Geography Skills and Progression - Year 4 2026-2027
Subject Leader: Mrs Lonsdale

YEAR 4			
This document shows how the Year 4 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 covered, and the outcomes children are working towards. The document highlights how each unit builds on children's previous geographical learning while developing a deeper understanding of physical and human geography. Through carefully planned sequences of lessons, children develop their ability to investigate geographical questions, analyse information, compare places and environments, use geographical vocabulary accurately, and apply a range of geographical skills to make sense of the world around them.			
	Autumn 1/2	**Spring 1/2**	**Summer 1/2**
Focus	Focussing on the link between biomes and climate, children will locate the Amazon rainforest and explain how the vegetation in a tropical rainforest is defined by the two Tropics. They investigate the physical features and layers of the Amazon rainforest, considering how plants adapt to these conditions. Learning about the people who live in the rainforest, children discuss the impact of human activity locally and globally	Looking at the distribution of the world's biomes and mapping food imports from around the world, children learn about trading fairly with a specific focus on Côte d'Ivoire and cocoa beans. They explore where the food for their school dinners comes from and the pros and cons of local versus global.	Exploring the different ways water is stored and moves, pupils develop an understanding of the water cycle. They name and map major rivers both in the UK and globally. Children learn about the features and courses of a river and how they are used by humans, before studying a local river to spot these features.
Enquiry Questions	**Why are rainforests important to us?**	**Where does our food come from?**	**What are rivers and how are they used?**
National Curriculum	**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 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) **Human and Physical Knowledge** Describe and understand key aspects of: physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and	**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 **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 Knowledge**	**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 **Human and Physical Knowledge**

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	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 **Geography skills and fieldwork** Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied 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.		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 **Geography skills and fieldwork** Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied 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.		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 **Geography 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.	
Key Vocabulary	analyse biome buttress roots canopy layer community data deforestation drought emergent layer enquiry Equator forest floor	lines of latitude logging method mining present questionnaire quote risk route summarise Tropic of Capricorn Tropic of Cancer	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	condensation delta estuary evaporation flooding floodplain groundwater irrigation leisure meander oxbow lake	percolation precipitation river mouth source transpiration tributary valley water cycle waterfall

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	global warming greenhouse gas indigenous peoples interpret	understory layer vegetation vegetation belts				
How do children's previous experiences support their learning in this unit?	**Why is our world wonderful?** **(Year 2)** Children have been taught to... Identify and locate characteristics of the UK on a map. Identify human and physical features. Locate human and physical features on a world map. Explain the difference between oceans and seas. Name and locate the five oceans on a world map. Use an aerial photograph to draw a simple sketch map. Collect data by sketching findings on a map and completing a tally chart. Present their findings in a bar chart.		**Are all settlements the same?** **(Year 3)** Children have been taught to... 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.		**What is it like to live by the coast?** **(Year 2)** Children have been taught to... 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. 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 Knowledge	**Locational Knowledge** To know where North and South America are on a world map To know the names of some countries and major cities in Europe and North and South America To know the names of some of the world's most significant rivers		**Locational Knowledge** To know where North and South America are on a world map. To know that climate zones are areas of the world with similar climates. To know the world's different climate zones (equatorial, tropical, hot desert, temperate and polar.		**Locational Knowledge** To know where North and South America are on a world map. To know the names of some of the world's most significant mountain ranges. To know the names of some of the world's most significant rivers.	

