



Geography



"The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together."
-President Obama

Context

Ballifield Primary School is a large urban primary school located in South East Sheffield, in a suburb called Handsworth. This is primarily a residential area, with local shops, schools, churches and light industry, as well as hospitality establishments and large retail outlets. There are also several open-spaces, parkland and farmland. The area has changed over the last 10 years, with an increasing range of national commercial and recreational businesses opening in the area. From a quiet village hundreds of years ago, surrounded by farmland and fields, Handsworth is now a busy suburb of Sheffield, with bus and road networks linking to the motorways easily. Recent large housing developments on the outskirts of Handsworth, have seen more investment and infrastructure over the last few years. Proposals within the Sheffield Plan suggest building over 1,700 new homes on green belt land in the Handsworth area. Many local residents and campaigners are actively opposing this development, citing concerns over loss of wildlife, increased traffic, and destruction of community green space.

Ballifield Primary School is a two-form entry school serving 457 pupils* aged 3-11 years old, including a nursery for our youngest pupils. The school is located in the Woodhouse ward, an area experiencing higher deprivation than Sheffield and England averages. Individual pupil postcodes show that our pupils come from areas that are slightly more deprived than average. However, over half of our pupils are drawn from outside our catchment area, with families actively choosing Ballifield as a result of strong school reputation. Because pupils come from diverse postcodes across the region- some from more deprived areas, some from less deprived areas - when aggregated, our pupil-based deprivation is classified as close to average.

However, we recognise that raw data may not capture all families experiencing disadvantage. Evidence from multi-agency meetings and crime and vulnerability forums reveals deeper community challenges including domestic violence, housing instability, parental mental health issues, and poverty.

The location of our school consists of mainly a white British, English speaking population with many young and growing families. The area is becoming increasingly diverse, which is reflected in the school's population, with pupils joining from a wide range of backgrounds and geographical locations.

In terms of travel and exposure to the world, many of our families typically holiday within the UK, visiting tourist sites by the British coast such as Skegness. Many families own caravans in coastal locations and children talk about these with fondness. Some families travel abroad, typically to popular holiday destinations in Europe such as Spain. There is a relatively low level of travel further afield.

OUR INTENT FOR THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY AT BALLIFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Purpose

From talking to our pupils and families, when Ballifield families go on holiday they often go to the same place each year which limits opportunities to sample cultures and truly discover the world that they live in. It is our intention to open our children's minds and eyes to the **world**. By the time they leave Ballifield, our pupils will have developed a

coherent knowledge and understanding of their place in the world by studying 4 key areas of substantive knowledge:

- **Locational** Knowledge
- **Place** Knowledge
- **Environmental, Physical and Human** geography
- Geographical **skills** and **fieldwork**

At Ballifield, we have mapped out our curriculum, so that all our children experience geography in our locality, in the UK, and in the World. An important aspect of the primary geography curriculum is the development of children's spatial awareness in and about the environment. Studying locations, places and environments develops children's sense of place and space in the world at a range of scales. All our pupils will learn about human and physical processes and interconnections of our world. The purpose of our geography curriculum is to inspire and engage all pupils' natural curiosity, especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, to make sense of the ever-changing world that we live in. We do this by:

- Investigating **people, places, environments** and the **interconnections** that link them.
- Developing a sense of **place, belonging** and **identity** to develop a fascination about diversity, scale and place.
- Exploring and challenging perceptions, viewpoints and stereotypes.
- Supporting and empowering compassionate pupil voice, choice and action.
- Engaging in enquiry, from asking perceptive questions to using a range of sources critically and analytically.
- Providing opportunities to develop mapping and fieldwork skills.
- Encouraging immersion in rich dialogue, discussion and debate around geographical topics.
- Empowering all our pupils to be "custodians of the planet" where they develop an understanding of sustainability, climate change and begin to recognise the purpose that they have in the world.

