

Curriculum intent and rationale

Key Stage 3

The curriculum in geography is delivered by a mastery teaching and learning approach, building students' knowledge over time and ensuring they not only experience a broad content at Key Stage 3, but that it equips students with key attributes required for Key Stage 4 and beyond. As a department, we are aware that the secondary level can be the final experience of school geography; therefore, we aim to ensure all students leave with the essential and necessary geography knowledge needed for further education and employment opportunities.

Aims

- Help students to develop a sense of place and make sense of their surroundings, so that they can gain a better appreciation and understanding of the variety of physical and human conditions on the Earth's surface.
- Help students to see the interconnectedness and geography in everyday life, and how it affects us.
- Develops major skill areas: map and fieldwork skills; as well as cross-curricular skills such as IT, literacy, and numeracy.
- Ensure students are aware of the threats that humans pose the physical environment, and help them to become socially responsible, sustainable citizens
- Help students understand the awe and wonder of geography and have a fascination/passion for the subject.

- Foster critical evaluative thinkers that can grapple with problems and think deeply around geography topics.

The main aim of geography at Key Stage 3 is to broaden the worldview of students, by introducing them to new places, phenomena, and cultural capital that they may not have encountered in their wider lives or at primary school. To ensure that the scope of geography is clear throughout Key Stage 3, we regularly alternate between human and physical topics, but also local features and global features.

In Year 7, we begin by introducing geography as a concept and demonstrating how geography features in everyday life. Through a topic entitled 'geographical skills' we ensure that students have a firm understanding of their place in the world by studying cities, countries, and continents through the use of an atlas. Atlases are introduced, so that students are comfortable with the use of this essential resource. We also introduce students to basic maps for the use of navigation and the use of grid references to find places on maps. Through a topic focussed on earthquakes and volcanos, we help students to understand the structure of the Earth. Within this topic, we introduce the concept of a case study, to help us understand geographical phenomena, and we look how the differing income of places may alter a response to natural hazards.

The next topic 'tourism' introduces students to new places around the world, that they may not have previously encountered. We look at what makes tourist destination popular and the potential conflicts which may arise between tourists and locals. A study of rivers follows, with students encouraged to understand how a river changes as it transitions from source to mouth. To broaden student's worldview, we move on to study China, with a particular spotlight shone upon how China's politics differ from other democracies around the world. We finish the by looking at weather and climate. Through this topic we look to help students in interpreting a weather forecast, understanding the difference between weather and climate, and why places around the world have different climates.

Year 8 begins with a topic about people and the planet, which asks students to consider the impact that humans have on the planet, specifically relating to pollution and global warming. This builds on themes that are touched upon in both the tourism and the rivers topics in Year 7. Following on from discussions about how humans are changing the planet, we look at how ice has shaped the planet over the past 100,000 years, in a glaciation topic. The glaciation topic builds on weather and climates, in looking at how the climate has changed and discussing the drivers of this. It also builds on the map skills learned in Year 7, as we look to identify glacial features on Ordnance Survey maps.

Through a topic about crime, we begin for to look at how urban areas differ and where crime hotspots may be in cities. An investigation into crime on my patch gives students the chance to research local crime statistics in our area and to

practice presenting this data in a variety of ways through the graphing functions of Microsoft Excel. The crime topic also introduces the concept of regeneration as we consider which areas of a city may benefit from regenerating.

After discovering more about our local area, we take the students across the globe as they discover 'super powers'. Differing levels of development and the idea of the development gap are introduced as we look at some of the largest countries in the world, including Russia and India. Following this trip around the globe, we return to home shores to explore the UK coastline. In coasts, we look at the processes that help shape the coastline of our small island and the landforms that result. Another opportunity is presented here to develop students' maps skills as we identify coastal features on Ordnance Survey maps. We also take the opportunity to cast our nets further afield and look briefly at coral reef and their threat due to global warming. We finish Year 8 by introducing students to the continent of Africa, through links to their day-to-day lives, including food, football, and mobile phones. Whilst exploring these links, students gain a greater understanding about the African continent and the colonial links of the past, which have the lead to the gaps in development seen in Africa when compared to other parts of the world.

Year 9 commences with an exploration of hot and cold ecosystems. Students learn about the adaptations that plants and animals have evolved to keep themselves alive in extreme settings such as deserts. After this, we begin consolidating the learning from both Years 7 and 8. Students go a virtual fieldtrip to Birmingham city centre, to develop their geographical enquiry skills and graphical

presentation skills. During this time, students also spend time finding out about different careers in geography, so that they can begin shaping their thoughts about their future careers and the role that geography could play in it.

The year continues by looking at tropical storms and in the process revisiting the weather and climate knowledge learned in Year 7. During this topic, the atmospheric circulation model is introduced for explaining why tropical storms form in specific locations. After tropical storms, we move on to globalisation. The Globalisation topic consolidates concepts introduced throughout Years 7 and 8, as we discuss how the increasingly interconnected nature of the world has changed the economic structure of the UK, and the impacts that this has had on the UK population. Next stop is a topic focussed on flood management. This topic builds on the rivers topic from Year 7, but focusses particularly on what can be done to limit damage from extreme rainfall events through the use of hard and soft engineering strategies (also drawing on the weather topic from Year 7). We look at case studies, to see how features have been implemented in the past and identify whether they have been successful in a longer term. Finally, we conclude with a topic focussed on sustainability, climate change, and pollution. This topic develops upon the people and planet module, to look at how sustainable choices can be made on a daily basis to reduce the impact on the planet and to minimise the pollution caused by humans. Leaving this topic until last ensures that regardless of whether students choose to continue Geography into Key Stage 4, their final memory of the subject will be a message promoting sustainable ways for them to live their lives.

