Geography Overview 2024-2025

Intent

Bassingbourn's Geography curriculum aims to inspire pupils to become curious, explorative thinkers with a broad knowledge of the world – in other words, to think like geographers. We want pupils to develop the confidence to question and observe places, collect and record data in a variety of ways, and analyse and present their findings. Through this curriculum, we aim to build an understanding of how geography shapes our lives at different scales and over time. Pupils will be encouraged to become resourceful, active citizens with the skills to contribute to and improve the world around them.
Our curriculum promotes:
The development of both geographical skills and knowledge.
Critical thinking through asking perceptive questions, explaining ideas, and analysing evidence.
Progressive fieldwork skills across all year groups.
A strong understanding of the local area and how it compares to other places in the world.
A secure grasp of key geographical concepts, terms, and vocabulary.
Bassingbourn's Geography curriculum enables pupils to meet the end-of-key-stage attainment targets set out in the National Curriculum. In EYFS, the activities support pupils in working towards the 'Understanding the World' Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals, while providing the foundational knowledge they will need for geography learning in Key Stage 1.

Implementation

The National Curriculum organises the Geography attainment targets under four subheadings, or strands:Locational knowledge Place knowledge Human and physical geography Geographical skills and fieldwork

Bassingbourn's Geography curriculum has a clear progression of skills and knowledge within these four strands across each year group. Our Progression of Skills and Knowledge outlines what is taught in each year group and how learning builds over time to ensure that attainment targets are securely met by the end of each key stage.
Key geographical concepts are woven throughout all units rather than taught separately, as shown in the Progression of Key Geographical Concepts. Our National Curriculum coverage document identifies how our units meet the attainment targets and strands for Key Stages 1 and 2. It also shows how activities in EYFS address the relevant Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals.
The Bassingbourn Geography curriculum is a spiral curriculum. Essential knowledge and skills are revisited with increasing complexity, enabling pupils to build on prior learning. Locational knowledge, in particular, is reviewed regularly to help consolidate pupils' understanding of key geographical concepts such as scale and place.
The two EYFS units provide a strong foundation of geographical skills, knowledge, and enquiry, supporting children to transition smoothly into Key Stage 1 geography learning while also meeting the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals. These units include a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which teachers can adapt to fit with Reception class themes and topics.

Impact

Cross-curricular links are built into each unit of Bassingbourn's Geography curriculum, allowing pupils to make meaningful connections and apply their geographical knowledge and skills across other subjects.

Enquiry questions form the basis of our Key Stage 1 and 2 units. These open-ended questions have no set answers, encouraging purposeful learning and genuine engagement. By working to answer them, pupils develop the skills to collect, interpret, and present data using geographical methods and to make informed decisions based on their findings.

Each unit includes geographical skills and fieldwork to ensure pupils regularly practise and refine these skills. Fieldwork follows an enquiry cycle of question, observe, measure, record, and present, reflecting the processes set out in the National Curriculum. Pupils learn how to select an area of enquiry, plan how to measure and capture data using a range of methods, and present their findings in appropriate formats.

Fieldwork ranges from small-scale investigations within the school grounds to larger visits exploring human and physical geography in different settings. Regular opportunities to practise fieldwork within the local environment build confidence and understanding, allowing pupils to evaluate methods in a familiar context before applying them to wider comparisons. This approach ensures fieldwork is accessible, consistent, and deeply rooted in pupils' understanding of their locality.

Lessons are taught using a range of strategies, including independent work, paired and group tasks, hands-on activities, computer-based tasks, and collaborative projects. This variety ensures lessons are engaging and accessible to different learning styles. Each lesson includes guidance for adapting teaching to support all learners and provides opportunities to extend and challenge pupils where needed.

Knowledge organisers support pupils in recalling key facts and vocabulary, helping them develop a secure foundation of factual knowledge. Teacher subject knowledge is supported through resources and CPD, including guidance videos and planning documents, ensuring lessons are taught with confidence and accuracy.

