



Geography Policy

September 2025

Signed (Chair of Trustees):	
Date:	September 2025
Date of Review:	September 2026

Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.

Geography Curriculum Policy

Content Page

1. Aims
2. How we teach Geography
3. Geography Curriculum Planning
4. The Foundation Stage
5. Teaching Geography to children with special educational needs
6. Assessment and recording
7. Resources
8. Monitoring and review

Aim

We provide a high-quality geography education that inspires in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching will equip all pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world will help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time. Knowledge and understanding of sustainability and how human interaction affects this is key. Geography teaching is about developing an understanding of our world, primarily through experience, investigation and learning from primary and secondary sources.

The National Curriculum for Geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - I. collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - II. interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - III. communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

We want our children to be able to:

- Think creatively about Geography and enjoy trying to make sense of phenomena;
- Develop language skills through talking about their work and presenting their own ideas using sustained and systematic writing of different kinds;
- Use discussion to remedy misconceptions to build a secure foundation;
- Use geographic and mathematical language including technical vocabulary
- Draw diagrams and charts to communicate geographic ideas;
- Research and extract information from sources such as reference books, the internet and video clips.
- Develop a respect for the environment and for their own health and safety.
- Work with others, listening to their ideas and treating these with respect.

How we teach Geography

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We achieve this through a range of strategies, setting common tasks that are open-ended and can have a variety of responses; setting tasks of increasing difficulty where not all children complete all tasks; grouping children by ability and setting variations of tasks for each group; providing a range of challenges with different resources; using additional adults to support the work of individual children or small groups. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use technology in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

We achieve this by:

- Providing children opportunities to undertake map work
- take part in field work, covering aspects of physical and human environments
- learn from places of geographical interest through educational visits
- learn from visiting speakers
- learn from formal presentations (end of term projects) by their peers
- Articulate their geographical learning through description, writing summaries and personal accounts, speaking and listening e.g. discussion and debate, make use of photographs, video clips and the internet
- record their findings in a variety of ways
- handle and interpret data
- take part in role play, educational games or simulations
- use information technology
- engage in a variety of practical activities

We also:

- set common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group (variation);
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

Geography Curriculum Planning

The composites and components taught are underpinned by the national curriculum for geography as the basis for our curriculum planning. We have tailored our curriculum to the local circumstances of our school, we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those that predominate in our own immediate area.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases long-term, medium-term and short-term, broken into components that are coherent and cumulative with endpoints. Our long-term plan maps the geography topics studied in each term during each key stage. The geography subject leader works this out in conjunction with SLT and teaching colleagues in each year group. At times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently. Our medium-term plans follow the bespoke scheme of work and give details of each unit of work for each term. The geography subject leader reviews these plans on a regular basis.

Each class teacher creates a resource plan for each lesson, ensuring children are equipped for the lesson, particularly the bottom 20%. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and often discusses them with the geography subject leader on an informal basis. We plan the topics in geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

The Foundation Stage

Geography is taught in the Nursery and Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As these classes are a part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the geographical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. Geography makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of activities.

Teaching Geography to children with special educational needs

We teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography is a part of the school curriculum policy. This helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. The SEND Code of Practice outlines the entitlement of children with SEND including why it is important to make reasonable adjustments and give all children access to the curriculum. So, we teach geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography is a central part of the school curriculum policy. This helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors classroom organisation, intensive classroom support, teaching materials, teaching style, variation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively and then catch-up. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Intervention through SEN Support and EHC plans will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to geography.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in geography by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum expected standards. We record the attainment grades on Sims and pupil progress booklet, which is discussed with the senior leadership of the school. The class teachers keep evidence of the children's work in an e-portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each key stage of the school. The information is used to plan future work pupils, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child and as part of the child's annual report to parents. The information is also passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Resources

Resourcing geography remains a key priority in delivering the subject as intended. We have a wide range of resources to support the teaching of geography across the school. All our classrooms have a range of basic resources, but we keep the more specialised equipment in the geography cupboards. Within each year group we have a set of atlases. In the library we have a good supply of geography topic books and access to the internet to support the children's individual research. We also have access to technological devices which the children use to gather weather data. We have half-termly review of the resources needed to plan ahead to ensure that weekly lessons are delivered with efficiency.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is integral to good geography teaching and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry. Children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. At Key Stage 2, the children do a study of the local area and identified trips provide additional opportunities for enhanced field work.

Monitoring and review

At our school, the geography subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in geography. This is through half termly monitoring of teacher planning and children's' books. Pupil interviews, learning walks and summative assessments also contribute to the monitoring of the subject where data and feedback is then analysed to identify strengths and areas for development to address the following term. The geography subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of geography, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The geography subject leader gives the senior leadership team a half termly report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Subject	Term	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Geography	Autumn	United Kingdom	London	Environmental regions	Land use	Human geography and Land use	Characteristics of Europe
	Spring	Weather Patterns	The world	Rivers	Key aspects of physical geography	Climate Zones	Sustainability
	Summer	Coastlines	Contrasting UK and a Non-European country	Europe	UK and the Americas	Settlements and land use	Water use and rivers