

CURRICULUM SUBJECT OVERVIEW – GEOGRAPHY



‘The study of Geography is more than just memorising places on a map. It’s about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exist across continents. And in the end, it’s about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.’ - Barak Obama.

‘Through Faith, Friendship and Fun we Learn and Grow’

At Defford School, we believe that geography helps children make sense of the world around them—its people, places, and environments—while nurturing a sense of responsibility and wonder for God’s creation.

Faith inspires pupils to explore the beauty, complexity, and interconnectedness of the Earth, encouraging them to reflect on their role as stewards of the planet. It fosters a sense of awe and respect for the natural world and the diverse communities that inhabit it.

Friendship encourages collaboration and empathy, as pupils learn about different cultures, perspectives, and ways of life. Through shared enquiry and discussion, they develop a deeper understanding of global citizenship and the importance of working together to care for our world.

Fun ensures that our geography lessons are engaging, hands-on, and full of curiosity. Whether through fieldwork, map-making, or exploring distant places, pupils are inspired to ask questions, investigate, and discover.

Through these values, we nurture thoughtful, informed, and compassionate young geographers who are equipped to understand the challenges facing our world and empowered to make a positive difference.

Spirituality

In Geography, spirituality is about discovering and exploring the deep connections between people, places, and the planet. We encourage children to pause and reflect on the wonder of the natural world—from the vastness of oceans and mountains to the intricate patterns of rivers and ecosystems—and to consider how these connect to their own lives, values, and responsibilities.

Spirituality in geography invites pupils to explore both the seen and unseen: the visible landscapes and communities that shape our world, and the invisible forces—such as climate, culture, and interdependence—that influence how we live. Through enquiry and reflection, children are encouraged to consider their place in the world, their relationship with others, and their role in caring for creation.

By engaging with global issues such as sustainability, inequality, and climate change, pupils develop a sense of empathy, justice, and stewardship. They are inspired to think deeply about the impact of human actions and the importance of living in harmony with the Earth.

This reflective process helps children see geography not only as a subject of knowledge, but as a way of understanding their identity, their community, and their connection to something greater than themselves. Through this, we nurture a sense of awe, purpose, and global responsibility that enriches their learning and personal growth.

Intent	Implementation	Impact
As geographers, our children at Defford will gain a depth and breadth of knowledge and an understanding of the world, its environments and places both near and far, and the processes that create and affect them both human and physical. Our geography curriculum encourages children to appreciate and understand how the world works and the interconnections between communities and cultures as well as allowing them to consider how they can themselves be respectful, sensitive and accepting of the world. As a small village school, our geography curriculum is designed to enable pupils to grow in their global understanding of different cultures, to challenge stereotypes and to appreciate diversity. We believe children are active participants and investigators within geography, and value fieldwork as an essential part of the curriculum allowing them to explore, make connections and comparisons and identify patterns and changes. Geographical enquiry and skills are embedded throughout teaching to ensure skills are transferable and progressive. Our enquiry-based curriculum allows our children to investigate, ask questions and learn new information in order to gain a greater understanding of the wider world through the use of primary sources such as field work and secondary sources such as digital and physical maps, atlases, globes, photographs and books. Being a small village school, we want the children to be excited about the possibilities of what the world has in store for them to explore and experience. Children should leave Defford with a sense of their place in the world, both culturally and physically, and a desire to enquire about the world around them. We want to ensure that the children can be the best they can be and become responsible, confident global citizens who are well-equipped for the future.	Our Early Years Foundation Stage pupils will experience provision linked to Understanding of the World. Learning will include the use of simple maps, exploring the natural world as well as learning about people, culture and communities. Pupils will learn geography through playing, exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically. There are many opportunities for cross curricular learning, such as linking geography to science when learning about the seasons. Children from Year 1 to Year 6 are taught geography discretely once per week in alternate terms (a total of 3 enquiries per academic year). To support and inspire our young Geographers, we use an enquiry led approach. This ensures coverage and progression in all skills and knowledge relating to Geography. We plan an opportunity within each session to revisit geographical knowledge, skills and understanding that may need further consolidation or to use new knowledge to enforce prior skills. Through our enquiry-based learning, the children develop an understanding of the world. In every geography lesson, it is made explicit to pupils that they are being taught geography. Specifically named geography knowledge, skills and understanding are also referred to throughout the enquiries: locational knowledge, place knowledge, human features, physical features, map skills, compass skills and fieldwork skills. It is expected that the pupils will become familiar with these terms as they progress through the school. In addition to this, pupils will progress through transferable learning skills to develop as geographers. For example, pupils in Year 1 will be expected to identify, locate and name. Year 2 will describe and begin to explain. A geographer in Year 6 will compare, contrast and give reasons in their lessons. These are the specific skills that the teachers will assess. Due to the numbers on roll, we use a rolling programme of planning as we have mixed age classes. When planning each enquiry, teaching staff ensure that the outcome for each year group is pedagogically appropriate, taking all the above into consideration. Where possible, field trips are used to enhance learning, particularly of the local area	Our geography curriculum acts as a vital lens through which children interpret a complex, interconnected world. Its impact is transformational, moving beyond rote memorisation of capitals to fostering deep spatial literacy and a sense of global citizenship. By investigating the relationship between human societies and physical environments, pupils develop the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate contemporary challenges like climate change and sustainability. This high-quality education integrates literacy, mathematics, and science through real-world application. Through rigorous fieldwork, children transition from passive observers to active enquirers, learning to collect data and challenge cultural stereotypes. This builds a nuanced understanding of diversity, ensuring they see regions as multifaceted rather than through "single stories." This curriculum instils a sense of belonging and ethical responsibility, equipping pupils with the substantive knowledge and disciplinary tools required for secondary success. By anchoring their personal identity within a global context, we empower the next generation to be informed, empathetic contributors to society.

