Backworth Park Primary School

Geography Policy

September 2026

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Statement of intent

At Backworth Park Primary School, we are committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

Backworth Park Primary 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, a positive attitude towards sustainability, and a strong understanding of worldwide cultures and the environment.

The vision for pupils, staff and other members of the school community is to always look to achieve our personal best in every aspect of school life.

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 (2023) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Primary Teaching and Learning Policy
- Primary Assessment Policy
- Primary Curriculum 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 lead will be responsible for:

- Maximising pupils' potential attainment and achievement and taking lead accountability for pupil progress.
- Leading, managing and developing the school's geographical provision.
- 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.
- 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.

Geography 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 on an annual basis.
- 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.

3. The national curriculum

The national curriculum will be followed for all geography teaching.

During Reception, in accordance with the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage', focus will be put on the seven early learning goals (ELGs), with the geographical aspect of pupils' work relating to the objectives set out within the framework. The ELGs cover:

1. Communication and language: listening, attention and understanding; and speaking.
2. Personal, social and emotional development: self-regulation, managing self, and building relationships.
3. Physical development: gross motor skills and fine motor skills.
4. Literacy: comprehension, word reading, and writing.
5. Mathematics: number and numerical patterns.
6. Understanding the world: past and present; people, culture and communities; and the natural world.
7. Expressive arts and design: creating with materials; and being imaginative and expressive.

During Years 1 and 2, pupils will be taught to:

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 which make up the UK and its surrounding seas.

Place knowledge

- Understand the geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the UK and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.

Human and physical geography

- Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the UK.
- Locate 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: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather.
    - Key human features: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- Use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the UK and its countries, as well as any other countries, continents and oceans studied.
- Use simple compass directions (i.e. North, South, East and West), and locational and directional language, to describe the location of features and routes on a map.
- Use aerial photos and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and construct basic symbols in a key.
- Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of the school its grounds and identify the key human and physical features of the surrounding environment.

During Years 3 to 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.
- 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 ad 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.

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.

Maths

- Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of measurement and data handling, including through recording their findings on charts, tables and graphs.

Science

- Pupils use their knowledge of the natural world to identify and analyse features of physical geography.

5. Teaching and assessment

Lesson planning

All relevant staff will be briefed on the school's lesson planning procedures as part of staff training.

Throughout the school, geography will be taught as a discrete lesson and as part of cross-curricular teaching when appropriate. 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 their planning.

Lesson plans will balance visual, auditory and kinaesthetic elements used in teaching, ensuring that all pupils with different learning styles can access the learning experience. All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with pupils.

Long-term planning will be used to outline the units to be taught within each year group. Medium-term planning will be used to outline the vocabulary and skills that will be taught in each unit of work, as well as highlighting the opportunities for assessment, identifying learning objectives, main learning activities and differentiation. Short-term planning will be used flexibly to reflect the objective of the lesson, the success criteria and the aim of the next lesson, building on medium-term planning and taking into account 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
- Researching using secondary sources

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.

Assessment

Pupils will be assessed and their progression recorded in line with the school's Primary Assessment Policy. Assessment in geography will be based upon geographical knowledge and understanding.

Pupils will be assessed continually throughout the year and will undertake a summative assessment at the end of each academic year. 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. The results of end-of-year summative assessments will be passed to relevant members of staff, such as the pupil's future geography teacher.

Assessment will take various forms, including the following:

- Talking to pupils and asking questions
- Discussing pupils' work with them
- Marking work against learning objectives
- Specific assignments for individual pupils
- Observing practical group and individual tasks and activities
- Pupils' self-evaluation of their work
- Classroom tests and formal exams

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 attitude towards geography, progress in understanding geographical methods, ability to investigate, and the knowledge levels they have achieved. Verbal reports will be provided at parent-teacher meetings during the Autumn and Spring terms.

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.

Where it is inappropriate for a pupil to participate in a specific lesson because of reasons related to any protected characteristics, the lesson will be adapted to meet the pupil's needs 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

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the geography lead, in collaboration with the headteacher. The next scheduled review for this policy is October 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to geography teachers and other relevant staff.