Geography Policy

Status	Non - statutory
Review cycle	Every 2 years
Date written/last reviewed	May 2025
Date of next review	May 2027
Signature of Co-Headteacher Jo Wreford	
Date	May 2025
Signature of Chair of Governors Annabelle Hughes	
Date	May 2025
Published on website	Yes

INTENT

*"The study of **geography** is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together." **Barack Obama**.*

At Meadlands, we deliver a high-quality geography education that inspires pupils and develops their fascination and curiosity about the world and its people – something which will remain with them for the rest of their lives. We want to provide our pupils with all they need to become future explorers, cartologists, town planners and climate change experts!
Pupils' geographical learning starts with the familiar, and slowly builds outwards - from Ham and London to the UK, Europe, and then onto the seven continents of our world. Their understanding of how their local area fits into the wider world is therefore gradually developed and strengthened. Our teaching equips 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.

Aims

Our aims for teaching geography at Meadlands are:

- To provide a framework about places at local, national and global levels, to support their developing geographical understanding, within the National Curriculum programmes of study
- To ensure the progressive development of geographical concepts, knowledge, skills, vocabulary and attitudes
- To promote positive attitudes and enthusiasm for geography
- To arouse children's curiosity to discover more about their local area and the wider world
- To develop our children's geographical skills through the use of local area fieldwork, observation and map work
- To develop children's knowledge and understanding of the human and physical process which shape places at a local, national and international level and explain their similarities and differences
- To enable our children to develop an awareness of the world in which they live
- To help our children to understand the inter-relationship between people and environment
- To develop children's awareness and sensitivity to cultural, social and political issues in the world
- To support children to recognise and understand issues concerning the environment and sustainable development at a local, national and global level
- To make connections to other subjects, for example links with maths and science

Links to our school intent

Language

- Vocabulary is carefully selected for each unit and included on the Knowledge Organisers
- Key vocabulary is highlighted on class displays and in light boxes
- Spoken language and discussion is threaded throughout geography teaching

Memory

- Rich experiences planned for each unit encourage more information to pass into the children's long-term memory
- At the end of each lesson, children record what they have learned and can remember in a 'Learning Journey' in their topic book
- Making connections to other subjects and to the children's own lives also encourages memories to be stored

Wellbeing

- Studying geography offers opportunities for discussion, exploration and discovery which promotes a sense of fun, fulfilment and curiosity
- Geography offers opportunities for extra-curricular fieldwork experiences and trips, which the children love

IMPLEMENTATION

At Meadlands, we strive to meet the National Curriculum expectations and guidelines. See below for the Key Stage requirements:

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

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.

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 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
- describe and understand key aspects of 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.

EYFS

Young children are naturally curious about the world around them and this is a vital time to begin to embed important aspects of geographical learning such as asking and answering questions, understanding simple geographical vocabulary and using role-play to explore geography. The primary area of the EYFS profile covering geography knowledge and skills is "Understanding the World". This is split into 2 strands: 'People and Communities' and 'The World'.

By the time children leave reception, they should be able to:

People and Communities

• Talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. • To know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The World

• Know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another.

Teaching

Geography is taught in blocks, with this model promoting a greater depth of understanding. Our curriculum is mapped to ensure alignment with the national curriculum content and programme of study. It is arranged progressively across year groups, and units are taught starting with the familiar (local geography) then branching outwards.

Teachers have identified the key knowledge and skills of each unit and these are mapped across the school ensuring that knowledge builds progressively and that children develop skills systematically. This progression is outlined in our geography unit knowledge organisers. As each unit of history progresses, children fill in a 'Learning Journey' to recall and summarise what they have learned.

A working wall is used to support and celebrate learning during each unit of work. It is also used to support the acquisition of key knowledge and geographical vocabulary.

Overview of units studied:

	Unit 1	**Unit 2** **Fieldwork unit**
Year 1	Local study: Welcome to Ham *Study of locality*	River Study: River Thames *Conservation study*
Year 2	Where is best? North, East, South or West. *Comparative study of the UK*	From Coast to Coast (Ham to Brighton) *A comparative study*
Year 3	A tale of 2 cities *A comparative study*	A study of life near a volcano: Italy (Pompeii) *An in-depth study of a region in Europe*
Year 4	India *An in-depth study of a country in another continent*	Forests: a study of the difference & similarities between a bog forest (Richmond Park) and a rainforest (Amazon) *A comparative study*
Year 5	A trip of a lifetime Planning a trip through the Americas *A study of North and South America*	Go with the flow: the difference between The Thames & The Yangtze *A comparative study*
Year 6	The 7 continents	

See **Appendix B** for progression of skills across different year groups.

