



Barnfields Primary School: Geography Subject Rationale

Geography Subject Quest at Barnfields:

To inspire a curiosity and fascination about the complexity of the world in which we live, developing a deeper understanding of diversity, people, resources, natural environments and the Earth's physical and human processes.

Knowledge Types in Geography

Substantive	Core	Disciplinary
		

Geography Intention

At Barnfields Primary School, we are committed to cultivating a profound understanding and appreciation of the world in which we live, as well as our individual roles within it. Our Geography curriculum is designed not only to impart essential knowledge but also to ignite curiosity and encourage critical thinking among our children.

Through a hands-on approach, children engage with a wide range of topics that explore both local and global environments. They examine geographical phenomena, cultural diversity, and the interconnectedness of ecosystems. Our curriculum covers pressing global issues such as climate change, resource management, and urbanisation, enabling children to recognise and analyse the challenges our planet faces today.

Additionally, we emphasise the importance of fieldwork and real-world experiences, allowing children to observe, investigate, and appreciate their surroundings first-hand. Whether it's through local community projects – led by our Eco Warriors, conservation efforts – using our HOPE Garden, or environmental advocacy initiatives- supported again by our Eco Warriors, our children have the opportunity to apply what they learn in the classroom to make a tangible difference.

Provision, Planning and Delivery

Provision

We bring our vision for Geography to life by:

- Prioritising Geography as a dedicated subject within the school timetable to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the world.
- Implementing a spiral curriculum that enables learners to progressively build upon key geographical knowledge, skills, and concepts.
- Providing hands-on learning opportunities through fieldwork, map skills, and the exploration of diverse environments.
- Connecting geographical studies with real-world examples by exploring the work of geographers, environmentalists, and cartographers.
- Encouraging collaborative discussions in pairs and small groups to develop critical thinking and effective communication about geographical issues.
- Reinforcing key geographical concepts such as place, space, environment, and sustainability to deepen understanding.
- Promoting the use of geographical vocabulary when analysing maps, case studies, and discussions about human and physical geography.



- Designing learning units that allow children to investigate their own surroundings and global issues, fostering curiosity and inquiry.
- Providing opportunities for independent research and exploration, helping children develop skills in questioning and problem-solving.
- Supporting children in articulating their observations and ideas clearly, refining their thinking about geographical challenges.
- Encouraging self-evaluation and constructive discussion about local and global geographical issues, emphasising reflection and growth.
- Exploring a diverse range of locations, cultures, and perspectives to develop a deeper understanding of the interconnected world and how it has changed over time.

Planning

Following the Geography Subject Road Map, children at Barnfields Primary School engage with a balanced and ambitious geography curriculum that builds progressively each year. From Year 1 onwards, children explore the four key areas of geography: locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography, and geographical skills and fieldwork. These are enriched by cross-curricular links, real-world case studies, and hands-on learning experiences.



Teachers use the Barnfields Knowledge Progression Grid, which outlines the key geographical knowledge to be taught, to create a detailed Medium-Term Plan (MTP) for each unit of learning. When planning, teachers consider key concepts and core knowledge, alongside the geographical tools and techniques used (e.g. map reading, data collection) and significant case studies or locations studied.

Delivery

The Geography curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is delivered through weekly lessons. To ensure that children are fully engaged in their learning, lessons are organised based on a termly unit of work, with these being delivered once a week. A minimum of ten hours per term is dedicated to developing key geographical knowledge, skills and understanding, allowing children to explore a range of topics in depth.

Progression

At Barnfields Primary School, we ensure progression in geography education by designing a curriculum that systematically builds children's knowledge over time. We understand that progression means children 'knowing more, remembering more,' and being able to apply their knowledge effectively. To achieve this, we carefully sequence learning so that children develop locational, place, human and physical, and geographical skills knowledge in a structured way. Our goal is to ensure that all children become confident in using geographical knowledge and skills, as outlined in the National Curriculum.



To support this, we plan our curriculum so that each new concept builds on prior learning. We establish a strong foundation by teaching essential knowledge first—such as map reading, key geographical terms, and understanding



different environments—before encouraging children to apply their knowledge through targeted questioning and fieldwork. This begins in Reception, where children are exposed to their sense of place and location as well as beginning to introduce geographical skills including map work and human and physical geography. We balance structured learning (where children master key geographical skills) with investigative learning (where they explore and apply their understanding to real-world scenarios). This enables children to move from guided learning to independent geographical enquiry.



Practice is a key part of our approach. We provide regular opportunities for children to revisit and refine their skills, ensuring they have time to master geographical techniques before applying them in new and more complex contexts. For example, when learning about map skills, children first develop an understanding of symbols and grid references before applying their knowledge to analyse different types of maps and create their own. By embedding practice into the curriculum, we help children deepen their understanding and confidence in using geographical skills and concepts.

