Sandy Lane Primary School

Geography Curriculum



Locational Knowledge



Place Knowledge



Human & Physical



Geographical Skills and

Intent

At Sandy Lane Primary School, our Geography curriculum is structured to give pupils a clear, progressive understanding of the world around them—from their immediate surroundings to the complexities of global systems and human-environment interaction. We aim to provide every child with the knowledge, skills, and vocabulary they need to think geographically, ask meaningful questions, and develop a deep-rooted sense of place.

Our intent is to ensure that children:

- Build a strong foundation in locational knowledge, place understanding, and geographical skills from an early age.
- Develop a secure understanding of the relationships between human and physical environments and how these shape the world we live in.
- Understand the significance of geographical processes such as weather patterns, land use, climate change, migration, and globalisation.
- Are equipped to interpret maps, atlases, digital mapping tools, and satellite imagery with increasing precision.
- Develop the confidence to use fieldwork to observe, measure, record, and present information accurately.
- Acquire and use a rich and expanding geographical vocabulary to describe, compare, analyse, and explain.
- Become reflective, critical thinkers who understand the impact of their choices and actions within a global context.

Our curriculum enables pupils to appreciate the diversity of people, cultures, and environments across the world while building an understanding of their local area and its place within wider national and global contexts. Geography at Sandy Lane is not taught in isolation; it is purposefully linked to other areas of the curriculum where appropriate, enriching cross-curricular learning and helping children make meaningful connections.

Implementation

The geography curriculum at Sandy Lane Primary School follows a carefully planned sequence that ensures progression in knowledge, understanding, and skills from Key Stage 1 through to Upper Key Stage 2. It is underpinned by high expectations, hands-on learning experiences, and opportunities for critical thinking and discussion.

Key Stage 1

In KS1, children begin by exploring their immediate environment. They learn to name and locate key places, including the countries of the UK and their capital cities. They are introduced to basic geographical language to describe features of familiar places, such as hills, rivers, houses, and shops. Pupils explore simple maps, globes, and atlases, learning to use directional language and simple symbols.

They compare the local area with contrasting locations, both within the UK and globally, to develop early place-based understanding. Fieldwork is used regularly to give children practical experience in observing and recording geographical features, such as school grounds, parks, or the high street.

Lower Key Stage 2

In LKS2, pupils begin to take a broader view of geography. They expand their locational knowledge to include Europe and other continents, major rivers, mountain ranges, and countries around the world. Pupils explore how physical processes such as rivers and volcanoes shape the land, and how human activities such as settlement and land use interact with these processes.

Children begin to use four-figure grid references, map symbols, and compass directions more confidently. Fieldwork becomes more purposeful, involving data collection (e.g., traffic surveys, land use studies) and basic analysis. Case studies are used to bring topics to life and encourage pupils to make connections between different places, people, and environments.

Upper Key Stage 2

In UKS2, pupils tackle increasingly complex geographical topics such as climate zones, biomes, economic trade, population distribution, and patterns of human migration. They investigate how humans adapt to and impact their environments, looking at issues such as urbanisation, sustainability, and climate change.

Map work is refined further through the use of six-figure grid references, OS maps, and digital tools such as Google Earth. Pupils use satellite imagery to examine geographical features at different scales and from different perspectives. Fieldwork becomes more analytical, with children planning investigations, drawing conclusions, and presenting findings using a range of media.

Throughout the curriculum, key geographical vocabulary is explicitly taught and revisited to ensure secure understanding and confident use in written and verbal work.

Impact

By the end of Year 6, pupils at Sandy Lane Primary School will have developed a well-rounded understanding of geography as both a knowledge-rich and

skills-based subject. They will be able to:

- Speak confidently and accurately about geographical processes, concepts, and issues using appropriate terminology.
- Locate key countries, cities, and physical features around the world and explain their significance.
- Apply geographical enquiry skills, including interpreting sources, analysing data, and drawing conclusions.
- Conduct meaningful fieldwork and use maps, digital technology, and other tools to explore the world around them.
- Understand how local actions can have global consequences and begin to consider their own role in shaping a sustainable future.
- Make connections between physical and human geography, recognising the dynamic and interconnected nature of our world.

Geography lessons at Sandy Lane are memorable and engaging, encouraging pupils to think critically about their environment and develop a lifelong interest in the world. The structured progression through the key stages ensures that all pupils leave primary school with the foundations they need to succeed in geography at secondary level and as informed, responsible global citizens.

Progression

Progression Overview
Our structured progression scaffolds learning, allowing pupils to build upon prior knowledge while developing key skills for interpreting and engaging with the world around them.
Detailed Progression Overview
Our geography curriculum is structured to provide a clear progression of knowledge, understanding, and skills from Reception, KS1 through to UKS2. This progression ensures that students develop a deep and connected understanding of the world, from their immediate surroundings to global processes and interconnections. Reception lays the foundations for geographical learning by helping children make sense of the world around them. Through exploring their immediate environment, talking about places that are special to them, and observing changes in the weather and seasons, children begin to develop an awareness of their local area and the wider world. They learn to use simple maps, recognise familiar features, and build the curiosity and vocabulary needed for future geographical learning. KS1 serves as the foundation, introducing children to basic locational knowledge and simple geographical concepts. They begin by exploring their local

environment, identifying key human and physical features, and using basic geographical tools like maps and globes.
LKS2 expands their perspective to include Europe and broader world geography. Children develop a stronger grasp of physical and human geography, understanding processes like river formation and the impact of settlements. Their fieldwork skills advance through the use of grid references, map symbols, and basic data collection.
UKS2 deepens pupils' global awareness, enabling them to explore complex geographical processes such as climate zones, biomes, and human migration. They refine their map skills with six-figure grid references and satellite imagery while applying analytical skills to real-world geographical challenges.

