Primary Geography Progression: Nursery 1 to Year 6

Based on statutory National Curriculum Geography content for England KS1 and KS2, with EYFS preparation stages.

Year Group	Knowledge	Skills	Tier 1 Vocabulary	Tier 2 Vocabulary	Tier 3 Vocabulary
Nursery 1	Experience places; notice weather; observe natural features.	Explore environments; notice similarities/differences; talk about observations.	big, small, hot, cold, tree, water	same, different, near, far	weather
Nursery 2	Recognise familiar places; notice weather changes; identify natural/built features.	Observe, describe and compare places. Use simple map symbols.	park, road, house, rain, sun, wind	compare, describe, location, route	season, environment
Reception	Know immediate environment features; recognise similarities/differences; observe seasons.	Describe local area; draw simple maps; discuss seasonal change.	map, field, path, shop, village	human, physical, journey, direction	locality, feature
Year 1	UK countries/capitals; continents; oceans; weather patterns.	Use maps, atlases, globes; simple compass directions; fieldwork.	country, city, sea, ocean, beach, river	locate, identify, observe, direction	continent, capital city, compass, Equator, physical feature, human feature
Year 2	Compare UK locality with contrasting non-European area; human and physical features.	Create simple maps; use aerial photos and keys; local fieldwork.	town, farm, forest, hill, mountain, harbour	compare, contrast, classify, describe	aerial photograph, key, symbol, route, settlement, migration
Year 3	Europe, North and South America; UK counties, cities and topography,	Use maps, atlases, globes, digital maps, 8-point compass, 4-figure	region, coast, valley, city, county, volcano, vegetation, rainforest.	interpret, investigate, pattern, region	topography, land use, grid reference, digital

	latitude, longitude, hemispheres, volcanoes, climate zones, biomes.	grids.			mapping, Europe, biodiversity, conservation
Year 4	Regions of UK and Europe; rivers, water cycle, trade, resources.	Collect fieldwork data; compare regions; present findings. Use OS symbols.	river, climate, rainfall, trade, resources,	analyse, evidence, similarity, difference	climate zone, biome, vegetation belt, water cycle, source, mouth, settlement, trade route, tourism
Year 5	Tropics, meridian; mountains, earthquakes.	Use 6-figure grids; interpret data and maps.	mountain, earthquake	process, relationship, distribution, impact	latitude, longitude, hemisphere, tropic, meridian, tectonic, erosion
Year 6	Regions of UK and Americas; settlement and economic activity.	Collect, analyse and communicate geographical data.	energy, minerals	evaluate, justify, conclude, communicate	Economic activity, natural resources, distribution, trade links, sustainability, climate change

Area	Possible adaptations / equipment
Maps	Enlarged maps; simplified maps; high-contrast maps; tactile maps; maps with fewer features; larger-scale maps; pre-labelled maps; overlays; individual maps to annotate
Map skills	Large compasses; rulers; string for measuring distances; simplified grid references; highlighted grid lines; visual prompts for using a compass/key/scale; worked examples
Atlases	Enlarged pages; simplified atlas extracts; digital maps; pre-selected pages; sticky tabs to locate relevant information; reduced visual clutter
Map symbols & keys	Visual symbol cards; enlarged symbols; colour-coded keys; partially completed keys; matching activities; symbol prompts available during independent work
Data handling	Pre-drawn tables/graphs; larger graph paper; simplified scales; colour-coded data; partially completed graphs; physical manipulatives; digital graphing tools
Graphs & charts	Enlarged axes; clearly marked intervals; templates; rulers; highlighted sections; step-by-step prompts; examples of completed graphs
Fieldwork	Visual fieldwork instructions; checklists; clipboards; adapted recording sheets; photographs; paired recording; pre-drawn tables; digital recording where appropriate
Observations	Picture prompts; tick-box recording; sorting activities; photographs; magnifiers; simple observation grids; opportunities to record orally
Physical geography	3D models; physical landscapes; sand trays; water trays; rocks/soil samples; photographs; diagrams; tactile resources
Human geography	Photographs; maps; symbols; artefacts; videos; visual comparisons; sorting activities; labelled images to support discussion
Weather & climate	Weather symbols; visual recording charts; thermometers; rain gauges; wind indicators; visual scales; simplified weather maps
Locational knowledge	Globes; large maps; floor maps; map puzzles; labelled maps; flags/images; repeated use of key locations; visual location prompts
Scale & distance	Large rulers; string; measuring wheels; visual scale guides; highlighted distances; worked examples; simplified scales where appropriate

Directions	Floor arrows; compass points displayed visually; directional cards; physical movement activities; large compass points; gesture/signs
Physical models	Globes; raised/tactile maps; landscape models; topographical models; sand/water models; building/construction materials
Organisation	Individual equipment trays; labelled resources; visual equipment lists; colour-coded resources; maps/atlases stored consistently; reduced resources presented at one time
Following geographical processes	Numbered steps; visual sequences; photographs; diagrams; teacher modelling; “first/then” prompts; process cards
Communication	Visual choice boards; symbols; photographs; labelled diagrams; opportunities to explain verbally; paired discussion before recording
Workspace	Clear working space; larger maps; appropriate seating; access to floor maps; resources within easy reach; uncluttered worksheets