NEWTON BLUECOAT CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM

Whole-School Overview 2026–27

CURIOUS • EXPLORATIVE • INFORMED • RESPONSIBLE

Our Geography Vision

At Newton Bluecoat, Geography should inspire curiosity and fascination about our immediate surroundings and the wider world. We want children to develop a secure sense of place, understand how people and environments are interconnected, and recognise how places are shaped and changed by physical and human processes.

Our curriculum begins with the familiar - our school, village and local area - and deliberately broadens children's horizons to the United Kingdom, Europe and the wider world. **Fieldwork, mapwork, enquiry and geographical vocabulary are woven through the curriculum so that pupils learn not only geographical facts, but how to think and work like geographers.**

By the end of Year 6, our geographers will…

- have secure locational knowledge of their locality, the UK and a wide range of globally significant places;
- understand key physical and human processes and explain how people, places and environments are interconnected;
- use maps, atlases, globes, aerial photographs, digital mapping and Ordnance Survey maps with increasing confidence;
- ask geographical questions, collect and interpret evidence, draw conclusions and communicate findings clearly;
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and explain geographical features and patterns;
- use a rich and increasingly precise geographical vocabulary;
- consider environmental issues thoughtfully and express balanced, evidence-informed views about change and sustainability.

The Geographical Journey

PLACE	SPACE & SCALE	ENVIRONMENT	CHANGE & CONNECTION
What is this place like and what makes it distinctive?	Where is it? How is it connected to other places?	How do physical and human features interact?	How and why do places change over time?

Knowledge, Vocabulary and Retrieval

Knowing more and remembering more. Core locational knowledge, map knowledge and vocabulary are deliberately revisited so that pupils build increasingly secure mental maps of the world. Teachers make links to prior learning and use regular retrieval to strengthen long-term memory.

Core Vocabulary Progression

YEAR	EXAMPLES OF CORE VOCABULARY
Year 1	near, far, left, right, map, globe, journey, seasons, weather, hot, cold, town, village, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, continent, ocean
Year 2	aerial view, landscape, environment, local, distant, city, coast, beach, cliff, harbour, port, mountain, river, valley, vegetation, Equator, North Pole, South Pole
Year 3	Continents, countries, trade, links, traditional, industrial, land use, plains landscape, terrain, population, trade, farming, seas and oceans, map, atlas, latitude, longitude
Year 4	river, source, water cycle, evaporation, condensation, precipitation, infiltration, runoff, flood plain, pollution, Europe, region, environmental, temperate
Year 5	UK, counties, land use, natural resources, renewable, non-renewable, food miles, trade links, rainforest, Amazon, latitude, longitude, biome, vegetation belt
Year 6	import, export, trade, fair trade, economic activity, Prime Meridian, time zone, erosion, coastline, climate, environmental change, interdependence

Recurring Geographical Concepts

Place	Scale	Location	Environment	Interconnection	Change
What makes places distinctive?	Local → global	Where is it and why there?	Physical + human	How places depend on each other	How and why places change

"GEOGRAPHY HELPS US UNDERSTAND OUR PLACE IN GOD'S WORLD - AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CARE FOR IT."

Whole-School Geography Journey

Year 1

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**Hot and Cold Areas of the World**	Why are some places hot and others cold?	Continents, oceans, climate, Equator and polar regions
Spring	**UK Countries and Capital Cities**	What makes the United Kingdom a group of four countries?	UK, countries, capitals, seas and simple map location
Summer	**Fieldwork in the School Grounds**	What is our school environment like?	Observation, simple maps, human/physical features and fieldwork

Year 2

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**Local Area - Where I Live? / Continents and Oceans**	Where do we live in the world?	Locality, UK, continents, oceans, routes and simple maps
Spring	**African Explorers**	How is a place in Africa similar to and different from where we live?	Place comparison, climate, landscape and human/physical features
Summer	**Seaside Localities / Seasonal & Daily Weather**	What makes a seaside place distinctive?	Coasts, weather, seasonal patterns and human activity

Year 3

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**Local Area - Map Work & Fieldwork**	How can maps and fieldwork help us understand our locality?	Eight compass points, OS symbols, local features and fieldwork
Spring	**Volcanoes & Earthquakes**	Why does the Earth shake and erupt?	Earth structure, tectonic processes, volcanoes, earthquakes and impact
Summer	**Lake District**	What makes the Lake District a distinctive region of the UK?	Region, mountains, lakes, settlement, tourism and comparison

Year 4

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**Rubbish & Recycling**	What happens to our rubbish and how can our choices make a difference?	Waste, recycling, sustainability, data and human impact
Spring	**Passport to Europe**	How does a European region compare with our own?	Europe, region, climate, settlement, land use and comparison
Summer	**Flow River Flow**	How do rivers shape landscapes and people's lives?	Water cycle, river processes, features, flooding, pollution and fieldwork

Year 5

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**A Kingdom United**	How diverse is the geography of the United Kingdom?	Cities, counties, mountains, rivers, seas, land use and regions
Spring	**Food, Glorious Food!**	Where does our food come from and why does it matter?	Resources, trade, food miles, climate, sustainability and interdependence
Summer	**Amazon Adventure - Amazon Rainforest**	Why is the Amazon important to the world?	Rainforest, biome, climate, latitude, resources and environmental change

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Year 6

Term	Unit	Big enquiry question	Geographical focus
Autumn	**Amazing Americas**	How are places across the Americas connected and different?	North/South America, latitude, longitude, climate, regions and comparison
Spring	**Trading and Economics**	How does global trade connect people and places?	Imports, exports, trade, resources, economic activity and fair trade
Summer	**Our Changing World**	How and why is our world changing?	Environmental change, erosion, climate, human impact and informed response

Thinking Like a Geographer

Across every unit, children are taught to think geographically. The curriculum progressively develops four connected strands:

STRAND	WHAT CHILDREN LEARN TO DO
Locational & Place Knowledge	Locate places accurately; develop a sense of place; compare local, national and global locations.
Human & Physical Geography	Describe and explain physical processes, human activity and the interactions between people and environments.
Geographical Enquiry	Ask increasingly searching questions; investigate patterns and issues; use evidence to reach and explain conclusions.
Map Skills & Fieldwork	Use maps and digital tools at increasing levels of sophistication; observe, measure, record, analyse and present fieldwork data.

Progression from Year 1 to Year 6

KS1 foundations: Name and locate; observe; describe; compare; use simple maps, globes, symbols and compass language; ask and answer simple geographical questions.
Lower KS2 development: Explain patterns and processes; use a wider range of maps and digital sources; use eight compass points and four-figure grid references; undertake purposeful local fieldwork.
Upper KS2 depth: Analyse connections and change; use latitude, longitude, time zones and increasingly complex mapping; use six-figure grid references; collect, analyse and present quantitative fieldwork data; form evidence-based views.

Fieldwork: Geography Beyond the Classroom

- Year 1: school grounds - observe and describe the environment and daily weather.
- Year 2: local village walk - identify human and physical features and map where children live and play.
- Year 3: local mapwork - plan routes, use compass directions and identify features from maps and aerial images.
- Year 4: environmental or river enquiry - observe, record and explain human and physical features.
- Year 5: food and resource enquiry - collect and present data about where food comes from and how choices connect places.
- Year 6: comparative/settlement enquiry - use numerical and quantitative skills to analyse and communicate fieldwork findings.