Geography

Curriculum Intent

Our aim is to make the best geographers who can make sense of the physical and human world. We seek to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to understand the spatial dimension, physical changes in the Anthropocene and the interconnectedness of all our lives in the twenty-first century.

In Year 7 our curriculum is designed to establish a baseline, consolidating map skills (both on- and offline) and locational knowledge, while building on students' natural curiosity about local and global issues affecting them, including HS2 and the climate crisis. We believe it is essential to equip students with foundational knowledge and understanding about weather and climate in Physical Geography, to help them make sense of the evidence for a climate crisis and its projected impacts and Population and Migration in Human Geography to help them make sense of how the world's population live.

In Year 8, students study rivers, how they work as a key physical process and the risk of flooding. This is an increasing challenge for us in the UK and builds on the knowledge learnt in the weather and climate topic in year 7. Students then study the concept of development, building on their knowledge and understanding from the population and migration topic in year 7. We study how to measure development, why countries have different levels of wealth and how some countries are trying to improve their level of development. Finally, the ecosystems topics develop students' understanding of physical processes and landscapes, provides essential scaffolding for learning within later key stages. A trip to Kew Gardens helps to reinforce our learning of ecosystems.

Year 9 Geography introduces students to further physical geography; celebrating diversity and challenge in the natural world with a study of natural hazards. However, our curriculum also provides an opportunity for students to deepen their critical understanding of socio-economic processes, with a study of the impact of fast fashion (linking directly to their own lives) as well as, looking at the region of the Middle East and drawing together many aspects they have learnt through key stage 3 by looking at the climate, economy, inequality and resources.

Fieldwork investigations are key to the success of our curriculum, with fieldwork being carried out across the key stages in both familiar and unfamiliar settings; with independence being a key tenet. An annual trip to Iceland in Year 10 provides an in-depth insight into this unfamiliar geothermal landscape and its people.

At GCSE and A level, the AQA course is taught with 'geography in the news' in mind and a call for students to think critically when interrogating data about the physical and human world, and employing key skills to do so. Across key stages 4 and 5 we have selected a range of options which

provide maximum breadth within these exam curricula; for example, studying glacial and coastal geomorphology and our changing economic world at key stage 4 while water and carbon and changing places become a focus at A level.

The A level course also provides students with a greater depth of understanding, which is particularly apparent in its synoptic approach; topics taught support and develop a greater understanding of contemporary issues of concern to our students; for example, their study of the water and carbon cycles informs an understanding of global governance, and vice versa. With Years 12 and 13, we aim to challenge the girls to reflect on the way in which we interpret and 're -present' the world (and other people in it) thereby providing a useful springboard for those who go on to further socio- political studies at university.

Curriculum Implementation

Key Stage 3

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Fantastic Places	Rivers & flooding	Globalisation & Fast fashion
Population and migration	Development	Dangerous world (hazards)
Weather and climate	Ecosystems	Middle East
		Urban issues and challenges (GCSE)

Key Stage 4: GCSE (AQA)

Year 10	Year 11
Urban issues and challenges	Challenge of natural hazards
Challenge of resource management	Fieldwork and geographical applications
Physical landscapes of the UK (Coasts & Glaciers)	The changing economic world
The living world	

Key Stage 5: A Level (AQA)

Year 12	Year 13
Water and carbon cycles	Independent Investigation (NEA)
Coastal Landscapes	Hazards

Population and the Environment Changing places Geographical skills and fieldwork	Global Systems and Governance

Impact

Key Stage 3

We aim to create the very best geographers. We challenge students to think globally about how and why our planet looks like it does, we ask how humans have contributed to the landscape and society. We constantly vary topics between human and physical geography, often intertwining, to provide a varied and balanced appreciation of the ideas, skills and topics in this discipline. We aim to engage our students with the awareness of the challenges facing humanity today and how, with this knowledge, can be more globally aware. We want to develop our geographers into effective researchers, thinkers and confident speakers via a broad variety of activities. We start in year 7 with a more local focus before expanding our horizons across the world looking at different challenges on different scales and analyse information to draw out critical conclusions by the end of the key stage. We have designed our curriculum to be above all interesting and contemporary which sparks an interest to continue learning outside of the classroom.

Key Stage 4

Our GCSE builds on the foundation laid during Key Stage Three curriculum by developing further the essential skills needed to be a successful geographer. The topics have been carefully selected to cover a range of concepts that will provide a broad understanding of both important physical processes and landforms combined with human geographies that will provide students with an understanding of how our world has been shaped by the actions of humans. The skills developed at Key Stage Three transfer through so that students are able to access the highest grades. In addition, we develop a greater focus on fieldwork and geographical skills through a two day residential trip to Dorset where students investigate first hand both human and physical processes and use a range of skills to analyse and draw conclusions from primary data collected.

Key Stage 5

Our A level course challenges students to deepen their intellectual and academic confidence through the exploration of six major geographical concepts: The Carbon and Water Cycles and Global Systems and Governance are two of the new, yet globally significant, topics introduced at this level. Combined with the other four topics our students develop a greater understanding of how the world has come to be both in terms of landscapes and through human actions. The Non Examined Assessment (NEA) further develops the fieldwork skills taught at GCSE into an independent investigation where students design their own research project culminating in a report analysing their findings and draw conclusions.