Bassingbourn's Geography curriculum is timetabled to ensure consistent, high-quality provision across all year groups. Geography lessons take place on a regular cycle, giving pupils sufficient time to develop and consolidate skills while maintaining progression throughout the school. Resources such as maps, atlases, globes, compasses, and digital mapping tools are readily available to support delivery.

To raise the profile of Geography in school, we celebrate learning through displays, assemblies, enrichment days, and themed events. Extra-curricular opportunities, such as field trips, visits, and guest speakers, enhance pupils' experiences and deepen their understanding of the subject.

Assessment and Progress Tracking
Formative and summative assessment are embedded throughout the curriculum. Teachers assess learning through observation, questioning, and the evaluation of work against learning objectives. Each unit includes a unit quiz and knowledge catcher, which can be used at the start or end of the unit to measure progress and identify gaps. Pupils also present their findings as part of the assessment process, demonstrating their geographical skills and understanding.

Progress is tracked using school-wide systems to ensure pupils are on track to meet the end-of-key-stage expectations. Evidence is collected through books, digital portfolios, and assessment records, supporting teacher judgements and allowing leaders to monitor progress across the school. By the end of their time at Bassingbourn, pupils will: Compare and contrast human and physical features to identify similarities and differences between locations in the UK, Europe, and the Americas. Name, locate, and explain the positions of physical features, understanding their interactions and processes over time, including climate, biomes, natural disasters, and the water cycle. Understand how humans use land for economic activity and trade, and how the distribution of natural resources has shaped these uses. Recognise the ways humans are influenced by and have influenced their physical environment, both positively and negatively. Develop map-reading skills, using the eight points of a compass, four- and six-figure grid references, symbols, and keys, as well as aerial photographs and digital mapping. Understand how positioning on the globe is determined, including latitude, longitude, hemispheres, tropics, time zones, and the relationship between day and night. Plan and conduct their own geographical enquiries using chosen methodologies, collected data, and digital tools. Meet the Understanding the World Early Learning Goals by the end of EYFS and the National Curriculum expectations for Geography by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
The outcome is that pupils leave Bassingbourn as curious, knowledgeable, and confident geographers, ready to continue their geographical learning into Key Stage 3 and beyond.

Geography	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Reception	**Exploring Maps**	**Outdoor Adventures**	**Around the World**
Knowledge and Skills	Draw information from a simple map. Explore the natural world around them. Describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside. Recognise some environments that are different from the one in which they live. Understand that some places are special to members of their community. Early learning goals ELG: Understanding the World – People, Culture and Communities Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. ELG: Understanding the World – The Natural World Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class..	Explore the natural world around them. Describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside. Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them.. Early learning goals ELG: Understanding the World – People, Culture and Communities Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. ELG: Understanding the World – The Natural World Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.	Recognise some environments that are different from the one in which they live. Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries. Draw information from a simple map. Early learning goals ELG: Understanding the World – People, Culture and Communities Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts, and maps. Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps. ELG: Understanding the World – The Natural World Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class..
Year 1/Year 2 (Cycle A)	**What's it like here?**	**What is the weather like in the UK?**	**What can you see at the coast?**
	Pupils who are secure will be able to: Locate three features on an aerial photograph of the school and know the name of the country and village, town or city in which they live. Make a map of the classroom with four key features, using objects to represent the distance and direction of features in the classroom. Recognise four features in the school grounds using a map.	Pupils who are secure will be able to: Name and locate the four countries on a map of the UK. Identify the country they live in. Identify the four seasons, the current season and describe some seasonal changes. Identify the four compass directions. Identify that the arrow on a compass always shows north. Use the compass directions to describe the location of features.	Name and locate the seas and oceans surrounding the UK in an atlas. Label these on a map of the UK. Describe the location of the seas and oceans surrounding the UK using compass points. Define what the coast is. Locate coasts in the UK. Name some of the physical features of coasts. Explain the location of UK coasts using the four compass directions.