Planning

Geography is planned in units by class teachers and overseen by the subject leader. Planning takes the form of:

- **Knowledge organiser** – which outlines the knowledge and skills to be taught, the tier 3 subject specific vocabulary, links forwards and backwards in the curriculum, opportunities for cross-curricular links and ambitious outcomes.

- **Mid-term plan** – breaks down the number of lessons to be taught, the learning challenges, learning activities, key questions, key vocabulary and resources needed.

- **Lesson slides** – the plan for the individual lesson with the learning challenge and relevant information. These will include vocabulary and key enquiry questions.

Cross curricular links

Geography is taught as a discrete subject, however, links across the curriculum should be made wherever possible. Opportunities for writing are documented in the yearly Writing Overview for each year group. Other key opportunities for cross-curricular learning include links with: maths (e.g. measurement and data handling); PE (e.g. Outdoor and Adventurous Activities); and Science (e.g. through use of enquiry skills, learning about rocks in year 3, and our Global Goals units of work).

SMSC

Geography – in particular human geography - relates very naturally to the teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Discussions about use of the world's resources and the impact of major events on the lives of local people, help to deepen the children's understanding of and empathy for humans across the globe. Opportunities for children to 'put yourselves in someone else's shoes' are embraced regularly during geography lessons.

British Values

Geography offers a unique opportunity for children to demonstrate fundamental British values through understanding the physical and human characteristics of places, the connections between places and people, interdependence, sustainability and cultural understanding and diversity. In our Geography lessons and wider curriculum, there will be opportunities for children to learn about all five major British Values:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Resources

A variety of geography resources are available to support quality teaching and learning, including children's reference books, photographs, atlases and maps, as well as internet access and online research/reference tools such as Google Earth. Resources are shared by all staff and children and, staff may request or suggest additional resources they feel would be useful for a Geography topic. When required, additional resources are purchased by the Geography Coordinator in accordance with the school ordering policy and procedure. Please refer to **Appendix A** for useful websites to support Geography teaching and learning.

Fieldwork and Enquiry

Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and, as stated by Ofsted, 'enhances the learning of geography'. Allowing children to experience geography first-hand engages and motivates them to learn and achieve. All classes have at least one Geography unit which can be supported and enhanced by fieldwork, and we utilise our extensive grounds and local area for this.

In addition to this we have a whole school fieldwork enquiry day in Autumn 2. We carry out fieldwork following an enquiry model where each class gets outside and collect data to answer a big question based on human or physical Geography. The steps of the enquiry are:

- **Big Question**: Posed by teachers in discussion with pupils.
- **Planning:** Pupils plan how they will answer their question.
- **Data Collection:** Pupils record, measure and observe in their local environment.
- **Present data:** Pupils present their data in graphs/maps etc.
- **Analyse Data:** Pupils think back to their big question, what does their data show?
- **Communicate their result:** Pupils communicate their findings either verbally or in writing.
- **Evaluate the Enquiry:** What would they do differently next time?

Assessment

Formative assessment occurs throughout every Geography lesson, to support pupils to make good progress. Teachers also use recap slides at the start of lessons, and quizzes at the end of units to encourage the children to recall and remember more, and to assess their understanding.
There is no statutory end of Key Stage Two assessment for geography, but there is a statutory regulation to report to parents at least once a year about their child's progress. To assess understanding and progress, staff use their professional judgement in gathering of evidence of children's work – including written work, pupil voice, pop quizzes and observation of practical activities and fieldwork. Teachers also report to parents on children's 'attitude to learning' within geography lessons, noting if children have demonstrated an emerging, expected or exceeding attitude in this subject.

Equal Opportunities

At Meadlands, all pupils are encouraged and supported to take a full and active part in all geography lessons and activities. Staff should ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, and social circumstances, have access to, and make the greatest progress possible, in all areas of the curriculum. This includes children with Special Educational Needs, who many need lesson activities, teaching approaches, resources or support to be differentiated to meet their individual needs. This is the responsibility of the class teacher. There are also opportunities for more able pupils to be challenged and to develop and extend their understanding of the different topics.

