

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027

Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

Year 1

This document shows how the Year 1 geography curriculum is carefully planned to develop children's geographical knowledge, skills and understanding. It outlines how learning is sequenced within each unit, identifying the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary children will develop, the National Curriculum objectives being covered, and the outcomes children are working towards by the end of each unit.

The document also highlights how each unit builds on children's prior learning and experiences, while preparing them for future geographical learning. Through carefully planned sequences of lessons, children develop their ability to explore places, use geographical vocabulary, apply geographical skills and make sense of the world around them.

	Autumn 1/2	Spring 1/2	Summer 1/2
Focus	Locating where they live on an aerial photograph, children recognise local features. They create maps using classroom objects before drawing simple maps of the school grounds. Pupils use maps to follow simple routes around the school grounds and carry out an enquiry about how to improve their playground.	Studying the countries and cities that make up the UK, children discuss the four seasons and their associated weather. They consider how we change our behaviour in response to different weather and keep a weather diary or record. Finally, children investigate the UK's hot and cold places using weather maps with a simple key.	Using a world map, children start recognising continents, oceans and countries outside the UK with a focus on China. They identify physical features of Shanghai using aerial photographs and maps before identifying human features, through exploring land-use. Pupils then compare these features to those in the local area and make a simple map using data they have collected through fieldwork.
Enquiry Question	What is it like here?	What is the weather like in the UK?	What is it like to live in Shanghai?
National Curriculum	Human and Physical Geography Use basic knowledge to refer to key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour, shop Geographical skills and fieldwork 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	Locational Knowledge Name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas 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 Geography skills and fieldwork Use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language (for example, near and far, left and right), to	Locational Knowledge Name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans 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 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

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

	grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment. 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.		describe the location of features and routes on a map. 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. 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 basic geographical vocabulary to refer to: key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop Geography skills and fieldwork 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.	
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	atlas capital city climate compass continent country direction land locate	location map rain gauge season temperature thermometer weather weather vane	continent country different directional language e.g. near, far, next to, behind, etc. key human feature	map physical feature similar symbol
How do children's previous experiences support their learning in this unit?	How do we use maps? EYFS They have drawn information from a simple map. They have explored the natural world around them. They have learnt how to describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside.		What is it like here? Year 1 They have located 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. They have made a map of the classroom with four key features, using objects to represent the distance and direction of features in the classroom.		What is the weather like in the UK? Year 1 They have learnt to name and locate the four countries on a map of the UK. They have identified the country they live in. They have identified the four seasons. They have described some seasonal changes. They have identified the four compass directions.	

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

	They have recognised some environments that are different from the one in which they live. They understand that some places are special to members of their community.	They have recognised four features in the school grounds using a map. They have explained how they feel about three areas of the playground and they have found out how others feel by looking at the results of a survey. They have designed a way to improve three areas of the playground using the results from the survey.	They have learnt the compass directions to describe the location of features. They have observed and described daily weather patterns. They have begun to locate the four capital cities of the UK. They have explained what the weather is like during each season in the UK. They have suggested appropriate clothing and activities for each season.
Key Knowledge	Locational knowledge To know the name of the country and city they live in. To know that the UK is short for 'United Kingdom'. To know that a country is a land or nation with its own government. Place knowledge NA Human and physical knowledge NA Geographical skills and fieldwork To know that an aerial photograph is a photograph taken from the air above. To know that atlases give information about the world and that a map tells us information about a place. To know that a map is a picture of a place, usually drawn from above. To know that symbols are often used on maps to represent features. To know simple directional language (e.g. near, far, up, down, left, right, forwards, backwards).	Locational Knowledge To know the name of two continents (Europe and Asia). To know that a continent is a group of countries. To know that they live in the continent of Europe. To know that the UK is short for 'United Kingdom'. To know that a country is a land or nation with its own government. To know that the United Kingdom is made up of four countries and their names. To know the name of the country they live in. Place Knowledge NA Human and Physical Knowledge To know the four seasons of the UK. To know that 'weather' refers to the conditions outside at a particular time. To know that different parts of the UK often experience different weather. To know that a weather forecast is when someone tries to predict what the weather will be like in the near future.	Locational Knowledge To know the name of two continents (Europe and Asia). To know that a continent is a group of countries. To know that they live in the continent of Europe. To know that an ocean is a large body of water. To know the name of two of the world's oceans (Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean). To know that the UK is short for 'United Kingdom'. To know that the United Kingdom is made up of four countries and their names. To know the name of the country they live in. Place Knowledge To know that life elsewhere in the world is often different to ours. To know that life elsewhere in the world often has similarities to ours. Human and Physical Knowledge To know that physical features means any feature of an area that is on the Earth naturally. To know that human features means any feature of an area that was made or built by humans. Geography skills and fieldwork

