



Micklands Primary School

Geography Curriculum Syllabus

Our Intent

At Micklands, we believe that geography is a vital part of preparing children to understand, explore, and care for the world around them. Our geography curriculum builds a strong sense of place, connection, and curiosity—from the local streets of Reading to distant continents and fragile ecosystems.

We teach children to observe their surroundings, compare environments, understand human and physical processes, and think critically about how people interact with their environment. Geography lessons are not just about maps and globes—they are about thinking like a geographer: asking questions, noticing patterns, gathering evidence, and making informed decisions.

Geography at Micklands helps children understand their role in a changing world. Whether learning about rivers, railways, weather or rainforests, our pupils are encouraged to connect classroom learning with the world beyond the school gates—and to imagine a future they can help shape.

Look out for:

- Fieldwork in the school grounds and local area
- Climate change education woven into each year group
- Map reading, sketching, surveying and data collection
- Meaningful cross-curricular links with history, art and science
- Opportunities to explore global fairness, energy use, and sustainability

Content and Structure

Geography is taught through three well-sequenced units per year from EYFS to Year 6. Each unit includes:

- **Fieldwork or real-world application**
- **Core vocabulary and key questions**
- **A prior knowledge check to build on previous learning**
- **1-minute assessment activities to track understanding**
- **A creative end-of-unit assessment task**
- **A clear opportunity to discuss climate change and sustainability**

Curriculum Progression

Year	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3
Y1	Where We Live and What the Weather's Like	Exploring Places and Features	Exploring Our Local Area and the World Beyond
Y2	Mapping Our World	Comparing Climates and Continents	Our School and the World Around It
Y3	Exploring Places with Digital Maps	Mapping, Land Use and Imaginary Places	Mountains, the Alps and Our Local Area
Y4	Maps, Grid References and Compass Skills	Life in the Rainforest	Rivers and fieldwork
Y5	Mapping the UK	Global Climate Zones and Vegetation	Volcanoes and Fieldwork
Y6	Mapping and North America	Earthquakes	Railways and Fieldwork

Link to Climate Change Education

Each year group in KS1 and 2 includes **explicit and implicit opportunities** to connect art with environmental awareness:

Year	Unit Focus	Link to Climate Education
Y1	Where We Live and What the Weather's Like, Exploring Places and Features, Exploring Our Local Area and the World Beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify changes in the environment and weather patterns, introduces climate awareness in a relatable, age-appropriate way. Encourage pupils to consider how they can help the planet. Help pupils understand that landscapes change over time and that we can care for them. Build awareness of global change and highlights how climate affects people in different places.
Y2	Mapping Our World, Comparing Climates and Continents, Our School and the World Around It	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise early awareness of environmental impact on the oceans and encourages small steps children can take to care for the planet. Help children begin to understand that climate change is already happening and affecting real places and people, even far away. Encourage empathy, global awareness, and the idea that small actions here can help people and nature elsewhere. Help children connect climate care to everyday choices in their local area. Encourage observation, responsibility, and action, while reinforcing that looking after local green spaces is part of protecting the planet.
Y3	Exploring Places with Digital Maps, Mapping, Land Use and Imaginary Places, Mountains, the Alps and Our Local Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe landscape change over time as both natural and human-influenced. Encourage them to think ahead, recognise human impact, and take on a responsible voice, blending geography, history, and environmental awareness. Encourage pupils to consider the long-term effects of land development on climate and local environments, building awareness of sustainable land use.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage awareness of how tourism and human activity affect delicate environments and supports responsible travel choices.
Y4	Maps, Grid References and Compass Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage environmental mapping and land use reflection at a local scale, supporting awareness of how design choices affect nature. • Develop understanding of global-local connections and empowers children to take practical steps to reduce their climate impact. • Connect local geography to real-world environmental responsibility and introduces water stewardship through first-hand observation.
Y5	Mapping the UK, Global Climate Zones and Vegetation, Volcanoes and Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote awareness of eco-travel, mapping sustainability onto local geography and encouraging reflection on carbon-conscious choices. • Link local geography to global issues. Encourage children to apply knowledge of climate zones to real-world environmental challenges. • Encourage exploration of sustainable energy sources and shows how geography can support the transition away from fossil fuels.
Y6	Mapping and North America, Earthquakes, Railways and Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show how historical approaches to land use respected ecosystems and can inform modern sustainable practice. Encourage reflection on cultural values around the environment. • Encourage children to see the link between climate adaptation, sustainable development, and disaster resilience in vulnerable regions. • Promote understanding of sustainable travel choices and the role of railways in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

How We Teach Geography

- Every unit begins with a prior knowledge check so teachers can tailor learning.
- Lessons combine map skills, fieldwork, discussion, modelling, and visual sources.
- 1-Minute Checks are used to assess pupil understanding in real time through practical activities like pointing, sketching or explaining choices.
- Creative assessment tasks conclude each unit, allowing children to demonstrate their understanding in ways that go beyond written tests—such as designing information posters, creating comparison maps, or presenting fieldwork findings.
- Key vocabulary is explicitly taught and revisited so children can use it confidently when explaining geographical ideas.
- Climate awareness is developed progressively, helping children understand not only what the world is like, but how it is changing—and what they can do about it.

Geography Assessment Summary for Parents

At Micklands, we assess children's geography learning through observation, discussion, pupil work, and creative end-of-unit tasks. We use the following broad categories to describe children's attainment in geography:

Below Expectations

Children at this stage may:

- Show a basic understanding of location or physical/human features, but need support to describe or record ideas clearly.
- Struggle to recall key vocabulary or connect learning from previous units.
- Find it difficult to explain similarities, differences or patterns between places.
- Need guidance when using maps, photos or fieldwork tools.

At Expected Level

Children working at the expected standard can:

- Use geographical vocabulary confidently to describe places, features and changes.
- Make simple comparisons between locations and environments, using key terms accurately.
- Use maps, photos, data and fieldwork observations to support their understanding.
- Ask and answer questions about places and explain their thinking clearly in writing, speech or drawings.
- Understand how people and environments are connected and show an emerging awareness of sustainability or climate issues.

Above Expectations

Children working beyond the expected level often:

- Demonstrate a deep understanding of geographical processes and how they interact.
- Apply vocabulary precisely and independently across unfamiliar contexts.
- Analyse maps, data, or fieldwork findings with insight and clarity.
- Make thoughtful comparisons and raise relevant questions that extend enquiry.
- Link learning across topics (e.g. trade, climate, human impact) and suggest possible actions or solutions to environmental problems.

How You Can Support Geography at Home

You don't need to be a geography expert! Here are simple ways to build your child's curiosity and geographical thinking:

Talk about places:

- Where do people in your family live or come from?
- What's different about this town or city?
- What would it be like to live near a mountain, a rainforest, or by the sea?

Explore maps and globes:

- Use Google Earth to zoom in on places you know.
- Look at maps of train lines, parks or the UK.

Link geography to everyday life:

- Talk about the weather and seasons.
- Look at where your food comes from.
- Ask questions about how travel, farming or building affects the world.

Go exploring (big or small):

- Take a walk and spot natural or human features.
- Visit a museum, nature reserve, or new neighbourhood.

Encourage curiosity:

- Watch a nature documentary together.
- Read books or watch videos about other countries.
- Make a weather chart or build a model of a river or volcano.

Most Importantly...

- Let them be a geographer —don't feel you need to guide or correct too much
- Show interest, not judgement
- Keep the experience joyful – enjoy the world around us!