	Explain how they feel about three areas of the playground and find out how others feel by looking at the results of a survey. Draw a design to improve three areas of the playground using the results from the survey.	Observe and describe daily weather patterns. Suggest appropriate clothing and activities for each season.	Name features of coasts and label these on a photograph. Identify human features in a coastal town. Describe how people use the coast. Follow a prepared route on a map. Identify human features on the local coast. Record data using a tally chart. Represent data in a pictogram. Describe how the local coast has been used..
Key vocabulary	aerial photograph aerial view atlas city country directional language distance features globe improve key land locate location map north place questionnaire sea survey symbol town village	aerial photograph aerial view atlas city country directional language distance features globe improve key land locate location map north place questionnaire sea survey symbol town village	aerial photograph capital city city cliff coast coastline continent country data collection fieldwork island harbour human feature lake landmark location locate ocean physical feature pictogram pier river sand dunes sea tally chart tourist town village
Year 1/Year 2 (Cycle B)	**Where Am I?**	**Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place?**	**What's it like to live in Shanghai**
	State that the UK stands for the United Kingdom. Point to each country in the UK on a map when prompted. Verbally identify features within the school grounds. Use and respond to directional language. State that an aerial photograph is taken from above. Recognise some familiar features in aerial photographs. Explain that symbols show features on a map. Add symbols to a map. Identify how places on the school grounds make them	Name and locate the seven continents on a world map. Locate the North and the South Poles on a world map. Locate the Equator on a world map. Describe some similarities and differences between the UK and Kenya. Investigate the weather, writing about it using key vocabulary and explaining whether they live in a hot or cold place. Recognise the features of hot and cold places.	Give examples of human and physical features. Identify features they see on a walk. Explain the location of features using some directional language. Use an aerial photograph to locate physical and human features. Draw simple pictures or symbols on a sketch map. Draw compass points. Name the continent they live in.

	feel. .	Locate some countries with hot or cold climates on a world map.	Use an atlas to locate the UK and China on a world map. Use an atlas to locate Europe and Asia on a world map. Identify China's physical and human geography. Sort physical and human features using photographs. Identify physical and human features in images of Shanghai. Compare Shanghai to their locality. Identify similarities and differences between human and physical features.
Key vocabulary	aerial photograph aerial view atlas beach car park city country directional language farm feature feelings fieldwork forest hill house lake land locate location map mountain museum north ocean photograph place pond position post office postcard present	Zambia Village Town Capital city Africa Two figure grid reference Near, far, left, right	Sea Ocean Beach Cliff Harbour Port Coast Attractions Waves Shoreline English Channel Irish Sea North Sea

	river roundabout route school grounds sea shop symbol town village		
Year 3	**Why do people live near Volcanoes**	**Who lives in Antarctica**	**Are all settlements the same?**
	Name all four layers of the Earth in the correct order, stating one fact about each layer. Explain one or more ways a mountain can be formed. Give a correct example of a mountain range and its continent. Describe a tectonic plate and know that mountains occur along plate boundaries. Correctly label the features of shield and composite volcanoes and explain how they form. Name three ways in which volcanoes can be classified. Describe how volcanoes form at tectonic plate boundaries. Explain a mix of negative and positive consequences of living near a volcano. State whether they would or would not want to live near a volcano. State that an earthquake is caused when two plate boundaries move and shake the ground. Explain that earthquakes happen along plate boundaries. List some negative effects that an earthquake can have on a community. Observe, digitally record and map different rocks using a symbol on a map. Identify rock types and their origins based on collected data.	Describe what lines of latitude and longitude are, giving an example. Understand that the Northern and Southern Hemispheres experience seasons at different times. Define what climate zones are. Understand Antarctica has a polar climate made up of ice sheets, snow and mountains. Describe Antarctica's location in the far south of the globe. State that tourism and research are the two main reasons people visit Antarctica. Describe equipment researchers might use and clothes they wear. List some of the research carried out in Antarctica. State the outcome of Shackleton's expedition. Successfully plot four-figure grid references at the point where the vertical and horizontal line meet. Describe a similarity and difference between life in the UK and life in Antarctica. Confidently use the zoom function on a digital map. Begin to recall the eight points of a compass, following at least four of them. Recognise and describe features on their school grounds from an aerial map. Draw a map of the route they take on an expedition. State one thing that went well on the expedition and one aspect that did not go as hoped.	Locate some cities in the UK. Describe the difference between villages, towns and cities. Identify features on an OS map using the legend. Describe the different types of land use. Follow a route on an OS map. Discuss reasons for the location of human and physical features. Locate some geographical regions in the UK. Identify and begin to offer explanations about changes to features in the local area. Describe the location of New Delhi. Identify some human and physical features in New Delhi. State some similarities and differences between land use and features in New Delhi and the local area.
Key vocabulary	active volcano climate change composite volcano crust dormant volcano earthquake epicentre extinct volcano	climate climate zone compass points direction	agricultural land capital city commercial land compare country border county dispersed facilities