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

		To know that weather conditions can be measured and recorded. Geography skills and fieldwork To know simple directional language (e.g near, far, up, down, left, right, forwards, backwards). To know that a compass is an instrument we can use to find which direction is north. To know which direction is N, S, E, W on a map	To know that an aerial photograph is a photograph taken from the air above. To know that atlases give information about the world and that a map tells us information about a place. To know that a map is a picture of a place, usually drawn from above. To know that symbols are often used on maps to represent features. To know simple directional language (e.g near, far, up, down, left, right, forwards, backwards). To know what a sketch map is. To know that a compass is an instrument we can use to find which direction is north. To know which direction is N, S, E, W on a map.
Key Skills	Locational knowledge NA Place knowledge NA Human and physical knowledge Recognising some physical features in their locality Recognising some human features in their locality. Geographical skills and fieldwork Using an atlas to locate the UK Using directional language to describe features on a map in relation to other features (real or imaginary). Using directional language to describe the location of objects in the classroom and playground.	Locational Knowledge Showing on a map which continent they live in. Locating the four countries of the United Kingdom (UK) on a map of this area. Showing on a map which country they live in and locating its capital city. Place Knowledge NA Human and Physical Knowledge Describing how the weather changes with each season in the UK. Describing the daily weather patterns in their locality. Confidently using the vocabulary 'season' and 'weather'. Recognising some physical features in their locality. Geography skills and fieldwork Using an atlas to locate the UK.	Locational Knowledge Locating two of the world's seven continents on a world map. Locating two of the world's oceans (Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean) on a world map. Showing on a map which continent they live in. Place Knowledge Naming some key similarities between their local area and a small area of a contrasting non-European country. Naming some key differences between their local area and a small area of a contrasting non-European country. Human and Physical Knowledge Recognising some physical features in their locality. Recognising some human features in their locality. Geography skills and fieldwork Using an atlas to locate the UK.

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027

Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

	Responding to instructions using directional language to follow routes Recognising local landmarks on aerial photographs. Recognising basic human features on aerial photographs. Recognising basic physical features on aerial photographs. Drawing freehand maps (of real or imaginary places) using simple pictures or symbols. Drawing a simple sketch map of the classroom and playground using simple pictures, colours or symbols to represent features. Using simple picture maps and plans to move around the school. Asking questions about the world around them. Commenting on the features they see in their school and school grounds on a walk around the respective places. Asking and answering simple questions about the features of their school and school grounds. Drawing some of the features they notice in their school and school grounds in correct relation to each other on a sketch map. Using a simple recording technique to express their feelings about a specific place and explaining why they like/dislike some of its features.	Using an atlas to locate the four countries in the UK. Using directional language to describe the location of objects in the classroom and playground. Using directional language to describe features on a map in relation to other features (real or imaginary). Responding to instructions using directional language to follow routes. Beginning to use the compass points (N, S, E, W) to describe the location of features on a map. Recognising local landmarks on aerial photographs. Using simple picture maps and plans to move around the school. Asking questions about the world around them. Commenting on the features they see in their school and school grounds on a walk around the respective places. Asking and answering simple questions about the features of their school and school grounds. Drawing some of the features they notice in their school and school grounds in correct relation to each other on a sketch map.	Using a world map and globe to locate four of the world's seven continents (Europe and Asia) Using a world map and globe to locate the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean. Using directional language to describe features on a map in relation to other features (real or imaginary). Beginning to use the compass points (N, S, E, W) to describe the location of features on a map. Recognising local landmarks on aerial photographs. Geographical skills and fieldwork Recognising basic human features on aerial photographs. Recognising basic physical features on aerial photographs. Drawing freehand maps (of real or imaginary places) using simple pictures or symbols. Drawing a simple sketch map of the school and local area using simple pictures, colours or symbols to represent features. Adding labels to sketch maps. Asking questions about the world around them. Commenting on the features they see in their school and school grounds on a walk around the respective places. Asking and answering simple questions about the features of their school and school grounds. Drawing some of the features they notice in their school and school grounds in correct relation to each other on a sketch map.
--	---	--	--

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

Sequence of lessons	Lesson 1: Where in the world are we? Lesson 2: What can we see in the classroom? Lesson 3: What can we find in our school grounds? Lesson 4 : Where are the different places in our school? Lesson 5: How do we feel about our playground? Lesson 6: Can we make our playground even better?	Lesson 1: Where is the UK? Lesson 2: What are the four seasons? Lesson 3: What are the compass directions? Lesson 4: What is the weather like today? Lesson 5: Is the weather the same everywhere in the UK? Lesson 6: How do people prepare for the weather?	Lesson 1: What can we see in our local area? Lesson 2: Can we map our local area? Lesson 3: Where in the world is China? Lesson 4: What can you see in China? Lesson 5: What is Shanghai like? Lesson 6: How is Shanghai different from our local area?
Key outcomes	• 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. • 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.	• Name and locate the four countries on a map of the UK. • Identify the country they live in. • Identify the four seasons. • Describe some seasonal changes. • Identify the four compass directions. • Use the compass directions to describe the location of features. • Observe and describe daily weather patterns. • Begin to locate the four capital cities of the UK. • Explain what the weather is like during each season in the UK. • Suggest appropriate clothing and activities for each season	• 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. • 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.

Geography Skills and Progression - Year 1 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

			Identify similarities and differences between human and physical features.
How does this unit prepare children for future learning?	What is the weather like in the UK? Year 1 Children will learn to... Name and locate the four countries on a map of the UK. Identify the country they live in. Identify the four seasons. Describe some seasonal changes. Identify the four compass directions. Use the compass directions to describe the location of features. Observe and describe daily weather patterns. Begin to locate the four capital cities of the UK. Explain what the weather is like during each season in the UK. Suggest appropriate clothing and activities for each season.	Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place? Year 2 Children will learn to... 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. Locate some countries with hot or cold climates on a world map.	Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place? Year 2 Children will learn to... 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. Locate some countries with hot or cold climates on a world map.