Discovery Pathway
GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM

Exploring • Discovering • Understanding the World Around Us



Respect | Independence | Resilience | Aspiration | Hope | Kindness

Inspiring curiosity, building knowledge and understanding of our world through exploration and discovery.

Explore ..... Discover ..... Learn ..... Understand ..... Respect ..... Prepare for life

Our World • Our Communities • A Brighter Future

Curriculum Intent

Discoverer Pathway – Geography Curriculum Intent

Our **Discoverer Geography Curriculum** enables students with complex learning needs to explore, experience and develop an understanding of the world around them. Geography begins with what is **immediate, familiar and meaningful**—the student themselves, their classroom, school and local environment—before gradually extending their experiences to different places, people and environments.

Using Kapow Primary Geography to support curriculum planning and sequencing, learning is carefully adapted to students' individual communication, sensory, physical and cognitive needs. National Curriculum concepts are made accessible through practical, multi-sensory and experiential learning, while maintaining high expectations for every student.

The curriculum follows a **spiral approach**, deliberately revisiting important geographical concepts, vocabulary and experiences over time. Through repetition in different contexts, students have opportunities to recognise familiar ideas, build connections, strengthen long-term memory and develop increasingly secure knowledge of their world.

Learning through experience

For Discoverer students, geography is something to be experienced as well as taught. Students learn through exploration of real places, objects, photographs, maps, sensory experiences, outdoor learning and educational visits.

Students are supported to:

- Develop awareness of themselves in relation to different people and places.

- Recognise familiar places within school, home and the local community.
- Explore different environments, landscapes, weather and seasons through first-hand experiences.
- Notice and respond to features of the natural and human world.
- Explore geographical features using sight, sound, touch, smell and movement.
- Begin to recognise similarities, differences, patterns and changes between places.
- Develop an understanding of simple positional and directional language.
- Encounter and use maps, photographs, symbols, globes and other geographical representations.
- Develop meaningful geographical vocabulary through objects, symbols, signing, AAC and spoken language.
- Make choices, communicate preferences and share what they notice about their environment.

Geographical knowledge and skills

Learning is organised around four interconnected areas:

Locational knowledge – developing awareness of familiar places and gradually extending this to the local area, the UK and the wider world.

Place knowledge – experiencing and recognising that different places have different features, people, environments and ways of life.

Human and physical geography – exploring features such as homes, schools, shops, roads, parks, rivers, weather, plants and landscapes and beginning to distinguish between features made by people and those occurring naturally.

Geographical skills and fieldwork – exploring real environments, following routes, using simple maps and symbols, observing features, collecting information and communicating discoveries.

Communication, regulation and independence

The Discoverer Geography Curriculum supports Baskerville's golden thread of **Communication, Regulation and Independence**. Geography provides meaningful opportunities for students to communicate about what they see and experience, regulate within different environments and develop the confidence to explore increasingly independently.

Fieldwork and community-based learning are particularly important. Students practise following routes, recognising landmarks, making choices, responding safely to different environments and developing awareness of the people and places within their community.

How do Geography skills and knowledge develop?

Within the Discoverer Pathway, geographical knowledge and skills develop through meaningful, practical and multi-sensory experiences. Learning begins with students developing an awareness of their immediate environment and familiar places, before gradually extending their understanding to their local community and the wider world.

Knowledge and skills are deliberately revisited through a spiral curriculum, allowing students to encounter important geographical concepts repeatedly and in different contexts. This supports students to develop increasingly secure understanding, communication and independence.

Progression is organised through four key areas:

Locational knowledge – Students develop an awareness of where they are and begin to recognise familiar places, landmarks and environments. They experience and explore simple maps, photographs, symbols and globes and gradually

develop an understanding that these can represent real places. Learning progresses from recognising familiar locations to identifying and communicating about places within their community and the wider world.

Place knowledge – Students develop a sense of their place in the world, beginning with themselves, their classroom, school, home and local community. Through photographs, visits, stories, sensory experiences and comparisons, they encounter different places and begin to notice similarities and differences between environments, people and ways of life.

Human and physical geography – Students explore the natural and human features of the world through first-hand experiences. They encounter weather, seasons, plants, water and different landscapes alongside human features such as homes, schools, shops, roads and transport. Over time, students begin to recognise differences between natural and human-made features and develop an awareness of how people interact with and care for their environment.

Geographical skills and fieldwork – Fieldwork is central to Discoverer geography. Students explore their school grounds, local community and other environments using their senses to observe and investigate. They develop skills in following familiar routes, recognising landmarks, using simple positional and directional language, exploring maps and symbols, making choices and communicating what they notice. These experiences increasingly support students to navigate familiar environments with greater confidence and independence.

