

WFA Curriculum Statement

Being a Geographer



Intent

At Wallscourt Farm Academy, we want our children to see themselves as geographers who seek to understand the why of where. We recognise children as learners who are developing curiosity about places, environments, and people, and who hold distinct identities within different states of being. When being geographers, children explore the relationships between people and their environments in order to understand the world and their place within it.

Foundations for being a geographer are established in the Early Years through first-hand experiences of the local environment and community. Children are supported to make sense of their immediate surroundings, notice similarities and differences between places and people, and develop early map awareness through play, stories and observation. These experiences align with the CLF EYFS geography framework and are deliberately built upon as children move into Key Stage 1, where learning becomes increasingly structured and sequenced.

Our enquiry-based curriculum develops a secure and progressive balance of geographical knowledge, disciplinary thinking, and core fieldwork skills. Through carefully structured enquiries, learners ask meaningful questions, investigate patterns, analyse evidence, and seek explanations. This enables them to become lost in wonder at the beauty and diversity of the world. Explicit subject vocabulary is taught and revisited so children gain the voice of the geographer and can articulate their developing understanding clearly and confidently.

Children explore geography through five key substantive concepts:

- Place; Space and Scale
- Physical Geography
- Human Geography
- Environmental Impact and Sustainability
- Cultural Awareness and Diversity

As they progress through the school, children gain an increasing understanding of how places are connected, how environments change over time, and how human actions influence the world. This empowers them to think critically about the present and future of our planet as informed, responsible young global citizens.



Implementation

Being a Geographer is enacted through our enquiry-based curriculum and sequenced deliberately from EYFS to Year 6. Each enquiry balances substantive knowledge (what geographers know), disciplinary knowledge (how geographers think and work) and geographical skills, with explicit links to other states of being so that learning is purposeful and connected.

Enquiries are rooted in real places and meaningful contexts that broaden children's perspective from the local and familiar to the national and global. Learning is enriched through the use of maps, atlases, globes, aerial photographs, digital mapping tools, diagrams, data, and high-quality texts. Fieldwork is integrated throughout the curriculum, beginning with simple observational experiences and building to purposeful data collection, analysis, and presentation in Upper Key Stage 2.

Explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary ensures that learners can describe, explain, compare and reason with increasing precision. Learning is further strengthened through linked states of being (e.g. Writer, Historian, Citizen, Scientist and Designer) enabling learners to apply geographical knowledge in meaningful, connected ways.

Sequencing from EYFS to Year 6

EYFS – Understanding the World

- Children explore their immediate environment through first-hand experiences, such as exploring the school grounds or local walks.
- They talk about places special to them and their families, and begin to use photographs and simple maps.
- Adults model geographical language and care for the environment, laying foundations for locational knowledge and early fieldwork.

Year 1 – Local place and simple maps

- Enquiry example: *Where is my school?*
 - Learners are geographers using simple maps, aerial photos and positional language to identify landmarks and routes in the immediate locality.
 - Linked state(s): Designer (create models of key local landmarks) and Historian (identify important historical places and how they have changed over time).
 - Fieldwork focus: observing, sketching, simple route maps; using and making picture keys.

Year 2 – UK regions; oceans and continents; contrasting locality



- Enquiry examples: *What are the regions of the United Kingdom?* and *What are the world's oceans and continents?*
 - Learners develop national and global locational knowledge using maps, atlases and globes.
 - Linked state(s): Writer (informative reports) and Citizen (persuasive posters about protecting oceans).
- Enquiry example: *What is the physical and human geography like in Guizhou (China)?*
 - Learners compare a contrasting non-European locality and communicate understanding through postcards (Being a Writer).
 - Fieldwork focus: simple surveys/observations; drawing and reading plan-view maps with basic keys.

Year 3 – Regions of the UK; Europe and the Mediterranean; early thematic comparisons

- Enquiry example: *How is life in the Mediterranean similar to and different from the South West of the UK?*
 - Learners extend map skills and compare physical and human features, beginning to link climate and landscape to human activity.
 - Fieldwork focus: Sketch maps; simple measurements; charts and diagrams.

Year 4 – Capital city case study and global framing

- Enquiry example: *Why is London such an important place?*
 - Learners investigate London as a capital city, exploring the interaction between physical geography (River Thames) and human geography (transport, population).
 - Learning is framed within global concepts including hemispheres, latitude and longitude, climate zones and time zones.
 - Fieldwork focus: Digital mapping; OS symbols.
 - Linked state(s): Writer (explanations and reports), Historian (how location supports significance over time).

Year 5 – Water, resources and human–environment interaction

- Enquiry examples: *Where are significant waterways and why there?* (rivers/canals, settlement, trade); *How can we love our Earth?* (finite natural resources, sustainability, climate change).
 - Strong integration with Science (water cycle; resources; energy) and Citizen (responsibility, debate and action), and Writer (persuasive speeches; explainers).



- Fieldwork focus: river/settlement studies; collecting, analysing and presenting primary/secondary data; digital mapping.

Year 6 – Complex physical processes and global issues

- Enquiry example: *How are mountains formed?*
 - Learners are geographers developing their understanding of complex physical geography through the study of mountain formation. They investigate how mountains are created through tectonic processes, including plate movement, collision and uplift. Learners use maps, diagrams and models to explain these processes clearly and precisely.
 - This enquiry builds on earlier geographical learning about landscapes and physical features, enabling learners to move from describing physical geography to explaining physical processes using appropriate scientific and geographical vocabulary.
 - Linked state(s) of being: Scientist (understanding large-scale physical processes), Writer (explaining processes logically and clearly).
 - Fieldwork focus: Using secondary sources such as models, diagrams and global datasets; Presenting findings through structured explanations.

How Geography links to other States of Being

- Writer – Geography provides the purpose and content; writing provides the form. Typical outcomes include: non-chronological reports (place/region studies), explanations (processes like rivers or tectonics), arguments/persuasion (comparative place studies; sustainability), and postcards/letters from a place (audience-aware writing).
- Historian – Geography supplies context for change over time (location, resources, trade routes, environment). Learners use place knowledge to explain settlement, power and legacy in studies such as ancient civilisations or local history.
- Scientist – Physical geography draws directly on scientific processes (water cycle, weather/climate, erosion, deposition, plate tectonics). Learners test ideas through observation, measurement and data analysis, then apply scientific understanding to explain geographical patterns and change.
- Designer – Spatial understanding is applied through models, maps and data displays (e.g. landmark models in Y1; river-basin models or settlement layouts in LKS2) to communicate ideas and solutions linked to place.
- Citizen – Enquiries regularly surface questions of responsibility (care for local environments; oceans; resources; climate change). Learners practise respectful dialogue, evaluate evidence and plan age-appropriate actions.



Impact

By the time children leave Wallscourt Farm Academy, they are confident and thoughtful geographers who can explain where places are, describe what they are like and suggest reasons for similarities, differences and change. They have a secure understanding of both human and physical geography across a range of scales, from the local area to the global context.

Children can use maps, atlases, globes and digital tools with increasing accuracy, carry out age-appropriate fieldwork and communicate their findings clearly using appropriate geographical vocabulary. They show curiosity about the world, respect for diversity and an emerging understanding of environmental responsibility and sustainability.

Children leave WFA with the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to continue developing as geographers: able to think critically about the world, understand interconnections between people and places, and engage thoughtfully with the geographical issues that shape their future.

