

Geography is a dynamic subject because the World, and our understanding of it is continually changing. Living in an area of natural beauty means that it is our duty at Hawes Primary School to ensure the children have a strong understanding of the geography of their immediate locality. Encouraging children to understand the geography of their local area and to spend time outdoors is also proven to improve mental health.

“Geographers are concerned with the local and the global. They are interested in how local, regional and national decisions have global impacts. They are interested in the relationships between regions and countries, for example in exploring trade and their interdependence on each other.”
(Ofsted, 2021)

The fundamental role of geography at Hawes Primary School lies in helping children to understand the world, its environments and places near and far, and the processes that create and affect them. It will provide children with the necessary cultural capital to become global citizens, with an awareness of current world events. Purposeful and natural links to Fundamental British Values, SMSC and global themes are an integral part of our curriculum and are threaded through the geography curriculum.

The geography curriculum enables children to take on the role of a geographer: exploring, discovering and beginning to make sense of the world around them. At Hawes Primary School, we believe that all children’s education begins in Early Years. Our curriculum is aligned to the Early Years Framework and shows the sequential steps of essential knowledge acquired from Reception to Year 6. Our curriculum offer for geography begins in Early Years.

‘Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.’
EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021

Curriculum Design

The whole school long term plan is designed for mixed age classes. Geography is taught in a block at least once per term. Unit plans are designed on a two year rolling program for KS1 and ensure that Year Groups cover core knowledge for their Year group. In KS2, a four year rolling program operates. In Autumn Term, children study UK based topics, Spring Term sees a European or Non-European country comparison study and Summer Term topics cover physical geography units such as mountains.

Knowledge in geography

Geography provides opportunities for children to learn about their locality as well as places around the world. Children are taught what they need to know, the declarative knowledge, and how to use what they know, the procedural knowledge. They are given opportunities to study locations, places, environments and human and physical features, examining the distribution of these features. Whether it is the distribution of local post boxes or volcanoes globally, studying distribution will allow children to notice geographical patterns, leading them to consider the reasons for and the impacts of these and to ask further questions.

Substantive knowledge in geography is based on the knowledge of four key elements of geographical understanding.

These are:

- Location: Develop children’s knowledge of the location of significant places, both terrestrial and marine.
- Place: Know the similarities and differences of significant places, both terrestrial and marine.

- Human and physical features: Know the processes that provide the human and physical features of the world, including how these are interdependent and change over time.
- Skills and fieldwork: Know how to collect, analyse and communicate geographical data gathered through experiences of fieldwork. Know how to interpret a range of geographical information and present this in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical skills and written formats.

Disciplinary knowledge in geography is the process of enabling children to use their substantive knowledge of the world around them to make links between and across different areas of the curriculum. Geography knowledge will equip the children with the ability to explain how and why places are changing and to predict any future changes. They will also apply this knowledge to explain what could and should change in the future of the world in which they live; providing them with the opportunity to become effective global citizens.

Reading opportunities in geography

Reading underpins our entire curriculum. Key texts and pieces of information are carefully selected ensuring that the content and reading age are appropriate.

SMSC in Geography

Geography education encourages pupils to explore how places have been changed by the contexts and processes that have shaped them. It helps them to understand the complex ways in which communities and societies are linked and to appreciate the diversity of people's backgrounds. Geography also helps pupils to understand society better. Appreciating diversity encourages positive relationships and shared values. It promotes tolerance and partnership, within local and wider communities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural attributes are developed in our pupils throughout the geography curriculum:

- Spiritual education is threaded through all elements of geography. The fundamental role of geography is for the children to know about the world around them. Through building this knowledge, children have opportunities to explore their own feelings about the people, culture, place and environments studied.
- Moral education in geography is explored through learning about human and physical features of locations and how human features affect the physical features. For example, do the benefits of deforestation outweigh the environmental impact?
- Social education in geography teaches children how different people live around the world and how their lives may have similarities and differences. In addition to this, children are provided with opportunities to discuss and debate geographical issues, developing their personal social skills and confidence.
- Cultural education is a fundamental part of the geography curriculum, primarily through the component of place knowledge. All children are taught about how different cultures live and compare this to their own lives. Children are given the opportunity to explore the multicultural societies within Britain and the wider world.

Enhancements in Geography

At Hawes Primary School, we have a carefully planned rolling programme of enhancements to ensure that all year groups are exposed to a wide range of opportunities that enhance children's knowledge and cultural capital in all subjects.

Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027