	fault line fault-block mountain fertile soil fold mountain geothermal energy igneous rock index inner core outer core magma magma chamber man-made rock mantle metamorphic rock minerals natural rock negative effects plate boundary positive effects pyroclastic flow sedimentary rock seismic waves shield volcano tectonic plate tsunami vent volcanic mountain volcanic springs	drifting ice hemisphere ice sheet ice shelf iceberg lines of latitude lines of longitude treaty	land use legend linear local memorial metro monument nucleated place of worship recreational land region residential land settlement transportation
Year 4	**Where does our food come from**	**Why are rainforests important to us**	**What are rivers and how are they used**
	Identify that different foods grow in different biomes and say why. Explain which food has the most significant negative impact on the environment. Consider a change people can make to reduce the negative impact of food production. Describe the intentions around trading responsibly. Explain that food imports can be both helpful and harmful. Describe the journey of a cocoa bean. Locate countries on a blank world map using an atlas. Use a scale bar correctly to measure approximate distances. Collect data through an interview process. Analyse interview responses to answer an enquiry question. Discuss any trends in data collected.	Describe a biome and give an example. State the location and some key features of the Amazon rainforest. Name and describe the four layers of tropical rainforests. Understand that trees and plants adapt to living in the rainforest and give an example. Define the word indigenous and give an example of how indigenous peoples use the Amazon's resources. Name one way in which the Amazon is changing. Articulate why the Amazon rainforest is important. Give an example of how humans are having a negative impact on the Amazon and an action that can be taken to help. Use a variety of data collection methods with support. Summarise how the local woodland is used and suggest changes to improve the area.	. Identify water stores and processes in the water cycle. Describe the three courses of a river. Name the physical features of a river. Name some major rivers and their location. Describe different ways a river is used. List some of the problems around rivers. Describe human and physical features around a river. Identify the location of a river on an OS map. Make a judgement on the environmental quality in a river environment. Make suggestions on how a river environment could be improved.

Key vocabulary	air freight carbon footprint consume distribution export fertiliser food bank food miles grant import pesticides produce qualitative quantitative reliability responsible trade sample size scale bar seasonal food source sustainability trade trend	analyse biome buttress roots canopy layer community data deforestation drought emergent layer enquiry Equator forest floor global warming greenhouse gas indigenous peoples interpret lianas lines of latitude logging method mining present questionnaire quote risk route summarise Tropic of Capricorn Tropic of Cancer understorey layer vegetation vegetation belts	condensation delta estuary evaporation flooding floodplain groundwater irrigation leisure meander oxbow lake percolation precipitation river mouth source transpiration tributary valley water cycle waterfall
Year 5	**What is it like in the alps**	**Why do oceans matter**	**Would you like to live in the desert**
	Locate the Alps on a world map and identify and label the eight countries they spread through. Locate three physical and three human characteristics in the Alps. Research and describe the physical and human features of Innsbruck. Use a variety of data collection methods including completing a questionnaire, mapping their route and recording their findings in sketches or photographs. Compare the human and physical geography of their local area and Innsbruck. Describe at least four of the key aspects of the human and physical geography of the Alps to answer the enquiry question, ‘What is life like in the Alps?’	Describe the water cycle. Describe how the ocean is used for human activity. Explain how the ocean helps to regulate the Earth’s climate and temperature. Identify the Great Barrier Reef as part of Australia. Describe the benefits of the Great Barrier reef. Describe how humans impact the oceans and the consequences of this. Explain some actions that can be taken to help support healthy oceans. Explain which data collection method would be best for marine fieldwork and why. Collect data using a tally chart, photographs and a sketch map. Safely navigate the fieldwork environment.	Identify the lines of latitude where hot desert biomes are located. Describe the characteristics of a hot desert biome. Locate the largest deserts in each continent. Describe ways the Mojave Desert is used. Name and describe the physical features found in a desert. Identify how humans use the desert. Explain how human activity may contribute to the changing climate and landscape of a desert. Recognise that the Mojave Desert has a different time zone to the UK. Describe some of the threats to deserts. Give the benefits and drawbacks of living in a desert environment.

