



Geography Curriculum Statement

"Geography explains the past, illuminates the present and prepares us for the future. What could be more important than that?" –

Michael Palin, 2007

Intent

At Purbrook Junior School, our geography curriculum inspires curiosity and fascination about the world, its people, and the environment. Through an enquiry-based approach, children explore their local surroundings before broadening their understanding to national and global contexts. Each year group builds on prior learning to develop children's understanding of both human and physical geography, from local land use and settlements to global biomes, natural resources, and ecosystems.

Our progressive curriculum enables children to explore themes such as trade, natural hazards, rivers, climate change, biodiversity, sustainability, and regional comparisons based on the concepts of place, space, environment, and Earth processes. These topics help pupils understand how people interact with their environment, the impact of human activity on the planet, and the importance of informed and sustainable decision-making.

Aligned with the school's Climate Action Plan, geography also fosters practical understanding of sustainability initiatives. Pupils learn about renewable energy, waste reduction, biodiversity, and sustainable food systems, encouraging them to become engaged members of the school and wider community. Opportunities for pupil leadership, such as Eco-Council projects and sustainability campaigns, complement the curriculum by empowering children to apply geographical knowledge to real-world climate action.

We value real-life experiences that deepen learning, such as fieldwork, local studies, outdoor learning, and cultural comparisons. Wherever possible, geography is enriched through visits, visitors, cross-curricular links, and school sustainability projects, including environmental initiatives and climate-focused investigations.

Implementation

Geography is taught every term through engaging, enquiry-led units built around Big Questions that promote curiosity, critical thinking, and environmental

awareness. Each unit has clear progression in knowledge and skills, supporting children to make connections across topics and year groups.

Learning activities develop geographical skills such as:

- Map work at a range of scales, including spatial analysis of local ecosystems and carbon footprints
- Fieldwork and observation, including environmental surveys, biodiversity studies, and outdoor learning
- Data collection, analysis, and interpretation, including climate indicators, energy use, and sustainability metrics
- Use of digital and physical maps, atlases, and globes
- Sketch maps, diagrams, and cross-curricular writing

Children are encouraged to communicate their learning in a range of ways — through discussion, debate, presentation, and extended writing. High-quality vocabulary, including terms related to sustainability, climate change, and environmental management, is explicitly taught and revisited, allowing pupils to articulate their geographical understanding confidently.

Practical engagement is embedded in the curriculum: children participate in sustainability projects, such as school litter picks, biodiversity enhancement, renewable energy monitoring, and promoting sustainable travel. These initiatives mirror the school's broader climate action goals and allow pupils to apply their learning in meaningful ways.

Regular monitoring of lessons, pupils' work, and feedback ensures coverage, depth, and high standards of teaching and learning across the school.

Impact

Our geography curriculum ensures that pupils leave Purbrook Junior School with:

- A secure understanding of the world's physical and human features, the impact of human activity, and the importance of sustainable practices
- Knowledge of local and global environmental issues, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource management

- Experience of participating in sustainability initiatives and applying geographical skills to real-world problems
- A sense of place, enabling them to compare and contrast locations from the local area to global regions such as the Amazon, Italy, and the USA, while considering environmental and climate-related factors
- Curiosity, respect, and responsibility for different environments and cultures
- The skills and confidence to investigate, question, and interpret the world around them, including environmental challenges and solutions

By Year 6, pupils think like geographers — enquiring, analysing, and explaining how people, places, and environments are interconnected and how human actions affect the planet. They leave Purbrook equipped with the knowledge, vocabulary, and enthusiasm to continue exploring, understanding, and contributing positively to a sustainable and climate-conscious future.