Aim

The aim of the study of Geography at Ballifield Primary School is to focus on what all children learn by:

- Exposing all children, especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, to high quality geography lessons where they learn about the world that they live in and their place in it.
- Planning systematically to develop children's knowledge and skills, beginning in the Foundation Stage, and moving through Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2. We regularly review, refine and adapt units to ensure the optimum sequence of learning and depth in coverage is achieved.
- Reinforcing key concepts and vocabulary throughout different units and year groups, ensuring that there is a progression in the geography vocabulary taught.
- Teaching locational and place knowledge, and human and physical geography in line with the National Curriculum programmes of study.

- Providing opportunities to use maps and plans to develop competency in key geographical skills. Practice and progression will allow for applying these skills consistently.
- Making horizontal, vertical and diagonal links to reinforce concepts, knowledge and skills across the year groups and subjects.
- Developing children's substantive and disciplinary knowledge in geography across the key stages. Teachers will aim to ensure that crucial Geographical knowledge is learnt and remembered and utilised in each unit (know more, remember more and do more).
- Giving children the opportunities to see the human impact on our planet and consider issues of changes to our environment and the impact we have on our world by the choices we make.

OUR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY AT BALLIFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The School Curriculum Requirements

As a maintained school in England, Ballifield Primary School is legally required to follow the statutory National Curriculum which sets out in a programme of study, on the basis of key stages, subject content for the subject of geography that should be taught to all pupils.

We use the National Curriculum as the basis for our planning in geography, ensuring all aspects are met. We have school membership of the Geographical Association and have used some of their schemes of work to support and enhance our own planning. We have personalised units of work to relate to our local context particularly for KS1, so that we are using familiar places in the early stages of our journey around the world in the subject of geography.

Time allocation for geography

At Ballifield, geography will be taught across 3 half terms, alternated with History. The topics will be taught in either a block or as a weekly lesson, depending on the content of the topic, and at the discretion of the class teacher.

Which aspects of geography will be taught?

In EYFS, geographical links are made through understanding the world in the early years curriculum. These help to develop strong foundations in communication and language through geography. From year one upwards, our geography follows the National Curriculum programmes of study, the geography taught across school encompasses knowledge and skills, beginning in key stage 1, with learning about our locality, before progressing further afield to learn about the UK and the wider world. In key stage 2 the children will also explore human and physical processes and wider global issues.

Age range	Geographical knowledge	Geographical skills

4-5 year olds	Weather and seasons; the poles.	Comparing and contrasting seasons and environments.
5-7 year olds	Local area knowledge; the countryside, towns and seaside; the weather and seasons; oceans, continents, the equator and the poles; human and physical features.	Making simple maps; carrying out simple fieldwork, identifying geographical features; using basic compass points. Using maps, atlases and globes.
7-11 year olds	Europe and the identities within it; tourism; Polar Regions; wildlife and human adaptation; land use; bodies of water and water cycles; sustainability; mountains and volcanoes; longitude and latitude; time zones and climate patterns; flooding; climates and biomes; world trade, global consumer brands and transportation of goods.	Using maps, atlases, and globes; discussion of current global issues; fieldwork studies, working out time zones; using maps and charts; analysing and describing trade; conducting a local area study.

Teaching and Learning

When planning the Ballifield geography curriculum we have considered the following points:

- Ensuring a range of teaching and learning strategies are encouraged to deliver the geography curriculum in a varied and exciting way for all our children, especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.
- Making coherent links to other curriculum areas where appropriate. There are strong links to mathematics and science in many units.
- Planning for themed days/field visits to places of geographical interest, which will help to develop field work skills are built into planning and support the children's learning in real contexts.
- Planning and development of the curriculum with support from the Geographical Association (GA) which are then adapted to suit the needs of every Ballifield child.
- Links are made to real life issues, such as flooding, climate change, and volcanic eruptions so that the children broaden their understanding of the world they are part of.
- Developing map work skills, and enabling children to use maps, globes, plans and atlases at different scales. We have a range of resources that we use appropriate to the age and ability of the children.
- Lessons include opportunities to use maps, atlases and globes which are accessible to all children and available in the classroom, often located near geography displays.
- Links will be made to previous units of study in order to develop and build upon children's geographical understanding as well as checking what children have remembered from previous geography lessons.
- Remembering geography learning is crucial in ensuring we build on knowledge so children know more, remember more and can do more in geography.