Spoken Language/Oracy

Oracy and opportunities for discussion are present throughout the Geography curriculum at Meadlands. We believe in the importance of having meaningful conversations about world issues and our planet. Questioning forms the basis of our teaching and we encourage pupils to practise curiosity and develop their own questions. As part of our fieldwork enquiries, pupils present their findings and develop skills to convey information effectively to an audience.

What does speaking and listening look like in Geography at Meadlands?

- Use of sentence stems to scaffold oral responses in class
- Using the strategy ***Agree, Build, Challenge*** to guide respectful discussions
- Questioning across the curriculum
- Drawing links verbally across the curriculum
- Presenting in front of an audience
- Debating
- Group work and reporting back
- Use of talk partners

IMPACT

- Children will develop a love of and interest in local and world Geography, and be inspired to study the subject further
- Children will learn to respect and be an advocate for protecting our world
- Children will develop a good knowledge of and appreciation for their local area, and understand its place within the wider geographical context
- Children will know more, remember more and understand more about locational, physical and human geography
- Children will understand and be able to build upon the key skills of geographical enquiry, map and fieldwork

Monitoring

The implementation for the Geography policy will be monitored by the subject leader, with reference to the Knowledge Organisers, mid-term plans, lesson plans, children's work in books, ambitious outcomes and displays.

APPENDIX A – Useful Websites

The National Geographic	**https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/teacher-category/geography/**
Ducksters (maps)	**https://www.ducksters.com/geography/**
Geography Association	**https://www.geography.org.uk/Support-Guidance**
Royal Geographic Society	**https://www.geography.org.uk/Support-Guidance**
The BBC	**https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zbkw2hv**
Google Maps	**https://www.google.com.au/maps**
Google Earth	**https://earth.google.com/web/**
The Science Museum	**https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/home**
The School Run	**https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-gnome-geography**
London Grid for Learning	**http://geo.lgfl.org.uk/**
Fieldwork resources	https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/primary-fieldwork/
	https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/quick-and-easy-fieldwork-ideas/

