

GEOGRAPHY

THE FOXTON CURRICULUM



2026-2027



You can travel the seas, poles and deserts and see nothing. To really understand the world, you need to get under the skin of the people and places. In other words, learn about geography. I can't imagine a subject more relevant in schools. We'd all be lost without it. – Michael Palin

At Foxton Primary School, we are geographers.



Our Geography Curriculum

At Foxton Primary School, our geography curriculum leverages our unique local geography to inspire and educate our students. Situated near fascinating sites such as the village of Foxton, the working swing bridge, Grand Union Canal, and the iconic Foxton Locks, our pupils have direct access to rich, natural green spaces and diverse wildlife. Our geography lessons aim to spark curiosity and fascination about the world and its people.

We have structured our curriculum to provide a clearly mapped journey from the early years, built upon seven big geographical ideas: Place, Space, Environment, Inter-connection, Sustainability, Scale, and Change. These concepts act as "motorways of conceptual understanding," which pupils revisit

and build upon as they progress through the school. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that children:

- Understand specific parts of the earth's surface and how personal experience shapes their perception of places.
- Recognize patterns over the earth's 3D surface and understand that these patterns change over time.
- Learn about the environment, including natural and human-built features, and how people interact with and manage these environments.
- Appreciate the interconnectedness of geographical objects through physical processes and human activities.
- Value sustainability, focusing on ecosystems, resources, and communities.
- Grasp the concept of scale, using maps as key resources to understand different geographical levels.
- Understand change over time and space, using this understanding to predict and plan for the future.

Teachers think carefully about how each topic contributes to developing these ideas, using knowledge planners to detail each topic's key learning questions and the accompanying knowledge.

From early on, pupils investigate a range of places both in Britain and abroad to understand Earth's physical and human processes. In Fox Cubs, children explore their physical world and community, fostering an understanding of our diverse world through stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems. They begin to use maps and globes and create their first maps. In Class 1, children start using real maps and recognizing physical and human features, comparing their local area to places outside Europe and developing fieldwork skills with digital maps, keys, and symbols.

Our teaching strategies identify and address misconceptions, providing robust support for all teachers. Pupils have ample opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills, ensuring secure learning. We consider prior knowledge needed for classroom activities to avoid gaps in understanding. Assessments check both component and procedural knowledge, ensuring reliable and accurate judgments about pupils' capabilities.

We support the ambitious goals of our geography curriculum by using allocated time effectively and ensuring it is dedicated to geography. We provide teachers with deep insights into curriculum concepts, support them in explaining complex ideas, and offer the necessary time, resources, and CPD for conducting fieldwork. The impact of our curriculum is a deep enjoyment of geography among students, a strong grasp of geographical vocabulary, and

an understanding of Earth's key physical and human processes. Children make meaningful links between geography and other subjects, improve their enquiry skills, and develop a positive commitment to the environment and the future of our planet.

Staff use a knowledge planner to map out in granular detail each topic's key learning questions and the accompanying knowledge that answers these. Moreover, every topic has a child-friendly knowledge organiser that clearly sets out the key knowledge and vocabulary to be learnt and remembered. These documents help teachers understand what has been taught previously and how their lessons build on prior learning as well as create the foundations for what comes next.

Key Vocabulary			Layers of Soil	
cumulonimbus cloud	Large thunderstorm clouds.		humus	Rotting dead leaves and animals.
erupt	To suddenly burst out causing lava to explode out of the earth's surface.		topsoil	Plant's roots grow here. Very few rocks.
fossils	The remains of plants or animals that lived a long time ago which can be found deep in the earth.		subsoil	Rocks and stones. Full of nutrients. Tree roots may reach. Fossils .
magma	Extremely hot, liquid rock.		bedrock	A mass of rocks. Fossils .
tectonic plates	The earth's crust is made up of large areas called tectonic plates that join together.			

Layers of Earth	
	Crust Thin outer layer. Hard rock. 10km–90km thick. Mantle Extremely hot rock that flows. 3000km thick. Outer core Iron and nickel. Mostly liquid with some rocky parts. 4000°C. Inner core Iron and nickel. Hottest layer at over 5000°C.

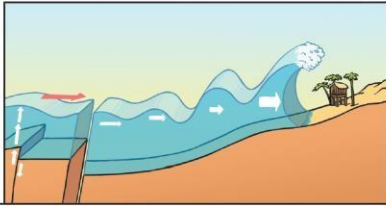
Volcanoes

- Volcanoes are made when pressure builds up inside the earth. This affects the earth's crust causing **magma** to sometimes **erupt** through it.
- Active volcanoes have **erupted** in the last 10 000 years.
- Dormant volcanoes haven't **erupted** in the last 10 000 years but may erupt again.
- Extinct volcanoes aren't expected to **erupt** again.