Preparation for life beyond Baskerville

Geography plays an important role in preparing Discoverer students for life beyond Baskerville School. Understanding where they are, recognising familiar places, navigating environments, responding to weather, accessing the community and developing awareness of the wider world are all meaningful foundations for greater independence.

Through practical exploration and repeated real-world experiences, students develop the **knowledge, communication, confidence and functional geographical skills** they need to participate as fully and independently as possible in their school, home and wider community.

Curriculum Scheme: Kapow Primary Geography – adapted for SEND
Approach: Practical • multi-sensory • Experiential • Communication-rich • Spiral
Golden Thread: Communication • Regulation • Independence

Assessment

Assessment is ongoing through:

- Observation
- Discussion
- Practical activities
- Photographic evidence
- Student voice
- Engagement scales
- Kapow assessment tools
- EHCP outcomes (where appropriate)

Progress is measured by pupils' ability to remember, communicate and apply historical knowledge and skills over time.

Cross-Curricular Links

Geography supports learning across the Discoverer curriculum, including:

- **English & Communication:** Vocabulary, describing places and sharing experiences.
- **Maths:** Position, direction, sorting, patterns and simple data.
- **Science:** Weather, seasons, habitats and the natural world.
- **History:** Local places and changes over time.
- **PSHE:** Community, belonging and respecting our world.
- **Outdoor School:** Exploring environments and developing fieldwork skills.
- **Independence:** Following routes, recognising landmarks and accessing the community.
- **Preparation for Life:** Developing confidence and independence in the world around us.

Enrichment Opportunities

To deepen geographical learning, students should experience:

- Local area walks and community visits
- Parks, woodlands and nature reserves
- Outdoor School and fieldwork activities

- Visits to contrasting environments
- Weather and seasonal observations
- Map, globe and navigation activities
- Travel training and exploring local routes
- **Environmental projects**, such as recycling, planting and caring for the local area.

Curriculum Links

KAPOW Primary

https://www.kapowprimary.com/

Geographical Association

https://geography.org.uk/online-teaching-resources/

Discoverer Pathway
GEOGRAPHY

Our World • Our Community • Our Future

Exploring
Discovering
Belonging



Cycle	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Cycle 1 Exploring our local world	**Exploring maps**  Looking at maps, symbols and places around us.	**What is it like to live here? (School / Local Area)**  Exploring our school and local area.	**Outdoor adventures – changing seasons Hot / cold weather**  Exploring the outdoors and noticing how the seasons and weather change.
Cycle 2 Exploring different places	**Where am I?**  Finding out about different places and where we are.	**What is it like here?**  Exploring and comparing different environments.	**Around the world**  Discovering places, people and cultures around the world.
Cycle 3 Our changing world	**What is the weather like in the UK?**  Exploring the different types of weather in the UK.	**Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place?**  Comparing hot and cold places around the world.	**What is it like to live by the coast?**  Exploring coastal places and what they are like to live in.

Different places • Amazing environments • A brighter future

Discoverer Pathway
GEOGRAPHY
KEY VOCABULARY

Exploring
Discovering
Belonging



Our World
Our Community
Our Future

Cycle	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Cycle 1 Exploring our local world 	**Exploring maps**  map, place, here, there, near, far, left, right, forwards, backwards, route, symbol, road, building, school, home	**What is it like to live here? (School / Local Area)**  school, home, local, area, place, street, road, shop, park, building, house, people, community, near, far, journey	**Outdoor adventures – changing seasons Hot / cold weather**  weather, season, hot, cold, warm, wet, dry, sunny, rainy, windy, cloudy, snow, ice, autumn, winter, spring, summer
Cycle 2 Exploring different places 	**Where am I?**  here, place, home, school, street, town, city, country, Birmingham, England, UK, map, globe, near, far, location	**What is it like here?**  place, environment, town, city, countryside, building, road, river, park, land, people, busy, quiet, natural, human, compare	**Around the world**  world, Earth, globe, map, country, continent, ocean, land, people, place, travel, hot, cold, near, far, different
Cycle 3 Our changing world 	**What is the weather like in the UK?**  weather, UK, season, temperature, hot, cold, warm, sunny, rainy, cloudy, windy, snow, forecast, autumn, winter, spring, summer	**Would you prefer to live in a hot or cold place?**  hot, cold, temperature, weather, climate, desert, polar, ice, snow, sun, dry, freezing, clothes, home, animal, compare	**What is it like to live by the coast?**  coast, seaside, sea, beach, sand, cliff, waves, harbour, lighthouse, boat, town, land, water, weather, people, tourism

Communication • Regulation • Independence • Preparation for Life