

Have you audited your local area work?

To avoid repetition in local area work it's worth spending a staff meeting or time on a development day familiarising colleagues with the local area's features and possibilities. This can be done simply by walking round the area and taking some useful photos for classroom use at the same time. Often teaching assistants have good local knowledge which can help. Chapter 13 Using the School Locality in the *Primary Geography Handbook* contains detailed help on the local area.

Progression in using the local area

The Early Years	Towards year 2	Towards year 4	Towards year 6
<p>Children need to develop an understanding that there are a variety of places around them for example the school, its grounds and the local area.</p> <p>These places all have characters of their own with distinctive features.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the place like? • What is our classroom like? • How is it different from room A? • What do I see on my way to school? • What is my house like? • What is my street like? • How are they different from the road where the school is? • What is the place like where my Granny lives? • Where do I like to go? Why? • Using a range of pictures of buildings and feature identify places they know. How should we look after this place? 	<p>Children can investigate places - the school grounds, the streets around the school and the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise and record different types of land use, buildings and environments. • Visit the park, shopping area or local industrial estate. • What are these places like? • What sort of jobs do people do? • What sorts of transport links are there? • Is traffic a problem? If so when and why? • How is traffic controlled and why? • Can we improve our school grounds? How can we find out what people would like? (links with Eco –Schools and Healthy Schools) 	<p>Children use skills previously gained to investigate more fully their local area, looking at types of shops, services and houses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They show greater skills in mapping the evidence, sketching views and conducting surveys. • What are the transport links like? Could we reduce the number of cars used in our area? How? Where do people have to travel to buy selected items? Or to go to work? • Conduct simple surveys about issues recognising the best type of questions to ask to gain information • Likes and dislikes about the area. How has the place changed over time? How can we find this out? • Introduce the idea of comparing and contrasting the area with other places. 	<p>Carry out more focused and in depth studies building on previous work. Look at issues and changes occurring in the area. Imagine how and why the area may change in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did the local Post office close? • What impact did this have on the area? • What do the proposals for a town by pass mean for place X? • A supermarket chain wants to build a new shop in the town. How will you go about finding the best place for it? • Design a short walking trail for visitors to your town/village. How will you select the route and things to see? • Design a short trail for the children in Year 2 to follow. What would they like to see? Use the local area as a comparison with other places in more detail.