – Iron Age.
- Linking our history Egypt topic with our rivers topic with a focus on the River Nile.
- Pupils will understand the physical and human features of Scandinavia before learning about Vikings and why they chose to invade.

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- Map work skills are linked as children look at maps from historical times.
- Making links between trade and the effect of rationing in WW2.

## Maths

- Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of measurement and data handling, including through recording their findings on charts, tables and graphs.
- The use of coordinates (through grid references) to locate and describe on a map
- Pupils will use their understanding of scaling and sizing to read OS and digital maps.

## Science

- Pupils use their knowledge of the natural world to identify and analyse features of physical geography.
- Pupils will learn about the water cycle which will link to the rivers topic in Year 4
- Our topic on the Basingstoke canal, rivers and coasts allows the children to further develop their knowledge on the impact of climate, erosion and other scientific factors.

## Computing

- Pupils use digital mapping software.

## PSHE

- Pupils will learn about the importance of protecting and looking after the environment, using their knowledge of what makes a good global citizen and the impact of their own actions on others.

## Art/DT

- Pupils will use 'junk material' to create a replica of their local town. Understanding how materials can be used to represent and build.

## 5. Teaching and assessment

### Planning

The statutory national curriculum content from the DfE's 'Geography programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2', as outlined above, is the starting point for our planning.

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However, this has been mapped out by the geography subject leader to ensure that coverage is thorough and progression is clear. Teachers use the skills progression documents, MTP overviews and the knowledge organisers as their starting points for planning. Each unit covers six learning questions, including additional longer fieldwork tasks.

The skills and knowledge progressions outline the skills that will be taught in each unit of work. The curriculum is designed to build skills and knowledge incrementally, therefore it is not expected that units, or the order in which they are taught, will change unless explicitly stated by the geography subject leader.

Planning and resources will be in place for teachers to use year-on-year, saving teachers valuable time and reducing workload pressures. There is room for units to be improved and adapted, but any changes must be discussed with the geography subject leader first.

In line with the school's teaching and learning policy, all lessons will have clear learning questions, which are shared and reviewed with pupils. Each lesson will start with a short retrieval session, utilising the approaches set out in the teaching and learning policy. Retrieval should cover all previous years, not just what has been taught that year. Short-term planning will be used flexibly to reflect the objective of the lesson and the success criteria based on the success of the previous lesson(s), referencing the skills progressions and considering pupils' needs.

## Teaching

Pupils will be taught to describe associated processes and key characteristics in common language, as well as understand and use technical terminology and specialist vocabulary. Lessons will allow for a wide range of geographical enquiry, including the following:

- Questioning, predicting and interpreting
- Pattern seeking
- Practical experiences
- Collaborative work
- Roleplay and discussions
- Problem-solving activities
- Classifying and grouping

Opportunities for outdoor learning will be provided where possible. Each year group will have the opportunity to undertake geography-based external educational visits at least once per year.

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Teachers will work with the geography subject leader to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met by:

- Setting tasks which can have a variety of responses.
- Providing resources of differing complexity, according to the ability and needs of pupils.
- Setting tasks of varying difficulty, depending on the ability and needs of the class.
- Utilising LSAs to ensure pupils are effectively supported.

## **Assessment**

Pupils will be assessed and their progression recorded in line with the school's assessment system for foundation subjects. Assessment in geography will be based upon geographical knowledge and understanding, and fieldwork skills.

Formative assessment will be carried out informally throughout the year. This will enable teachers to identify pupils' understanding of subjects and inform their immediate lesson planning.

Assessment will take various forms, including the following:

- Talking to pupils and asking questions, including during the retrieval section of each lesson
- Discussing pupils' work with them
- Marking work against learning objectives
- Observing practical tasks and activities
- Pupils' self-evaluation of their work

The skills and knowledge progression document as well as the assessment objectives show what is to be assessed. To sharpen assessment and support teachers in confidently assessing whether a child is working within the expected standard for their age, key objectives have been selected for each year group and will be available as an assessment grid. As the key objectives do not cover all of what is taught, pupils meeting the standards set out in the key objectives will have a broader range of knowledge and skills than those being assessed.

A summative grade is provided twice a year. Before February half term, teachers judge whether a child is on track to be at the expected standard for their year group or not, based on the evidence they have gathered so far. This predicted grade is sent to the school office receptionist, who updates each year group's data on the assessment spreadsheet. This data is shared with the headteacher and geography subject leader, who analyses the data and, when using the data analysis alongside other monitoring evidence, may respond in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Celebrating the success of a year group and highlighting good practice

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- Offering planning support to a year group
- Offering further training for teachers to improve their skills, knowledge and confidence in specific areas of geography teaching
- Amending the curriculum

A summative grade is given at the end of the school year, and is passed on to the children's next teacher. The geography subject leader will analyse the data and may respond as above.

Parents will be provided with a written report about their child's progress during the summer term every year. Reports will include information on the pupil's effort during geography, and whether they have achieved the expected standard for their age group. A written comment may be added to give further context or additional information. Verbal reports will be provided at parent-teacher meetings during the autumn and spring terms.

## Resources

Pupils will have access to a selection of school-owned equipment. The school will ensure that all pupils are able to access these resources.

## Health and safety

Appropriate risk assessments will be conducted for geography fieldwork lessons – control measures will be implemented to ensure activities can be undertaken safely.

## 6. Equal opportunities

All pupils will be given equal access to the entire geography curriculum, including fieldwork and educational visits.

Where required, pupils with SEND will be provided with additional support in order to fully engage with the geography curriculum.

Lessons will be adapted to meet all pupils' needs where appropriate, including being considerate of any pupil's protected characteristics, and alternative arrangements involving extra support will be provided where necessary

The school aims to provide more academically able pupils with the opportunity to extend their geographical studies through extension activities such as problem solving, investigative work and geographical research.

## 7. Monitoring and review

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This policy will be reviewed every two years by the geography subject leader, in collaboration with the headteacher.  
Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant staff.

## 8. Appendix

- LTP Overview
- MTP for each unit
- Skills, Knowledge and Vocabulary Progression Documents
- Key Objectives for Assessment

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