YFS ELG: Understanding the World: People, Culture & Communities The Natural World (Places & Environment)	Children at the expected standard can: • describe their immediate environment and community • notice similarities and differences in places • use simple positional and locational language. • talk about natural features and the environment • begin to use maps, globes, and directional vocabulary to represent places and journeys.	
Progression Overview	In EYFS, geography skills develop through exploration of both the local environment and wider places. Children begin by noticing and talking about familiar settings such as their home, school, and local park, gradually describing features and comparing similarities and differences between places. Through role-play, stories, and outdoor learning, they explore human and physical features, learn about different communities, and start to use maps, globes, and simple representations of space. By the end of Reception, children can describe their immediate environment, identify key physical and human features, use positional and directional language, and begin to explain simple observations about the natural and built world. These foundational skills prepare pupils for the more formal study of geography in Key Stage 1, including fieldwork, map skills, and understanding environments further afield.	
Vocabulary Progression	Geography vocabulary in EYFS develops from simple location and familiar place words to more precise terms related to the environment and mapping. Children first use words such as home, school, park, near, and far to describe their immediate surroundings. As their understanding grows, they begin to use positional and directional language like left, right, next to, behind, and terms for natural and human features including river, hill, forest, and sea. By the end of Reception, children are also introduced to more technical vocabulary such as map, globe, route, direction, community, and habitat, which enables them to articulate observations about places, people, and the environment accurately and prepares them for Key Stage 1 geography learning.	
Strand	Provision	Vocabulary

Locational Knowledge	• Role-play areas reflecting real-life places (shops, homes, post office) • Stories and discussions about different communities • Maps and globes exploration • Celebrating cultural festivals	home, school, park, town, city, country, map, community, people, culture, family, festival
Place Knowledge	• Outdoor exploration (school grounds, local park) • Nature walks and observing local habitats • Sorting materials • Seasonal changes and weather discussions	land, water, river, mountain, hill, forest, sea, weather, season, habitat, environment
Human & Physical Geography	• • Exploring natural and built environments • Identifying features in the local area • Comparing different environments through stories and pictures • Discussing weather and seasonal change • Water, sand and small world play linked to landscapes	Wet, dry, cloudy, stormy, village, farm, bridge, harbour
Geographical Skills and Fieldwork	• Simple mapping activities (classroom map, route maps) • Using positional language during play and outdoor activities • Compass directions using games (left, right, forwards, backwards) • Locating familiar places on a map or globe	near, far, left, right, next to, behind, map, globe, route,

		position, direction

Vocabulary Progression
By systematically developing geographical vocabulary across key stages, pupils gain the linguistic tools necessary to describe, analyse, and interpret the world with increasing sophistication. **Vocabulary Development and progression across the curriculum** **KS1 Vocabulary Development** In KS1, vocabulary is focused on naming and describing simple geographical concepts, such as place names (e.g., London, UK), basic human and physical features (e.g., mountain, road), and directional language (e.g., North, South). This foundational vocabulary allows our younger learners to articulate their observations and begin making basic geographical distinctions. **LKS2 Vocabulary Development** As pupils progress to LKS2, their vocabulary broadens to include more detailed geographical terms related to Europe and the wider world. They begin using words that describe physical processes (e.g. volcano, earthquake and human interactions with the environment (e.g., trade, economic activity). This richer vocabulary supports comparative studies and enables students to explain geographical patterns and relationships with greater precision. **UKS2 Vocabulary Development** At UKS2, pupils engage with more abstract and technical vocabulary, reflecting their deeper understanding of geographical systems and processes. Terms such as climate change, biome, urban planning and six-figure grid reference enable them to analyse global issues critically. Their ability to use precise

geographical language allows them to interpret data, construct reasoned arguments, and appreciate the interconnectedness of human and physical geography.