Gareth Webb
School Support Consultant

Progression of Skills
In Geography

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Geographical enquiry	▪ Teacher led enquiries, to ask and respond to simple closed questions. ▪ Use information books/pictures as sources of information. ▪ Investigate their surroundings ▪ Make observations about where things are e.g. within school or local area.	▪ Children encouraged to ask simple geographical questions; Where is it? What's it like? ▪ Use NF books, stories, maps, pictures/photos and internet as sources of information. ▪ Investigate their surroundings ▪ Make appropriate observations about why things happen. ▪ Make simple comparisons between features of different places.	▪ Begin to ask/initiate geographical questions. ▪ Use NF books, stories, atlases, pictures/photos and internet as sources of information. ▪ Investigate places and themes at more than one scale ▪ Begin to collect and record evidence ▪ Analyse evidence and begin to draw conclusions e.g. make comparisons between two locations using photos/ pictures, temperatures in different locations.	▪ Ask and respond to questions and offer their own ideas. ▪ Extend to satellite images, aerial photographs ▪ Investigate places and themes at more than one scale ▪ Collect and record evidence with some aid ▪ Analyse evidence and draw conclusions e.g. make comparisons between locations photos/pictures/ maps	▪ Begin to suggest questions for investigating ▪ Begin to use primary and secondary sources of evidence in their investigations. ▪ Investigate places with more emphasis on the larger scale; contrasting and distant places ▪ Collect and record evidence unaided ▪ Analyse evidence and draw conclusions e.g. compare historical maps of varying scales e.g. temperature of various locations - influence on people/everyday life	▪ Suggest questions for investigating ▪ Use primary and secondary sources of evidence in their investigations. ▪ Investigate places with more emphasis on the larger scale; contrasting and distant places ▪ Collect and record evidence unaided ▪ Analyse evidence and draw conclusions e.g. from field work data on land use comparing land use/temperature, look at patterns and explain reasons behind it
Direction/ Location	▪ Follow directions (Up, down, left/right, forwards/backwards)	▪ Follow directions (as yr 1 and inc *. NSEW)	▪ Use 4 compass points to follow/give directions: ▪ Use letter/no. co-ordinates to locate features on a map.	▪ Use 4 compass points well: ▪ Begin to use 8 compass points; ▪ Use letter/no. co-ordinates to locate features on a map confidently.	▪ Use 8 compass points; ▪ Begin to use 4 figure co-ordinates to locate features on a map.	▪ Use 8 compass points confidently and accurately; ▪ Use 4 figure co-ordinates confidently to locate features on a map. ▪ Begin to use 6 figure grid refs; use latitude and longitude on atlas maps.
Drawing maps	▪ Draw picture maps of imaginary places and from stories.	▪ Draw a map of a real or imaginary place. (e.g. add detail to a sketch map from aerial photograph)	▪ Try to make a map of a short route experienced, with features in correct order; ▪ Try to make a simple scale drawing.	▪ Make a map of a short route experienced, with features in correct order; ▪ Make a simple scale drawing.	▪ Begin to draw a variety of thematic maps based on their own data.	▪ Draw a variety of thematic maps based on their own data. ▪ Begin to draw plans of increasing complexity.
Representation	▪ Use own symbols on imaginary map.	▪ Begin to understand the need for a key. ▪ Use class agreed symbols to make a simple key.	▪ Know why a key is needed. ▪ Use standard symbols.	▪ Know why a key is needed. ▪ Begin to recognise symbols on an OS map.	▪ Draw a sketch map using symbols and a key; ▪ Use/recognise OS map symbols.	▪ Use/recognise OS map symbols; ▪ Use atlas symbols.
Using maps	▪ Use a simple picture map to move around the school; ▪ Recognise that it is about a place.	▪ Follow a route on a map. ▪ Use a plan view. ▪ Use an infant atlas to locate places.	▪ Locate places on larger scale maps e.g. map of Europe. Follow a route on a map with some accuracy. (e.g. whilst orienteering)	▪ Locate places on large scale maps, (e.g. Find UK or India on globe) ▪ Follow a route on a large scale map.	▪ Compare maps with aerial photographs. ▪ Select a map for a specific purpose. (E.g. Pick atlas to find Taiwan, OS map to find local village.) ▪ Begin to use atlases to find out about other features of places. (e.g. find wettest part of the world)	▪ Follow a short route on an OS map. Describe features shown on OS map. ▪ Locate places on a world map. ▪ Use atlases to find out about other features of places. (e.g. mountain regions, weather patterns)
Scale/ Distance	▪ Use relative vocabulary (e.g. bigger/smaller, like/dislike)	▪ Begin to spatially match places (e.g. recognise UK on a small scale and larger scale map)	▪ Begin to match boundaries (E.g. find same boundary of a country on different scale maps.)	▪ Begin to match boundaries (E.g. find same boundary of a county on different scale maps.)	▪ Measure straight line distance on a plan. ▪ Find/recognise places on maps of different scales. (E.g. river Nile.)	▪ Use a scale to measure distances. ▪ Draw/use maps and plans at a range of scales.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Perspective	▪ Draw around objects to make a plan.	▪ Look down on objects to make a plan viewmap.	▪ Begin to draw a sketch map from a high viewpoint.	▪ Draw a sketch map from a high viewpoint.	▪ Draw a plan viewmap with some accuracy.	▪ Draw a plan viewmap accurately.
Map knowledge	▪ Learn names of some places within/around the UK. E.g. Home town, cities, countries e.g. Wales, France.	▪ Locate and name on UK map major features e.g. London, River Thames, home location, seas.	▪ Begin to identify points on maps A, B and C	▪ Begin to identify significant places and environments	▪ Identify significant places and environments	▪ Confidently identify significant places and environments
Style of map	▪ Picture maps and globes	▪ Find land/sea on globe. ▪ Use teacher drawn base maps. ▪ Use large scale OS maps. ▪ Use an infant atlas	▪ Use large scale OS maps. ▪ Begin to use map sites on internet. ▪ Begin to use junior atlases. ▪ Begin to identify features on aerial/oblique photographs.	▪ Use large and medium scale OS maps. ▪ Use junior atlases. ▪ Use map sites on internet. ▪ Identify features on aerial/oblique photographs.	▪ Use index and contents page within atlases. ▪ Use medium scale land ranger OS maps.	• Use OS maps. • Confidently use an atlas. • Recognise world map as a flattened globe.