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	To know that climate zones are areas of the world with similar climates To know the world's different climate zones (equatorial, tropical, hot desert, temperate and polar) To know that biomes are areas of world with similar climates, vegetation and animals. To know the world's biomes. To know vegetation belts are areas of the world which are home to similar plant species. To know the name of some counties in the UK (local to your school To know the main types of land use To know that countries near the Equator have less seasonal change than those near the poles To know that the Equator is a line of latitude indicating the hottest places on Earth and splitting our globe into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres To know lines of latitude are invisible lines on the globe that determine how far north or south a location is from the Equator To know the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn are lines of latitude and mark the equatorial region; the countries with the hottest climates **Human and Physical Knowledge** To know that the water cycle is the processes and stores which move water around our Earth and to be able to name these To know that a biome is a region of the globe sharing a similar climate, landscape, vegetation and wildlife To know the world's biomes To know that the hottest biomes are found between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn	To know that biomes are areas of world with similar climates, vegetation and animals. To know the world's biomes. To know vegetation belts are areas of the world which are home to similar plant species. To know the main types of land use. To know that countries near the Equator have less seasonal change than those near the poles. To know that the Equator is a line of latitude indicating the hottest places on Earth and splitting our globe into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. To know lines of longitude are invisible lines on the globe that determine how far east or west a location is from the Prime Meridian. To know lines of latitude are invisible lines on the globe that determine how far north or south a location is from the Equator. To know the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn are lines of latitude and mark the equatorial region; the countries with the hottest climates. To know the Northern and Southern hemisphere are 'halves' of the Earth, above and below our Equator and have alternate seasons to each other. **Human and physical Knowledge** To know that a biome is a region of the globe sharing a similar climate, landscape, vegetation and wildlife. To know the world's biomes. To know that the hottest biomes are found between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. To know that climate zones are areas of the world with similar climates. To know the world's different climate zones.	To know the name of some counties in the UK (local to your school). To know the name of some cities in the UK (local to your school). To know the name of the county that they live in and their closest city. To begin to name the twelve geographical regions of the UK. To know the main types of land use. To know some types of settlement. **Human and physical Knowledge** To know that the water cycle is the processes and stores which move water around our Earth and to be able to name these. To know the courses and key features of a river. To know the different types of mountains and volcanoes and how they are formed. To know the main types of land use. To know the different types of settlement. To know water is used by humans in a variety of ways. To know an urban place is somewhere near a town or city. To know a rural place is somewhere near the countryside. To know that a natural resource is something that people can use which comes from the natural environment. To know the UK grows food locally and imports food from other countries. **Geography skills and fieldwork** To understand that a scale shows how much smaller a map is compared to real life.

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	To know that climate zones are areas of the world with similar climates To know the world's different climate zones To know that climates can influence the foods able to grow To know the main types of land use To know that a natural resource is something that people can use which comes from the natural environment To know the threats to the rainforest both on a local and global scale **Geography skills and fieldwork** To recognise world maps as a flattened globe To know that an OS (Ordnance survey) map is used for personal use and organisations use it for housing projects, planning the natural environment and public transport and for security purposes To know that an OS map shows human and physical features as symbols To know an enquiry-based question has an open-ended answer found by research To know that quantitative data involves numerical facts and figures and is often objective To know that an annotated drawing or sketch map is hand drawn and gives a rough idea of features of an area without having to be completely accurate To know that quantitative data involves numerical facts and figures and is often objective To know what a bar chart, pictogram and table are and when to use which one best to represent data	To know that climates can influence the foods able to grow. To know the main types of land use. To know that a natural resource is something that people can use which comes from the natural environment. To know that fair trading is the process of ensuring workers are paid a fair price, have safe working conditions and are treated with respect and equality. To know the UK grows food locally and imports food from other countries. **Geography skills and fieldwork** To know that grid-references help us locate a particular square on a map. To know an enquiry-based question has an open-ended answer found by research. To know what a questionnaire and an interview are. To know that quantitative data involves numerical facts and figures and is often objective To know that quantitative data involves numerical facts and figures and is often objective.	To recognise world maps as a flattened globe. To know that an OS (Ordnance survey) map is used for personal use and organisations use it for housing projects, planning the natural environment and public transport and for security purposes. To know that an OS map shows human and physical features as symbols. To know that grid-references help us locate a particular square on a map. To know the eight points of a compass are north, south, east, west, north-east, south-east, north-west, south-west. To know the main types of land use (agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and transportation). To know an enquiry-based question has an open-ended answer found by research. To know that an annotated drawing or sketch map is hand drawn and gives a rough idea of features of an area without having to be completely accurate. To know a Likert scale is used to record people's feelings and attitudes. To know what a bar chart, pictogram and table are and when to use which one best to represent data.