Tsunamis

- A tsunami is a giant wave caused by a huge earthquake under the ocean.
- The earthquake causes a large amount of water to be displaced very quickly causing a series of waves.
- As the waves travel through shallower water near land, they get bigger and bigger. The wave crashes onto the land causing devastation to buildings and sometimes even lives.



Tornadoes

- A tornado is a swirling funnel of air that forms when warm air rises from near the ground into big **cumulonimbus clouds**.
- There can be thunder and lightning at the same time.
- You can see tornadoes due to the dust and water droplets caught in the clouds.
- Storm chasers are film-makers and scientists who head towards the storms. They film the tornadoes and collect data about them.
- Most tornadoes happen in Tornado Alley in America – more than 500 each year.
- Tornadoes can happen in the UK but only around 30 per year.



Earthquakes

- Earthquakes are caused when the earth's **tectonic plates** suddenly move.
- Most earthquakes occur near the **tectonic plate** boundaries.
- Earthquakes can cause lots of damage to roads, buildings and property.



Cycle A Overview

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Class 1	Magical Mapping	<i>History: Local study</i>	Let's Go to China	<i>History: Emily Davison & Rosa Parks</i>	Wonderful Weather	<i>History: Travel and Transport</i>
Class 2	All Around the World	<i>History: Stone Age to Iron Age</i>	Local Geography: Foxton Locks	<i>History: Invaders and Settlers</i>	The United Kingdom	<i>History: Invaders and Settlers</i>
Class 3	Marvellous Maps	<i>History: Battle of Britain (local history link to Harrington)</i>	Exploring Eastern Europe	<i>History: Invaders and Settlers</i>	Enough for Everyone	

Cycle B Overview

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Class 1	Our Country	<i>History: The Gunpowder Plot</i>	Sensational Safari	<i>History: Toys: Now & Then</i>	Beside the Seaside	<i>History: Great Fire of London</i>
Class 2	Water	<i>History: Richard III</i>	Rainforests	<i>History: Ancient Egypt</i>	Extreme Earth	<i>History: Crime and Punishment</i>
Class 3	The Amazing Americas	<i>History: Mayan civilization</i>	Our Changing World	<i>History: Ancient Greece</i>	Trade and Economics	

Knowing more and remembering more

Every geography lesson starts with retrieval practice in order to combat the forgetfulness curve. This retrieves the most recent learning and makes connections to the big ideas of geography as mentioned above. Through responsive teaching, staff continuously monitor pupils' progress against expected attainment for their age and provide in-lesson feedback in order to move the learning forward. Additional support and challenge is provided as required. Children have a topic book in which their geography work is recorded. Every unit has a summative outcome that is marked in depth and used for teacher assessment purposes.

A Global Curriculum

Our geography curriculum serves as a pivotal catalyst in nurturing the global citizenship that lies at the core of our educational mission. With a deep commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), our curriculum is strategically designed to foster an understanding of complex global issues. Through thoughtful case studies addressing poverty, eyeopening excursions to regions practicing sustainable agriculture, and exploration of local water infrastructure, our curriculum resonates with multiple SDGs.

In line with Goal 1: No Poverty, our curriculum engages students in empathetic examinations of poverty's impact on diverse communities. By delving into real-world scenarios, students develop a heightened awareness of the challenges faced by marginalized populations around the world.

The emphasis on sustainable agriculture aligns seamlessly with Goal 2: Zero Hunger. As students explore agricultural practices that prioritize environmental stewardship and equitable access to food, they cultivate an appreciation for the delicate balance between human needs and ecological sustainability.

Furthermore, our geography curriculum integrates with Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, as students analyse local water infrastructure systems and their significance. This exploration encourages responsible water usage and highlights the critical importance of equitable access to clean water resources.

The thematic units within the curriculum amplify the integration of SDGs whilst deepening children's general understanding of Life of Land (Goal 15). In the unit 'Enough for Everyone', the focus on affordable and clean energy aligns with Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy. The unit 'Extreme Earth' connects with Goal 13: Climate Action, promoting an understanding of climate-related challenges and inspiring future advocates for environmental preservation.

In the unit 'Beside the Seaside', students delve into the realm of marine ecosystems and life below water, aligning with Goal 14: Life Below Water. This

exploration nurtures a sense of responsibility for marine conservation and underscores the interconnectedness of terrestrial and aquatic environments.

Through our geography curriculum, we strive to instil not only a comprehensive understanding of the world's complexities but also a deeprooted sense of responsibility and agency to drive positive change. By aligning with the SDGs, our curriculum empowers students to become informed, compassionate, and engaged global citizens who actively contribute to a sustainable and harmonious future.

Appendix 1

National Curriculum

Purpose of study

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Aims

The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

Subject content

Key stage 1

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness.

Pupils should 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 of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas

Key stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

Locational knowledge

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country

Human and physical geography

- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of 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, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
 - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities

- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including 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, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

Place knowledge

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, a region in a European country, and a region within North or South America

Human and physical geography

- describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - human geography, including: 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/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.