

Curriculum Statement for Geography

Intent

Our aim is to provide an excellent geography education for all our students; an education which brings out the best in all of them and prepares them for success in life.

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Implementation

In Geography we have 3 hours a fortnight to deliver the curriculum to years 7 and 8. Year 9 have 4 hours a fortnight and at KS4 this time allocation increases to 5 hours a fortnight. Due to differences in time allocations across the United Learning group we have to teach the following common units to each year group at KS3:

- Year 7 – Rivers & Development.
- Year 8 – Tectonics, Coasts and Population.
- Year 9 – Climate Change and life in an emerging economy

As well as this we also teach geography skills to Y7, and weather and climate and urbanisation in the UK to Y9. All KS3 students follow an appropriate geography curriculum with a level of challenge or basic skills support which feeds into the AQA GCSE geography curriculum we follow at KS4.

The AQA Geography syllabus is followed at KS4. This is comprised of three terminal exams at the end of year 11. Paper 1 is the physical geography paper and pupils' study three units within this sphere of the subject. The three units are the challenge of natural hazards, the living world (hot deserts) and physical landscapes in the UK (rivers and coasts). The human geography is examined on paper 2 and the three units assessed on here are: challenges in the human environment, the changing economic world and the challenge of resource management (water). Since the changes to GCSEs were made geography no longer has a coursework element to the course, pupils now sit a third exam paper and on this they are assessed on geographical applications and fieldwork. Pupils undertake a fieldtrip to complete a physical geography enquiry and another to complete a human geography enquiry. They are then asked questions relating to these field visits and they are asked about unseen fieldwork to ensure they have a good grasp of what fieldtrips involve and the different methods used to collect and present data. The geographical applications element of the paper is based on a pre-release booklet which is about a different geographical issue each year. Pupils are then required to make a choice about the issue they have been presented with and to justify their decision using the information and resources that have been made available to them in the booklet, and their own knowledge and understanding from the GCSE geography course.

At KS3 each year group completes an end of unit assessment and then there is an end of year assessment. The end of year assessment is issued by United Learning. These are all summative assessments which allow pupils to demonstrate their growing knowledge and understanding of the units that have been studied in their geography lessons. These summative assessments take place at the conclusion of delivery of each unit and the end of year assessment occurs in June. As well as this formative assessment are used in geography lessons and checkpoint tests are utilised to monitor progress at various points during the units being studied.

By the end of year 9, through the teaching of the common geography units and extra optional units our pupils will understand what it is to be a geographer. Pupils will have a curiosity and fascination in finding out about the world and its people. They will have developed a passion and commitment to geography. Our pupils will have developed an excellent knowledge of where the places we have looked at are in the world and know what they are like. They will have a holistic understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected, and how human and physical environments are interrelated. Pupils will develop a comprehensive understanding of the issues facing a diverse range of places and people, now and in the future. Our pupils will have an extensive core of geographical knowledge and vocabulary, and will be able to communicate this, in a variety of ways, routinely. They will have good spatial awareness and be able to use a wide range of maps effectively to investigate places routinely. They will be able to carry out increasingly complex, independent geographical enquiry, ask their own relevant questions, make sense of geographical data, think critically about different views, and justify their own view in reaching conclusions.

Impact

Students undertake assessments in geography at the end of each unit and at the end of each academic year. The benefit of these assessments is that students can gain a better understanding of their performance as part of a larger cohort. This also enables the geography department, and the school, to consider student performance against national benchmarks enabling appropriate intervention.

In geography we work to ensure that students are competent in literacy and numeracy by integrating numeracy and literacy tasks into our lessons. Numeracy has also become more prevalent on the GCSE geography exams so we must ensure our pupils are prepared for this.

We strive to ensure that all students access further educational opportunities through geography. We do this by offering them the opportunity to attend Geography Society on a weekly basis during the co-curricular time allocation. During this time pupils can undertake activities such as geographical drifting, making balloon globes and looking at geography in the news. The department is an active member of the Geographical Association and each year we aim to have a team of pupils to represent us at the Association's annual WorldWide quiz. In previous years the department has also teamed up with the MFL department to offer an overseas visit to Spain where pupils can study the human geography of the city of Barcelona and experience the ecosystems that exist outside of the city.

We aspire for all students to leave the academy with a sound knowledge and understanding of the world we live in and to enable them to become global citizens who will make positive contributions to our ever changing earth.