Disciplinary Oracy

Oracy is an integral part of Geography at Barnfields, supporting children in developing the confidence and clarity needed to talk about the world. Through purposeful discussion, pupils learn to describe places, explore spatial relationships, interpret geographical information and share informed viewpoints.

In EYFS, children begin to talk about their immediate environment through stories, images and first-hand experiences. Teachers introduce early geographical language naturally through play and exploration, helping children name familiar places, recognise basic landforms and talk about weather and seasonal change.

As pupils move into Key Stage 1, talk becomes more structured. Children discuss maps, photographs and simple fieldwork observations, using guided prompts to describe human and physical features.

Teachers support the development of positional and comparative language, enabling children to talk about similarities, differences and simple patterns they notice in the world around them.

In Key Stage 2, pupils take part in more sustained geographical discussion. They use maps, fieldwork data, photographs and case studies as sources for talk, drawing on increasingly precise vocabulary to explain processes such as erosion, settlement development or climate variation. Teachers model the language of explanation and comparison, helping pupils articulate how and why places change over time.

Enquiry-led learning provides regular opportunities for pupils to ask geographical questions, analyse evidence and consider different perspectives. Through guided questioning and collaborative talk, children compare locations, explore cause and effect and justify their conclusions using a range of sources.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

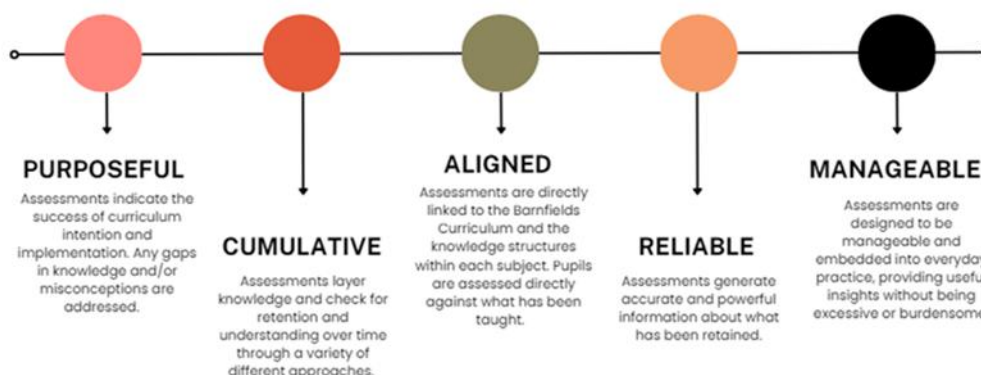


Assessment

Assessment in Geography follows the school's five assessment principles for foundation subjects: *purposeful, cumulative, aligned, reliable, and manageable*.



ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES ACROSS THE FOUNDATION SUBJECTS AT BARNFIELDS



Formative assessment is an integral part of the Geography curriculum and is used throughout each learning sequence to support children in securing key geographical knowledge and understanding. Teachers employ a range of formative strategies, including observation, questioning, learning conversations, retrieval practice, self and peer assessment, and the use of knowledge organisers. Knowledge organisers support children in recalling and retaining essential vocabulary, concepts and core knowledge, while enabling teachers to identify misconceptions and assess levels of understanding as learning progresses.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of each unit and is carefully aligned to the taught learning sequence. The end-of-unit assessment enables teachers to make secure judgements about how effectively children have understood and retained the intended knowledge and skills for that unit. Outcomes from summative assessment contribute to teachers' overall assessment of attainment and progress in Geography and are used to inform future curriculum planning and subject development, ensuring coherence and progression across the curriculum.

This structured approach to assessment ensures that both formative and summative practices are purposeful, manageable and closely aligned to curriculum intent, supporting high-quality geography teaching and learning.

Recording

Geography learning is documented in children's books, with each piece of learning linked to the specific learning objective. Evidence produced may include written explanations, annotated maps, diagrams, research findings, and photographs of fieldwork or practical activities. In UKS2 this may also include extended pieces of writing.

Reporting

Teachers upload children attainment data onto Sonar at the end of each term, assessing whether a child is working towards, at, or exceeding age-related expectations. The aim of this assessment is to evaluate how much geographical knowledge children have learned and retained. These assessments enable leaders to determine whether key curricular goals have been met and play an essential role in evaluating the impact of the Geography curriculum.



Children’s progress in Geography is formally communicated to parents through end-of-year reports. Additionally, informal updates may be provided during geography-related events, presentations, and parents’ evenings.

Supporting Research:

Ofsted (2021) Research Review Series: Geography

Ofsted (2023) Getting our Bearings: Geography Subject Report