Year A

Class	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Birch	What is the geography of where I live like?		How does the geography of a Non-European country compare with the geography of where I live?		Why does it matter where my food comes from?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit introduces pupils to their immediate geographical surroundings, helping them develop a sense of place and spatial awareness. It lays the foundation for all future geographical learning by anchoring concepts in familiar contexts. This unit is taught early to establish foundational geographical concepts using familiar surroundings. It prepares pupils for comparing local and global geographies in later units.</i>		<i>This unit builds on pupils' understanding of their local area by introducing them to contrasting global locations. It fosters global awareness and comparative thinking. This unit builds on pupils' understanding of their local area and introduces global comparisons, preparing them for more complex global interdependence topics.</i>		<i>This unit explores global trade and food production, helping pupils understand interdependence and sustainability. This unit builds on global awareness and introduces economic geography, setting the stage for sustainability and trade discussions in later years.</i>	
Oak	Why do the biggest earthquakes not always cause the most damage?		Why are jungles so wet and deserts so dry?		How and why is my local environment changing?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit introduces tectonic processes and the human factors influencing natural disaster impact, developing critical thinking. This unit introduces tectonic processes and human geography, preparing pupils for natural hazards and risk management topics.</i>		<i>This unit explores climate zones and biomes, helping pupils understand global weather patterns and ecosystems. This unit builds on climate and biome knowledge, supporting understanding of global weather systems and ecosystems.</i>		<i>This unit focuses on human impact and environmental change, encouraging local investigation and sustainability thinking. This unit builds on local geography and introduces environmental change, preparing pupils for sustainability and urbanisation topics.</i>	
Ash	How do volcanoes affect the lives of people living on Hiemaey?		Is fair trade fair?		What is a river?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit explores volcanic activity and its impact on communities, combining physical and human geography. This unit builds on physical geography and introduces the impact of natural hazards on communities, preparing pupils for tectonic and risk topics.</i>		<i>This unit introduces global trade, ethics, and economic geography, encouraging critical thinking and empathy. This unit builds on global trade and economic geography, preparing pupils for ethical and sustainability discussions</i>		<i>This unit explores river systems, processes, and their importance to people and environments. This unit introduces river systems and processes, preparing pupils for water cycle and landform studies.</i>	

Year B

Class	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Birch	How does the weather affect our lives?		Why don't penguins need to fly?		Why do we love being beside the seaside so much?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit introduces basic meteorological concepts and the impact of weather on daily life, supporting early scientific and geographical understanding. This unit introduces basic weather concepts early, supporting understanding of climate and environmental conditions in future units.</i>		<i>This unit uses Antarctica and penguins to explore adaptation, climate, and extreme environments, fostering curiosity and global awareness. This unit uses engaging content to explore adaptation and extreme environments, laying the groundwork for biomes and climate studies.</i>		<i>This unit explores coastal geography and tourism, linking physical features with human activity and cultural significance. This unit builds on physical geography and introduces human-environment interaction, preparing pupils for coastal and tourism studies.</i>	
Oak	Beyond the Magic Kingdom – what's it really like to live in the Sunshine State?		Why do some people live in Megacities?		How can we live more sustainably?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit uses Florida as a case study to explore regional geography, tourism, and contrasts within a developed country. This unit builds on regional comparisons and prepares pupils for deeper exploration of development and tourism.</i>		<i>This unit examines urbanisation, population growth, and global development, fostering understanding of human geography. This unit builds on settlement and population studies, preparing pupils for urbanisation and sustainability discussions.</i>		<i>This unit encourages critical thinking about environmental responsibility and sustainable living. This unit builds on environmental change and prepares pupils for future learning about climate change and responsible citizenship.</i>	
Ash	How is climate change affecting the world?		Why are mountains so important?		Who are Britain's National Parks for?	
<i>Reason</i>	<i>This unit addresses a pressing global issue, linking physical processes with human impact and responsibility. This unit builds on weather and environmental change, preparing pupils for sustainability and global responsibility topics.</i>		<i>This unit explores mountain environments, their formation, and significance to people and ecosystems. This unit builds on physical geography and introduces mountain environments, supporting understanding of ecosystems and human interaction.</i>		<i>This unit examines land use, conservation, and access, linking geography with citizenship and sustainability. This unit builds on land use and conservation, preparing pupils for citizenship and sustainability topics</i>	

Willow class will learn their Geography curriculum through the EYFS Areas of Learning: Understanding the World; Mathematics. Please refer to the EYFS Curriculum Plans.