Strand	*KS1*	*Vocabulary*	*LKS2*	*Vocabulary*	*UKS2*	*Vocabulary*
Locational Knowledge	- Name and locate the four countries of the UK and their capitals. - Identify seas surrounding the UK.	UK, England Scotland Wales Northern Ireland, capital city, sea	- Locate and name countries in Europe, including Russia, and major cities. -Name and locate continents -Name and locate hemispheres, lines of longitude and latitude -Identify key geographical features such as rivers, earthquakes and volcanoes, and climate zones globally.	Europe Russia, Global hemisphere latitude, longitude	- Locate major countries and cities globally, including North and South America. - Understand latitude, longitude, hemispheres, and time zones. - Identify key geographical features such as mountains	North South America time zone, Tropics Hemisphere Longitude Latitude
Place Knowledge	- Understand similarities and differences by studying a small area of the UK and a non-European country.	Similar, different, town, village, continent	- Compare a region of the UK with a region in a European country.	Region, culture, environment	- Compare a region in the UK with regions in North or South America, focusing on similarities and differences.	Biome, climate zones, ecosystem, diversity
Human & Physical Geography	- Identify basic physical features (e.g., beaches, mountains, rivers). - Identify basic human features (e.g., houses, roads, shops).	Beach, mountain, river, hill, house,	Describe physical features (e.g., rivers, volcanoes, earthquakes) and how they are formed. - Understand types of	Volcano, earthquake, settlement, trade, agricultu	- Understand physical processes such as climate zones, and biomes. - Describe human geography,	Climate change, migration, population, urban,

		park	settlements, land use, and economic activity, including trade links.	re, economic activity	including population, migration, and land use patterns.	rural, deforestation
Geographical Skills and Fieldwork	- Use world maps, atlases, and globes to identify the UK and its countries. - Use simple compass directions (N, S, E, W) and locational/directional language (e.g., near, far). - Use observational skills to study local geography, including features and land use.	Direction, map, North, South, East. West	- Use maps, atlases, globes, and digital mapping to locate countries and describe features. - Use four-figure grid references and symbols/keys on Ordnance Survey maps. - Conduct simple fieldwork to observe and measure features in the local environment (e.g., traffic surveys, sketch maps).	Atlas, grid reference, Ordnance survey, data	- Use six-figure grid references and advanced map symbols on Ordnance Survey maps. - Collect and analyse data from fieldwork to understand patterns (e.g. urban planning). - Interpret aerial photographs and satellite imagery to understand landscapes and changes over time.	Six-figure grid reference Urban planning Aerial Data analysis

KS1 Assessment Grid

Strand	*WTS*	*%*	*EXS*	*%*	*GDS*	*%*
Locational Knowledge	Can name some countries of the UK and capitals.		Can name all countries of the UK and capitals.		Can describe the relationship between the UK and the surrounding seas.	
Place Knowledge	Can identify one geographical feature in the UK and a non-European country.		Can compare geographical features in a UK and non-European country.		Can discuss how geography shapes lives in the UK and a non-European country.	
Human & Physical Geography	Can identify a few physical and human features.		Can identify and describe physical and human features.		Can explain the impact of physical and human geography on different places.	

Geographical Skills and Fieldwork	Can use basic maps and compasses with support.		Can use maps, atlases, and basic compasses independently.		Can explain how to use maps and describe locations using compass directions.	

LKS2 Assessment Grid

Strand	*WTS*	*%*	*EXS*	*%*	*GDS*	*%*
Locational Knowledge	Can locate a few European countries.		Can name and locate countries in Europe.		Can locate major cities and describe climate zones globally.	
Place Knowledge	Can compare regions in the UK and Europe with some support.		Can compare geographical features in a UK and non-European country.		Can critically compare regions, including physical and human geography.	
Human & Physical Geography	Can describe a few physical and human features.		Can describe the formation of some physical features.		Can evaluate the economic activity and trade links of different	

					regions.	
Geographical Skills and Fieldwork	Can use four-figure grid references with some guidance.		Can use digital tools and create simple maps for fieldwork.		Can interpret Ordnance Survey maps and create detailed maps.	

UKS2 Assessment Grid

Strand	*WTS*	*%*	*EXS*	*%*	*GDS*	*%*
Locational Knowledge	Can locate a few countries globally.		Can explain the significance of latitude and longitude.		Can analyse the impact of global geography on	

					different regions.	
Place Knowledge	Can compare regions within the UK.		Can analyse geographical similarities and differences across continents.		Can critically assess global geographical patterns and processes.	
Human & Physical Geography	Can describe physical processes.		Can describe and explain biomes and climate zones.		Can analyse the impact of migration and human geography on the world.	
Geographical Skills and Fieldwork	Can use six-figure grid references.		Can interpret aerial photographs and use advanced maps.		Can analyse the impact of migration and human geography on the world.	

Sandy Lane Primary School Geography Overview

Year A	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
KS1		**Countries of the United Kingdom** Big Idea: Are they all the same size?		**Locate continents and oceans – cold places (Arctic)** Big Idea: How will you survive in the Arctic?	**Compare hot and cold places (rainforests)** Big Idea: Would you like to live in a hot or cold place? Give reasons for your answer.	
LKS2			**Modern Greece** Big Idea- Where in the world is Greece!?		**Rivers** **Amazon and River Wharf** Big Idea- All rivers are the same- Agree or disagree?	
UKS2	**Mountains** *How do mountains shape our world?*					
YEAR B						

KS1		**Countries of the United Kingdom** Big Idea: Is Wales the largest country?	**Locate continents and oceans – hot and cold places** Big Idea: How will you survive in the Arctic?		-	
LKS2				**Earthquakes and Volcanoes** Big Idea- How does the earth erupt ?		

UKS2			**The Americas** *Are all biomes the same?*			