



Geography Department Curriculum Statement

Vision

The Geography Department seeks to inspire **ALL** students with a curiosity about the world and its people, and gain a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. We will develop students skills to enable them to understand and ask questions about the world around them, how they are interdependent, and understand the causes of changes and impacts of change. The learning experience of students is at the forefront of planning, therefore materials are regularly reviewed, with planning of lessons building upon previous knowledge and skills gained by students. Learning is embedded and sequential to contribute to long term memory, with learning progressively more challenging. Through high quality teaching, we wish to develop excellent knowledge of where places are, and what they are like, both in Britain and the wider world. It is our intent that students should learn both inside and outside the classroom. We are committed therefore to provide opportunities to investigate and make enquiries about the local area as well as further afield. It is our intention that we will empower learners to become active independent learners who have a genuine interest in the world around them and who will develop highly marketable skills for the workplace.

Implementation

The Geography curriculum has knowledge at the heart of its design. Students are taught about locational knowledge and place knowledge, as well as human and physical geography processes such as glaciated landscapes or weather and climate, fully covering the Geography National curriculum in appropriate depth.

The Geography National Curriculum's splits into "Aims" and "Subject content". With regards to aims we fully explore contextual knowledge of key locations and ensure students understand how physical and human features are created and change. Skills too are fully met and developed during the KS3 curriculum. And embedded in later years. Geography focuses on map skills, on differing scales and using a vast range of techniques. These are subsequently delivered within lessons where appropriate; maps are discussed and used within the weather and climate and the plate tectonics modules; graphs are used regularly when looking at development and the world of work. Students come back to these skills through their course extending their skill and knowledge base.

Each year group has key vocabulary that is central to the students learning and is fully integrated into lesson planning. The frequent assessment of knowledge and skills identifies priorities for intervention or further focus, with Session 3 used for students in need of extra support, or to encourage students to further extend their learning. This ensures that students possess a solid grounding on which to support students in their summative Key Stage 4 examinations and beyond into Sixth Form.

Impact

Outcomes within the Geography department are among the best in the school, and stand out against national comparison in terms of both attainment and progress. The number of students on the A Level Geography course at Sixth Form is very positive. The department prides itself on the number of students who go on to study Geography and Environmental Sciences at prestigious universities including Oxbridge.

The department offers a wide range of enrichment activities outside the classroom. Whether that be Session 3 for Year 7 introducing them to GIS or extra support for students in their GCSE and A Level's to maximise progress. Geography students also have a number of local visits to Wilderhope Farm, Shrewsbury, Birmingham and Telford. As well exploring places further afield such as the Snowdonia National Park, North Wales Coast, East Yorkshire Coastline, Iceland, Italy and Barcelona, to give student real examples.



Impact of Covid-19

The pandemic brought new challenges and opportunities. The department were quick to use live material for remote lessons. In particular we used the Field Studies Council resources, to support students with their coursework in the Sixth Form and bring in 'virtual' fieldwork for all year groups. We also used online resources including e-revision, so that students received quick feedback for their work, helping them stay motivated during this uncertain period. When students did return we focused on settling students in to a new routine, alongside assessing students, identifying students who needed additional support and intervention.

By the time we hit the second lockdown in 2021, staff were more experienced with remote learning software allowing staff to confidently take advantage of the opportunities this provided. In the Geography department we followed our curriculum plan, although lessons were continually adapted to fit the live format. As a department we also asked for feedback from students in the older groups, on how we could improve our lessons, 'what worked and didn't', so we were trying to evolve the lessons delivered. Students quickly got into the habit of emailing work into their teachers or saving it on to the School one drive. This allowed a quick turnaround of work, allowing students an opportunity for quick feedback on their work. During this second lockdown in 2021, student engagement was outstanding across all years.

As a department we are well on the journey to recovery. We will have given students local fieldwork opportunities in the first instance, to enhance their experiences, and in line with the 'Roadmap' in due course. We have also re-established foreign trips for Year 9 to Italy, with 40 students signed up to visit in June 2023 and Iceland for Year 12 students, again with 40 students signed up to visit in February 2023. These experiences are vital in putting Geography theory in to context and giving students lifelong positive memories. Teaching will address several PHSE priorities of the school, and will look to engage in students in a range of learning opportunities providing students the chance to work in group activities helping to build the links with their fellow students.