

# Generic grade descriptors and draft supplementary subject specific guidance for inspectors for Geography

## Achievement in Geography

	<b>Generic</b>	<b>Supplementary subject-specific</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Outstanding</b></p> <p>Achievement is likely to be outstanding when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is above average or high and learning and progress are outstanding</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is high and learning and progress are good</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils have a very good knowledge of where places are and what they are like. They are able to carry out increasingly complex geographical enquiry, apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques in a wide range of environments and contexts. They reach clear conclusions and are able to develop reasoned argument to explain their findings. Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out their own investigations and working constructively with others. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within the subject. Fieldwork skills are highly developed and frequently utilised. Pupils develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject and exhibit a real sense of curiosity in finding out about the world around them. They are able to express well balanced opinions about current and contemporary issues.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Good</b></p> <p>Achievement is likely to be good when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is average or above average and learning and progress are good</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is average and learning and progress are outstanding. In the most exceptional circumstances, attainment may be low.</li> </ul>	<p>Most pupils have a good knowledge of where places are and what they are like. They are able to use data and information sources to search and select, organise and investigate and refine and present information well. Pupils explore hypotheses which enable them to show good geographical understanding. They are able to reach conclusions and develop generally well reasoned arguments to explain their findings. Pupils are able to work independently when given the opportunity, taking the initiative in their work and when working with others. They demonstrate some originality, imagination or creativity in their subject work. Most pupils acquire and use a range of fieldwork skills. The majority of pupils enjoy the subject and can explain its value. Most are interested in the world around them and in contemporary issues.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b></p> <p>Achievement is likely to be satisfactory when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is average, above average or high and learning and progress are satisfactory</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is low but improving strongly and learning and progress are good. In exceptional cases, learning and progress may be satisfactory but improving securely and quickly.</li> </ul>	<p>Some pupils may have a good knowledge of where places are and what they are like, others are less clear. They are able to use data and information sources to search and select, investigate and present some findings. Pupils are generally dependent on their teachers but can occasionally work independently and take the initiative in developing their work. Occasionally pupils show creative or original responses in their subject work. Most pupils acquire and use some field work skills but only at a basic level appropriate for their age. Pupils are able to reach conclusions and are able to provide some reasons to explain their judgements. They are generally interested in the subject.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Inadequate</b></p> <p>Achievement is likely to be inadequate if either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ learning and progress are inadequate</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is low and shows little sign of improvement, and learning and progress are no better than satisfactory with little evidence of improvement.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils' knowledge of places is weak and confused. Pupils are not independent learners and rely heavily on the teacher to provide answers. The range of geographical skills and techniques to support their presentations is inadequate and often used inappropriately. They rarely demonstrate creativity or originality in their subject work. Most pupils do not make adequate progress in their acquisition and application of field work skills. Pupils express a lack of enjoyment in the subject or find it does not challenge or stimulate their interest.</p>

# Quality of teaching in Geography

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Teaching in the subject is at least good and much is outstanding, with the result that the pupils are making exceptional progress. It is highly effective in inspiring pupils and ensuring that they learn extremely well. Excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils. Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning, as does the precisely targeted support provided by other adults. Teachers and other adults are acutely aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on these. Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with striking impact on the quality of learning.</p>	<p>Teachers communicate enthusiasm and passion about geography to pupils. They have high expectations and a high level of confidence and expertise both in terms of their specialist knowledge and their understanding of effective learning in the subject. As a result, they use a very wide range of innovative and imaginative teaching strategies to stimulate pupils' active participation in their learning and secure outstanding progress across all aspects of the subject. Lessons are carefully structured and a range of innovative resources is used regularly and very effectively, with very good use made of multi-media to explore a wide range of geographical issues. The effective use of a wide range of types of maps is commonplace. Very effective use is made of ICT and Geographical Information Systems (where relevant) to promote learning and enable pupils to use data and information sources to search and select, organise and investigate and refine and present information skilfully and independently.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>Teaching in the subject is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. The great majority of teaching is securing good progress and learning. Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including new technology to enhance learning. Other adults' support is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through marking. They know how well they have done and can discuss what they need to do to sustain good progress. Teachers listen to, observe and question groups of pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.</p>	<p>Teachers have a clear understanding of the value of geography which they communicate effectively to pupils. They have a confident level of specialist expertise which they use well in planning and teaching the subject. As a result, they use an appropriate range of teaching strategies to promote good learning across all aspects of the subject. A range of multi-media resources is available to support learning. Frequent use is made of maps to a variety of scales. Good use is made of ICT and Geographical Information Systems (where relevant) to promote learning and enable pupils to use data and information sources to search and select, organise and investigate and refine and present information well.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>Teaching in the subject may be good in some respects and there are no endemic inadequacies. Pupils show interest in their work and are making progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Adequate use is made of a range of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed. Teaching ensures that pupils are generally engaged by their work and little time is wasted. Regular and accurate assessment informs planning, which generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and dialogue with adults. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, pick up general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning.</p>	<p>Teachers understand how to maintain most pupils' interest in geography. They have a sound level of subject expertise which they use in their planning and teaching. As a result, they use a range of resources and teaching strategies to promote a satisfactory level of learning across most aspects of the subject. Fieldwork tasks are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils but meet basic requirements. Resources, including maps, are used adequately. Multi-media resources are available to support learning but are not always used to their full potential. Satisfactory use is made of ICT and Geographical Information Systems (where relevant) to promote learning but opportunities for pupils to use data and information sources to search and select, organise and investigate and refine and present information are limited.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Expectations in the subject are inappropriate. Too many lessons are barely satisfactory or are inadequate and teaching fails to promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment.</i></li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Assessment in the subject takes too little account of the pupils' prior learning or their understanding of tasks and is not used effectively to help them improve.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Teachers are not able to engage pupils' interest in geography. Their subject expertise may itself be limited and, as a result, they do not provide the resources or teaching strategies to promote effective geographical learning. A narrow range of teaching and learning styles predominates. There is considerable variation in the frequency and quality of fieldwork experiences between classes. Low level tasks are set which are inappropriate to the pupils' ages and/or abilities. As a result, most pupils do not make adequate progress in their acquisition and application of geographical learning and field work skills.</p>