Key Stage 4

We believe that geography helps to provoke and provide answers to questions about the natural and human aspects of the world. Students are encouraged to develop a greater understanding and knowledge of the world, as well as their place in it. The geography curriculum enables students to develop knowledge and skills that are transferable to other curriculum areas as well as to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Geography is, by nature, an investigative subject, which develops an understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. We seek to inspire in students a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people which will remain with them for the rest of their lives; to promote students interest and understanding of diverse places, people, resources, and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. The curriculum is designed develop knowledge and skills that are progressive and transferable into their further education and beyond.

Aims

- An inclusive department that ensures all students make strong progress in geography.
- Deliver the AQA Geography GCSE specification in as broad a context as possible, whilst retaining enough focus on key knowledge and skills.
- Help students understand the awe and wonder of geography and have a fascination/passion for the subject.
- Help students to see the interconnectedness and geography in everyday life, and how it affects us.
- Give students experience of high-quality fieldwork to see how scientific

studies are completed and understand which topics can be investigated.

- Foster critical evaluative thinkers that can grapple with problems and think deeply around the topics we teach in geography.
- Improve students' metacognition skills through revision for learning tasks, to help prepare and strengthen their long-term memory.
- Improve students' written academic language skills, to help them become effective writers.
- Understand how human and physical geography is interlinked.

In Year 10, students study the topics for paper one of the GCSE AQA specification – living with the physical environment. This includes natural hazards (weather and tectonic) and climate change; the living world (tropical rainforests and hot deserts), and physical landscapes in the UK (rivers and coasts).

Over the last 225 million years, the Earth as we know it has been on the move. Continents have moved, mountains have grown, and earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis have shaped the landscape. Humanity owes its existence to these events, but they can also wipe out thousands. Understanding where and why they happen, and what we can do to reduce their effects is vitally important.

The weather affects all life on Earth. Habitats are shaped by it and urban environments have to cope and adapt to it. With extreme weather events (such as wildfires, hurricanes and drought) becoming more frequent, it is important to understand how our weather happens and what we can do to mitigate the effects of it.

Arguably, the greatest challenge facing us today is how we can protect our environment and reduce poverty to live prosperous lives. Industry, transport, electricity, and deforestation have all played a part in moving society forward, but at what cost to the environment? Students study the causes of climate change, its impacts and solutions.

We live in a time of change and stress for our climate and ecosystem. It is important to understand the factors that drive our climate and shape our ecosystems, so that we can fully appreciate how our modern lives are affecting them both. Water is vital for life. It sustains life and, through heat and the water cycle, it drives the hydrological cycle on our planet. Most people live close to the coast and rivers, so the study of these systems and how they affect people is vitally important. This gives students an understanding of social, economic, and environmental impacts of changes to these areas of the United Kingdom and how they affect the whole country, even those living far away from the coasts.

The second exam focuses on challenges in the human environment. This includes three topics which students study separately, but they are made aware of the links between the physical world and their own experiences, to give them a more personal feel to their learning. This section includes urban issues and challenges (focussing on Nigeria as a 'newly emerging economy' and the United Kingdom as a 'high income country'); the changing economic world (focussing on the UK and India); and resource management (focussing on food as a global resource, as well as an overview of food, water, and energy).

More than 50% of the world's population now live in urban areas. It is important to understand how these environments have developed, and the problems that the world faces as they grow and are redeveloped. Urban areas (particularly inner-city areas) are in a constant state of flux and change. These changes can revitalise and can exclude. Lagos is a city full of contrasts – both fabulous wealth and extreme poverty. How this happened and how it can be managed and transformed are important questions to understand how urban areas in 'medium income countries' are changing.

Liverpool is one of the largest cities in the United Kingdom and has a constantly changing mix of business, people and place. This topic covers Liverpool's growth, redevelopment, and future. What does developed mean and how can we measure it? Is being developed subjective? This topic raises profound questions about nations, identity, and global inequalities. Has global interconnectivity been a blessing or a curse? Is it acceptable that 80% of UK consumer goods are imported? Changes in transport and technology have created our globalised world – its study shows how this happened, and what consequences have ensued. These issues will be looked at through the study of both the United Kingdom's and Nigeria's changing economies. Vital resources are not evenly distributed around the world. In this topic food, water, and energy production across the UK will be explored. Issues include our reliance on food exports, changes to energy production and water supply, surplus/deficit and transfer. This topic will also focus on the global demand for food and how its availability and quality can be managed.

The importance of unit three lies in the fact that it centres on skills and application of knowledge. Part one focuses on general cartographic, graphical, and statistical skills. Part two takes these skills and fieldwork techniques, to ask contextual questions. Part three is an issue evaluation, which asks 'higher order questions' around pre-release materials (text, maps, graphs, and data). In order to prepare students for this section, we introduce skills and fieldwork techniques in lessons as much as possible. This is particularly possible when we look at physical landscapes, as we are able to use many Ordnance Survey maps and teach the related skills. However, in human geography, we also teach skills, such as photography analysis and map work.

In order to consolidate learning and connect the topics as much as possible, we take the human fieldwork project to Liverpool, as students also study this area for urban issues and challenges.