

Support units: Fieldwork

Illustration 1: Selecting a fieldwork site

Selecting a fieldwork site: Foundation year

The site you choose needs to suit the age group (typically five+ years). Consider their capacity for movement and their understanding of their environment. Their minds are very inquiring, so it is a great opportunity to start with simple fieldwork – geography outside the classroom.

Specified concepts to be covered

- place.

Possible sites

At this year level it is best to begin fieldwork in areas familiar to the students, close to their school and community, for example:

- The school grounds. Explore areas around the school, particularly ones that are outside their day to day activities, for example, where the Year 6 groups meet.
- Nearby. Take a short walk to somewhere close to the school (such as a park) that they can view as not just a place to play.
- Further afield. Visit a 'special' place in the community, such as a library, gallery, fire station or police station. Ideally this should be a place where it is unlikely that all students will have visited previously. This fieldwork may require the organisation of transport and specific administrative procedures at your school.

Fieldwork activities

These should include observation and the use of the senses based on an enquiry approach. Some possible questions to explore include:

- Where is this place?
- What happens here?
- Is it a safe place?
- What do you see?
- What noises can you hear?
- Why does our school or town need this place?
- Is it well looked after?
- Would you like to live or work here?

Reporting on the fieldwork

A few suggestions include:

- creating picture maps, drawings and photographs
- creating a story about the place
- making a rhyme
- comparing the place with other places
- imagining the place in five years time.