# The curriculum in geography

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>The curriculum in the subject provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning and wider personal development. The subject curriculum may be at the forefront of successful, innovative design. A curriculum with overall breadth and balance provides pupils with their full entitlement and is customised to meet the changing needs of individuals and groups. The subject's contribution to relevant cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT, is mainly outstanding. As a result, all groups of pupils benefit from a highly coherent and relevant curriculum which promotes outstanding outcomes.</p>	<p>The imaginative and stimulating geography curriculum is skilfully designed to match to the full range of pupils' needs and to ensure highly effective continuity and progression in their learning. The key geographical concepts such as place, space, scale, diversity, sustainability, for example are clearly embedded in the planning. The curriculum provides consistently high quality opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate key geographical skills of enquiry, graphicacy and geographical communication. Field work is well planned and clearly identified as an integral part of the schemes of work. Pupils experience fieldwork on a regular basis, and activities offer clear progression rather than repetition. The contribution of geography to community cohesion and the global dimension is at least good in all major respects, and is exemplary in significant elements. Excellent links are forged with other agencies and the wider, as well as the global, community to provide a wide range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement with the subject.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>The curriculum in the subject provides well-organised, imaginative and effective opportunities for learning and a broad range of experiences which contribute well to the pupils' development. The curriculum is adjusted effectively to meet the needs of most groups and a range of pupils with highly specific needs. The subject makes a good contribution to relevant cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT. Enrichment opportunities in the subject are varied, have a high take-up and are much enjoyed.</p>	<p>The geography curriculum is broad, balanced and well informed by current initiatives in the subject. It is designed to match to a range of pupils' needs and ensure effective continuity and progression in their geographical learning. The key geographical concepts such as place, space, scale, diversity, sustainability, for example are clearly identified in the planning. The curriculum provides frequent opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate key geographical skills of enquiry, graphicacy and geographical communication. Opportunities for fieldwork are clearly identified and all classes participate in the experience; it is well used in building up pupils' understanding of related geographical concepts and is linked well into the teaching programme. Community cohesion and awareness of the global dimension are planned into the geography curriculum. Good links are forged with other agencies and the wider, and global, community to provide a range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and their engagement with the subject.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>The curriculum in the subject is adequately matched to pupils' needs, interests and aspirations and provides adequate preparation for the next stage of their lives, whatever their starting points. Provision for potentially vulnerable pupils is satisfactory. The subject's contribution to cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT, is at least satisfactory.</p>	<p>The geography curriculum secures the pupils' broad and balanced entitlement in the subject and meets any statutory requirements which apply. It provides for a range of pupils' needs and ensures they make satisfactory progress in their learning. The key geographical concepts such as place, space, scale, diversity, sustainability, for example are identifiable within the planning. The curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate aspects of key geographical skills of enquiry, graphicacy and geographical communication. Some opportunities for fieldwork are identified in the planning, although these may not always be adhered to and there may be variation in fieldwork experiences between classes. Fieldwork in exam classes may be formulaic and focused on meeting exam criteria. Community cohesion is a part of the geography curriculum, but may not be planned for in such a way as to progressively build up pupils' understanding of the key concepts. Some links are forged with other agencies and the wider community, although the range of activity provided to enrich pupils' interest and learning may be quite limited.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>The curriculum has significant shortcomings in meeting the needs of pupils, or particular groups of pupils, and makes insufficient contribution to their learning, enjoyment or development.</p>	<p>The geography curriculum does not ensure pupils' entitlement to the subject, may not meet statutory requirements and does not secure continuity in their learning. There is little by way of enrichment activity. It is unclear how the key geographical concepts such as place, space, scale, diversity, sustainability, for example are to be progressively developed. The curriculum provides insufficient and inconsistent opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate aspects of key geographical skills of enquiry, graphicacy and geographical communication. There is little reference in the planning to field work opportunities, with cohorts of pupils getting no or very limited field work experience over a key stage. Fieldwork is not perceived as being important except for meeting examination requirements. The contribution of geography to community cohesion is ineffective; community cohesion is only seen as being peripheral to the teaching of the subject and is not easily identified in the planning.</p>

