Geography Fieldwork Rationale

Fieldwork is learning directly in the real world outside the classroom and has a long tradition in school geography. It has been described as 'learning geography through the soles of the feet'. It is one of the distinctive features of a geographical education and feeds students' curiosity about the world. (Geography Association)

Fieldwork involves students in observing, collecting data for themselves, describing their findings and analysing them. When doing this they become immersed in geographical thinking and draw together different forms of geographical knowledge.
To explain what they have observed, students must draw on their knowledge of human and physical processes and their understanding of location. Active engagement with geographical knowledge in the real world helps students to retain this knowledge in their memory. (Geography Association)

Why do fieldwork?

Fieldwork is the jewel in the crown of geography and should be done regularly because:

- It engages children with real-world learning
- It enables purposeful data collection
- It connects children to their local environment, creates memories and helps develop identity
- It helps explain the often 'messy' nature of geography in the real world, compares this to theory, and so deepens understanding
- It promotes curiosity, vocabulary acquisition, creativity and critical thinking
- It provides a genuine context for geographical skills and enquiry
- It is a statutory requirement for geography

What does good fieldwork look like?

Fieldwork combines knowledge with skill and requires children to think about what places are like and why, where places are and why, and how they connect to other places.
Good fieldwork:

- allows pupils to enquire about places at first-hand
- requires pupils to use and practice a range of skills in a variety of contexts
- builds core knowledge and a sense of place
- has a strong spatial dimension and develops understanding of location
- revisits and investigates the same location over time, noting change and different aspects of place
- visits a range of places near and far and encourages children to look further and deeper
- develops creative and critical thinking
- builds on pupils' own questions and ideas
- often has purposeful outcomes.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z27gf82

Topic	Focused Questions	Fieldwork Location and Activity	Learning Outcomes
Y1 **What is it like where I live?**	• Where do I live? • Why do I live here? • What is in my surrounding environment? • How does my environment compare to another? • What makes this space unique? ▪ What is the difference between Human and Physical geography?	Local town centre • Getting into character OR Question/interview a local. • Land use mapping. • Facilities survey • Environmental Quality Index (EQI). • Litter/Pollution enquiry.	• To understand the spatiality and location of the local area. • To consider key geographical elements regarding the area. • To analyse data and make key conclusions regarding the land use. • To draw links between land use management and the Environmental Quality
Y2 **Seasons and weather patterns - How is the weather affected by the seasons?**	• What is the difference between weather and Climate? • How do we measure the weather? • How does weather (and climate) influence our lives?	On the school grounds • Create and trial weather instruments (e.g..: rain gauge). • Create a small scale weather investigation (microclimates).	• To understand how different elements of the weather are measured. • To analyse how surrounding factors effect each element. • To consider the impact weather has on our daily lives. • To acknowledge the differences between weather and climate.
Y3 **Rivers & Oceans - What do we know about the rivers, seas and oceans of the world?**	• Why is water important to us? • How do we conserve what we have? • How does too much/too little water effect us? • What is a river? • How does it change as it flows along? • What problems can rivers cause?	On the school grounds • Infiltration rates- make your own instrument. Local river (visiting one or more sites along its course) • Draw and annotate a sketch. • Measure the speed (use Pooh Sticks) to compare the other sites along the course. • Take pictures of any signs or "human interaction" with the river in question. • Create an emotional map at each site along the course.	• To acknowledge the importance of water in our daily lives. • To consider the impact water can have if there is too much or too little of it in an area. • To understand and use geographical terminology to describe features of a river. • To demonstrate an awareness of factors/processes which impact a river along it's course
Y3 **Map skills - How do maps and atlases help us understand our world?**	• What is makes a good map? • How do we use maps? • What is the difference between a map and an image?	Local area/Home/On or around the school grounds • Journey Stick • Emotional Mapping • Orienteering/Treasure Hunt	• To understand what elements are integral to a map. • To understand spatiality, scale and direction. • To be able to create and interpret maps.

Example of Topic	Focused Questions	Fieldwork Location and Activity	Learning Outcomes
Y4 **How can we use maps to find out about the local area?**	• What are the mines located? • What is a UNESCO World Heritage site?	Local coastal area • I-Spy mining works • Haiku poems. • Count number of mine workings in locality • Field sketches. • Interviews/Questionnaires • Miner's cottages – development of settlement	• To understand where mines are locally • To understand why many mines are situated on / near the coastline • To understand the need for protection of mining sites

Y4
Why are rainforests so important to us?
	• What is a eco-system?
	• How big is an eco-system?
	• What variables effect an eco-system?
	• How have human managed eco-systems?
		On the school grounds
		• Soil Survey and Microclimate survey.
		• Quadrat sampling:
		  • Flora and Fauna count
		  • Vegetation (type, height, %cover)
		  • Erosion
		  • Litter
		• Human management (Inc. Questionnaires/Interviews
		• Environmental Quality Index (EQI).
		• Emotional mapping.
			• To consider factors that create an ecosystem.
			• To consider how humans or other factors have interrupted or altered the natural progression of the ecosystem.
			• To acknowledge the management and effectiveness of an environment.

Y5 **How do the UK's National Parks balance human activity and sustainable development to benefit both nature and people?**	• Map Skills – how to read a map • Where are National Parks located within the UK? • How could we travel there?	• Use the eight points of a compass, • Use four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.	• To read OS maps of National Parks.

Example of Topic	Focused Questions	Fieldwork Location and Activity	Learning Outcomes
Y6 **How are human settlements affected in volcanic regions?**	• Where in our school is the riskiest? • Chn describe possible impacts by identifying specific risks on the school site • Chn suggest how the risks could be reduced.	• Fieldwork – where in school is the riskiest? • Chn design and carry out an environmental quality survey in 3-5 places around school to find out where is the riskiest	