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Key Skills	**Locational Knowledge** Locating some countries in Europe and North and South America using maps Locating key physical features in countries studied including significant environmental regions (Amazon rainforest) Locating some key human features in countries studied Locating some of the world's most significant rivers and identifying any patterns Identifying key physical and human characteristics of counties, cities and/or geographical regions in the UK Identifying how topographical features studied have changed over time using examples Describing how a locality has changed over time, giving examples of both physical and human features Finding the position of the Equator and describing how this impacts our environmental regions Finding lines of latitude and longitude on a globe and explaining why these are important Identifying the position of the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn and their significance **Place Knowledge** Describing and beginning to explain similarities between two regions studied Describing and beginning to explain differences between two regions studied Describing how and why humans have responded in different ways to their local environments Discussing climates and their impact on trade, land use and settlement Describing and explaining how people who live in a contrasting physical area may have different lives to people in the UK	**Locational Knowledge** Locating some major cities of the countries studied. Locating key physical features in countries studied including significant environmental regions. Locating some key human features in countries studied. Finding the position of the Equator and describing how this impacts our environmental regions. Identifying the position of the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn and their significance. Identifying the position and significance of both the Arctic and Antarctic Circle. **Place knowledge** Describing and beginning to explain similarities between two regions studied. Describing and beginning to explain differences between two regions studied. Describing how and why humans have responded in different ways to their local environments. Discussing climates and their impact on trade, land use and settlement. Describing and explaining how people who live in a contrasting physical area may have different lives to people in the UK **Human and physical Knowledge** Mapping and labelling the six biomes on a world map. Understanding some of the causes of climate change. Describing and understanding types of settlement and land use. Explaining why a settlement and community has grown in a particular location. Explaining why different locations have different human features.	**Locational Knowledge** Locating some countries in Europe and North and South America using maps. Locating some major cities of the countries studied. Locating key physical features in countries studied including significant environmental regions. Locating the world's most significant mountain ranges on a map and identifying any patterns. Locating some of the world's most significant rivers and identifying any patterns. Locating some cities in the UK (local to your school). Beginning to locate the twelve geographical regions of the UK. Identifying key physical and human characteristics of counties, cities and/or geographical regions in the UK. **Place knowledge** Describing how and why humans have responded in different ways to their local environments. **Human and physical Knowledge** Describing how physical features, such as mountains and rivers are formed, and why volcanoes and earthquakes occur. Describing where volcanoes, earthquakes and mountains are located globally. Describing and explaining how physical features such as rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes have had an impact upon the surrounding landscape and communities. Describing how humans use water in a variety of ways. Describing and understanding types of settlement and land use. Explaining why a settlement and community has grown in a particular location.