Planning

- Long term plans set out the clear sequencing and coherence of our geography curriculum across each year group for the academic year. The geography leader will ensure that the curriculum is effectively covered by monitoring coverage and sequencing across the key stages.
- Class teachers will ensure that the geography curriculum is taught effectively by ensuring that they teach the planned curriculum, as well as identifying opportunities for both facilitating and extending learning, and by providing opportunities such as educational visits and visitors where appropriate. Links to learning beyond the classroom, SMSC and British Values will be made whenever links are possible.
- Medium term plans set out a coherent and well-sequenced series of lessons for each unit of work. Planned endpoints and crucial knowledge are included in the MTP for each unit to support assessment. These will make clear what pupils need to know by the end of a geography unit. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge is specified, which support class teachers to plan effective lessons. The geography leader has added useful links to quality resources to planning documents (books, videos, websites...) to enhance learning and support class teachers.

Geography Resources

- Resources are stored centrally in the resources room such as globes, age-appropriate atlases and maps.
- Teachers make good use of resources in order to allow the children experience a range of maps, atlases and globes in different scales and contexts.
- We have a digital school subscription to Digimaps, which all class teachers have access to, providing digital maps to be viewed on screen.
- We have access to Google Earth which contains a wealth of resources to view the planet via satellite imagery.

Visits and Visitors

Ballifield Primary School understands the importance of visits and visitors to our pupils' experience of geography. We aim to arrange visits/visitors in each key stage.

Year group	Visit
FS2	Exploration within continuous provision indoor and outdoor learning.
Year 1	Local area walk & survey School grounds fieldwork
Year 2	School grounds fieldwork
Year 3	Europe themed day and assembly for parents/carers Local area fieldwork
Year 4	Water treatment works visit School grounds fieldwork
Year 5	River fieldwork
Year 6	Map work skills

Inclusion

We understand that the most effective inclusion strategy begins with high-quality inclusive geography teaching, which benefits all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, those with

SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Teachers are aware that pupils who have barriers to learning in other areas may have a strong interest in and aptitude for geography. We also recognise that strong foundations in communication, language, reading, writing and maths will aide pupils to access our geography curriculum more fully. Adaptive teaching methods will be put into practice to support all pupils. Teachers also recognise that pupils' work and learning outcomes can take many forms. Pupils who are very knowledgeable in geography are given opportunities to demonstrate and develop their knowledge and strengths.

EYFS

In the EYFS at Ballifield, geography sits firmly within the area of ***Understanding the World***. This enables the children to explore other countries, cultures and their celebrations, developing their ability to recognise and celebrate similarities and differences between those and our own. Our children also have the chance to explore different environments and seasonal change throughout the year. We do this through a balance of planned teaching activities, giving the children opportunities to explore these topics independently in an engaging and enabling environment, and through outdoor learning opportunities that foster a love of the outdoors. All of this helps to develop strong foundations in communication and language through geography.

Nursery (FS1)	Reception (FS2)
Geography is non-statutory, but we do incorporate geography material into children's activities.	Geography is a compulsory part of the basic curriculum for all Reception children. Early Learning Goals outline what pupils should achieve by the end of Reception year.

Geography and SMSC

At Ballifield, we believe that geography plays a vital role in the personal development of our children. We want our children to learn about the world that they live in, and understand how they are an integral custodian of the world, including how their actions and choices can have an impact.

- **Spiritual** education in geography at Ballifield involves asking perceptive questions, and the recognition of a wider world outside the community in which we live. We encourage pupils to reflect on the landscapes and cultures we explore within our teaching.
- **Moral** education in geography at Ballifield allows pupils to consider and discuss global issues that impact our society. They are encouraged to reflect on concepts such as the impact they and others can have on the world in which they live, issues surrounding our environment and the changes happening within it. Through debate and discussion, we aim to encourage our pupils to develop a sound understanding of their purpose in the world and their responsibility to sustain it.
- **Social** education in geography at Ballifield involves exploring and celebrating the similarities and differences between countries and cultures. Pupils are also encouraged to consider how communities, including their local one, can be improved and what positive changes can be put in place to support this.