		Make suggestions for how to improve a marine environment. Present data using a tally chart and pie chart.	Identify characteristics of two contrasting biomes and compare land use. Discussing if a desert environment is hospitable and why.
Key vocabulary	atlas climate climate change coniferous trees data deciduous trees enquiry fold mountain glacier hemisphere human feature land height latitude leisure longitude method mountain climate mountain range OS map physical feature population questionnaire sea level recreational land use risk route scale temperate temperate forest tourism tourist vegetation	atmosphere biodegradable buffer coral bleaching coral reef decompose digital map disposable ecology ecosystem erosion geology habitat human footprint marine microplastics natural disaster ocean current policy renewable energy single use plastic species water cycle	agriculture airstrip arid barren biome climate desert desertification drought flash flood mesa mining mushroom rock national park natural arch nature reserve rainfall ranching renewable energy salt flat sand dune sparse time zone tourist attraction vegetation weather
Year 6	**Why does population change?**	**Where does our energy come from?**	**Can I carry out and independent fieldwork enquiry**
	Identify the most densely and sparsely populated areas. Describe the increase in global population over time. Begin to describe what might influence the environments people live in. Define birth and death rates, suggesting what may influence them. Define migration, discussing push and pull factors. Explain why some people have no choice but to leave their homes.	Describe the significance of energy. Give examples of sources of energy and their trading routes. Define renewable and non-renewable energy. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of different energy sources. Describe the significance of the Prime Meridian. Identify human features on a digital map. Discuss how transport links have changed over time.	Give examples of issues in the local area. Identify questions to be asked to find the relevant data. Justify which data collection method is most suitable. Design an accurate data collection template. Identify areas along a route that are best for data collection. Discuss how to mediate potential risks. Collect data at points located on an OS map.

	Describe the causes of climate change, explaining its impact on the global population. Suggest an action they can take to fight climate change. Calculate the length of a route to scale. Follow a selected route on an OS map. Use a variety of data collection methods, including using a Likert scale. Collect information from a member of the public. Create a digital map to plot and compare data collected from two locations. Suggest an idea to improve the environment.	Locate UK cities on a map. Use six-figure grid references to identify features on an OS map. Consider and justify the location of energy sources. Design and use interview questions. Plot points on a sketch map. .	Manage risks during a fieldwork trip. Identify any outcomes from data collected. Map data digitally. Describe the enquiry process.
Key vocabulary	Identify the most densely and sparsely populated areas. Describe the increase in global population over time. Begin to describe what might influence the environments people live in. Define birth and death rates, suggesting what may influence them. Define migration, discussing push and pull factors. Explain why some people have no choice but to leave their homes. Describe the causes of climate change, explaining its impact on the global population. Suggest an action they can take to fight climate change. Calculate the length of a route to scale. Follow a selected route on an OS map. Use a variety of data collection methods, including using a Likert scale. Collect information from a member of the public. Create a digital map to plot and compare data collected from two locations. Suggest an idea to improve the environment.	biofuel coal consumption contour line crude oil dam emissions energy source hydropower natural gas non-renewable nuclear power Prime Meridian producer regenerate renewable replenish sea level solar power time zone urban planner windpower six-figure grid reference	analyse audience city data data collection methods enquiry evidence impact improvement issue justify plot presenting process recommendation region risk route subjective viewpoint