## Effectiveness of leadership and management in geography

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers are conspicuously successful in establishing a strong sense of purpose which involves work towards meeting or sustaining ambitious targets in the subject for all pupils. Morale is very high and belief in success runs through all staff involved with the subject. Rigorous and extensive monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge lead to exceptionally well-focused plans for the subject. Actions taken are implemented with precision and managed thoroughly. As a result, the quality of teaching in the subject is at least good and leaders and managers at all levels are taking highly effective steps to drive up the quality of teaching still further. Consequently, achievement in the subject for all pupils is at least good.</p>	<p>Leadership in geography is informed by a high level of subject expertise and vision. There is a strong track record of innovation and success. Subject reviews, self-evaluation and improvement planning are well-informed by current best practice in the subject and in education generally. Subject leadership inspires confidence and whole-hearted commitment from pupils and colleagues. There are effective strategies to delegate subject responsibilities where appropriate and to share good practice and secure high quality professional development in the subject. Geography has a very high profile in the life of the school and is at the cutting edge of initiatives within the school.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers consistently communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement in the subject. They galvanise the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts to good effect. Leaders and managers routinely make good use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities relating to teaching, other provision and outcomes. They have an accurate picture and understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Planning is founded on robust evidence and good-quality data. It is tackling key areas of weakness, including those in teaching, systematically and building on areas of strength. As a result, teaching is at least satisfactory and improving. Target-setting is realistic and challenging. Consequently, achievement in the subject is generally good, or there is substantial evidence that it is improving strongly.</p>	<p>Leadership is well-informed by current developments in geography. Subject reviews, self-evaluation and improvement planning are clearly focused on raising attainment and improving the provision for the subject. There is a shared common purpose amongst those involved in teaching the subject with good opportunities to share practice and access subject training. The subject reflects wider whole school priorities and has a prominent profile in the school.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers are motivated to seek further improvement and are effective in focusing efforts on priorities in the subject. They monitor accurately the progress of all pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Self evaluation is broadly accurate. Target-setting in the subject is based on accurate assessment information but is only adequately challenging. Suitable plans are in place aimed at improving areas of weakness in the subject and effective steps are being taken to secure high-quality teaching. Expectations are sufficiently high to bring about outcomes which are broadly satisfactory and improving or, if lower, there is substantial evidence that they are improving strongly.</p>	<p>Leadership is aware of current developments in geography and incorporates these within its practice. Provision for the subject is monitored and reviewed regularly and there is a sound understanding of the strengths and priorities for improvement. There is some sharing of good practice, with modest access to subject-specific professional development although all teachers do not necessarily participate.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Subject and senior leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to embed their ambition for the subject.</li> <li>or</li> <li>■ Target-setting in the subject is not used effectively to raise expectations and improve outcomes.</li> <li>or</li> <li>■ Subject and senior leaders and managers do not drive and secure improvement.</li> <li>or</li> <li>■ Subject and senior leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to secure satisfactory and better teaching.</li> </ul>	<p>Geography leadership is not well-informed about current initiatives in the subject. It lacks the authority and drive to make a difference. Key statutory requirements for the subject are not met. Self-evaluation is weak and not informed by good practice in the subject. Opportunities for professional development in the subject are limited and, as a result, some staff lack the confidence and expertise to deliver it effectively. The subject has a low profile in the life of the school.</p>

## Overall effectiveness in Geography

<b>Outstanding (1)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be outstanding when: Achievement in the subject is outstanding, or achievement is good and outstanding leadership and management underpin the capacity for sustained improvement in the subject. At least one, of teaching or the curriculum in the subject, is outstanding, and neither is less than good.
<b>Good (2)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be good when: Achievement in the subject is good, and good leadership and management provide secure evidence of capacity for sustained improvement in the subject. In exceptional circumstances, leadership and management may be satisfactory. At least one, of teaching or the curriculum in the subject, is good, and neither is less than satisfactory.
<b>Satisfactory (3)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be satisfactory when: Achievement in the subject is at least satisfactory, and satisfactory leadership and management ensure adequate capacity for improvement in the subject. Teaching and the curriculum in the subject are at least satisfactory.
<b>Inadequate (4)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be inadequate if any of the following are inadequate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Achievement in the subject</li><li>■ Capacity for improvement, as evidenced by inadequate leadership and management of the subject</li><li>■ Teaching or the curriculum in the subject</li></ul>