- **Cultural** education in geography at Ballifield includes the exploration of different countries and cultures across the globe. It involves comparing and contrasting these to our own, and responding positively to these in a way that promotes an acceptance and appreciation of cultural differences.

Geography and British Values

At Ballifield, we promote the fundamental British values of:

1. **Democracy**
2. The **rule of law**
3. **Individual liberty**
4. Mutual **respect**
5. **Tolerance** of those with different faiths and beliefs

We believe that geography can make a key educational contribution to children's exploration of British Values and that pupils can make good choices for themselves and their community. In particular, geography lends itself to learning about mutual respect and tolerance. The pupils will learn about the lives of people around the world and develop an understanding and respect for different cultures.

THE IMPACT OF THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY AT BALLIFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The impact of our geography curriculum will result in our children becoming equipped with the skills to think **critically**, ask perceptive **questions** about their world and develop **perspective** and **judgement**. They will have developed **skills** to read maps and interpret data. They will understand the **impact** that humans have on the world and can explain their own role as a citizen of the world. Children will better understand the impact they have on the world around them and how we all live in a **global community, together**. They will be conscious that our world is ever **changing** and that each of us can influence this, preparing them for the future as more informed global citizens.

Assessment, reporting and monitoring

- At Ballifield, we plan for pupils to make progress in geography and measure achievement by assessing against the learning outcomes based on the geography National Curriculum. We set our endpoints, called 'crucial knowledge' which stipulate what children must learn.
- Throughout units of learning, teachers recap and review previous learning to ensure knowledge builds sequentially. Gaps are filled before new knowledge is taught and assessment for learning is used by class teachers to ensure that children know more and remember more.
- Children's attainment in geography throughout the school will be tracked and monitored by the Subject Leader in order to ensure that geography provision at Ballifield is impactful. The Subject Leader will also be able to identify areas for development and children who are finding it difficult to achieve the learning outcomes. Through discussion with teachers, ways to further support children to meet the learning outcomes are devised.
- As required by law, we report pupils' attainment in geography in written form to parents once a year, specifying whether their child has met the learning outcomes taught.

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for overseeing teaching and learning in geography at Ballifield. This role includes:

- Ensuring staff are clear on how to deliver the geography curriculum effectively in their year group. Staff are aware of crucial knowledge for the unit that they are teaching as well as previous units to be built on.
- Supporting staff with long term planning, medium term planning and delivery of high-quality geography teaching across school.
- Supporting staff by signposting to quality resources and links relevant to planning.
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources to support teaching and learning.
- Monitoring the teaching of geography, looking at planning, work scrutiny, plus teacher and pupil voice.
- Providing feedback to staff, and supporting staff to improve their subject knowledge and lesson teaching further.
- Providing and sourcing training and CPD to staff.
- Attending subject network meetings via Learn Sheffield, making connections with other geography leaders across the city. Feeding back key messages and updates for staff at Ballifield.

Geography Long term plan

Our Locality: Sheffield, Peak District, Yorkshire	The UK	The World	Human and Physical Processes Interconnection
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Year Group	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
F1	I wonder who is special	I wonder who can help me?	I wonder when it will snow	I wonder can I tell a story?	I wonder who lives on a farm?	I wonder who is hiding in sea?
F2	Our immediate environment		Contrasting environments		Growing	
Year 1	Local Area – Barnaby Bear		Investigating our street/Investigating our city		Investigating the UK – Barnaby Bear	
Year 2		Investigating the world – Barnaby Bear	Comparative Study – Paddington Bear			Little Blue Planet
Year 3	Local – investigating our town Handsworth – comparison & fieldwork		Living in the freezer			What is Europe like?
Year 4		The UK-Cities, counties and regions		Amazon adventure		Water
Year 5		Mountains and volcanoes		A journey through the Americas – longitude & latitude	Investigating Rivers - fieldwork	
Year 6	The Peak District		Climates and biomes			Investigating world trade

Policy date: November 2025

Policy review date: November 2026