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	Human and Physical Knowledge Mapping and labelling the six biomes on a world map Understanding some of the causes of climate change Describing and explaining how physical features such as rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes have had an impact upon the surrounding landscape and communities Describing how humans use water in a variety of ways Describing and understanding types of settlement and land use Explaining why a settlement and community has grown in a particular location Describing how humans can impact the environment both positively and negatively, using examples **Geography skills and fieldwork** Beginning to use maps at more than one scale Using atlases, maps, globes, satellite images and beginning to use digital mapping to locate countries studied Finding countries and features of countries in an atlas using contents and index Making and using a simple route on a map Beginning to choose the best approach to answer an enquiry question Mapping land use in a small local area using maps and plans Making a plan for how they wish to collect data to answer an enquiry based question, with the support of a teacher Asking and answering one- step and two-step geographical questions Observing, recording, and naming geographical features in their local environments	Explaining why people might prefer to live in an urban or rural place. Describing how humans can impact the environment both positively and negatively, using examples. **Geography skills and fieldwork** Beginning to use maps at more than one scale. Using atlases, maps, globes, satellite images and beginning to use digital mapping to locate countries studied. Using atlases, maps, globes and beginning to use digital mapping to recognise and describe physical and human features in countries studied. Using the scale bar on a map to estimate distances. Finding countries and features of countries in an atlas using contents and index. Beginning to choose the best approach to answer an enquiry question. Making a plan for how they wish to collect data to answer an enquiry based question, with the support of a teacher. Asking and answering one- step and two-step geographical questions. Making digital audio recordings for a specific purpose. Designing a questionnaire / interviews to collect qualitative fieldwork data. Using a questionnaire / interviews to collect quantitative fieldwork data. Presenting data using plans, freehand sketch maps, annotated drawings, graphs, presentations, writing and digital technologies (photos with labels/captions) when communicating geographical information. Finding answers to geographical questions through data collection.	Explaining why different locations have different human features. **Geography skills and fieldwork** Beginning to use maps at more than one scale. Using atlases, maps, globes, satellite images and beginning to use digital mapping to locate countries studied. Using atlases, maps, globes and beginning to use digital mapping to recognise and describe physical and human features in countries studied. Finding countries and features of countries in an atlas using contents and index. Zooming in and out of a digital map. Beginning to use the key on an OS map to name and recognise key physical and human features in regions studied. Accurately using 4-figure grid references to locate features on a map in regions studied. Beginning to locate features using the 8 points of a compass. Using a simple key on their own map to show an example of both physical and human features. Following a route on a map with some accuracy. Geographical skills and fieldwork. Saying which directions are N, S, E, W on an OS map. Labelling some features on an aerial photograph and then locating these on an OS map of the same locality and scale in regions studied. Beginning to choose the best approach to answer an enquiry question. Mapping land use in a small local area using maps and plans. Asking and answering one- step and two-step geographical questions.

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	Making annotated sketches, field drawings and freehand maps to record observations during fieldwork Collecting quantitative data in charts and graphs Using a questionnaire / interviews to collect quantitative fieldwork data Presenting data using plans, freehand sketch maps, annotated drawings, graphs, presentations, writing and digital technologies (photos with labels/captions) when communicating geographical information Suggesting different ways that a locality could be changed and improved Finding answers to geographical questions through data collection		Observing, recording, and naming geographical features in their local environments. Taking digital photos and labelling or captioning them. Making annotated sketches, field drawings and freehand maps to record observations during fieldwork. Begin to use a simplified Likert Scale to record their judgements of environmental quality. Presenting data using plans, freehand sketch maps, annotated drawings, graphs, presentations, writing and digital technologies (photos with labels/captions) when communicating geographical information. Suggesting different ways that a locality could be changed and improved. Finding answers to geographical questions through data collection.
Sequence of lessons	**Lesson 1:** Where in the world are tropical rainforests? **Lesson 2:** What is the Amazon rainforest like? **Lesson 3:** Who lives in the rainforest? **Lesson 4:** How are rainforests changing? **Lesson 5:** How is our local woodland used?: Data collection **Lesson 6:** How is our local woodland used?: Findings?	**Lesson 1:** How can our food choices impact the environment? **Lesson 2:** What does it mean to trade fairly? **Lesson 3:** How do we get our chocolate? **Lesson 4:** Where does food come from? **Lesson 5:** Are our school dinners locally sourced? **Lesson 6:** Is it better to buy local or imported food?	**Lesson 1:** What is the water cycle? **Lesson 2:** How is a river formed? **Lesson 3:** Where can we find rivers? **Lesson 4:** How are rivers formed? **Lesson 5:** What can we find out about our local river? **Lesson 6:** What features does our local river have?
Unit outcomes	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.

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	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.
How does this unit prepare children for future learning?	**Why do oceans matter?** **(Year 5)** Children will learn to... 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.	**Why does our population change?** **(Year 6)** Children will learn to... 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.	**Why do oceans matter?** **(Year 5)** Children will learn to... 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.

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	Make suggestions for how to improve a marine environment. Present data using a tally chart and pie chart.	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.	Make suggestions for how to improve a marine environment. Present data using a tally chart and pie chart.