

Curriculum Intent

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future” - Sir Michael Palin

We aim to develop our students' understanding of various people and their culture around the world, developing our students into global citizens who respect their local and global environment. We instil ideals on sustainability and develop students' moral responsibility to support those in the world less fortunate than ourselves; especially those suffering from natural disasters, poverty, famine, disease and war.

As a department, our intent is to ensure that our curriculum provides students with the effective opportunities to:

- Enjoy a knowledge-rich curriculum and explore the best that has been said and done in the field of geography
- Travel to remarkable and amazing locations which are relevant to our students both regionally, nationally and globally
- Allow our students to capture and experience a 'sense of place' through fieldwork
- Provide opportunities for students to gain an understanding of the many natural processes of the earth
- Provide our students with an array of transferable knowledge which will aid them in their further learning, employment or apprenticeships.

Enrichment and depth knowledge within Geography

- Throughout KS3 students have two opportunities to take part in fieldwork off school site, and they have several opportunities to complete fieldwork on the school site and from home.
- At KS4, students complete Human and Physical Fieldwork studies: Coastal Erosion at Formby Beach.
- 'Geography in the News' home works accompany each unit and enable students to research what is happening around the world and then link the news item to their current topic.
- Students use Knowledge Organisers, Knowledge Booklets and Knowledge Tests to ensure depth knowledge is embedded and revisited.
- Students are also set Enrichment Projects within each unit for the High Ability students to push themselves further.
- Knowledge booklets support SEND students which contain key knowledge and skills.
- 'Humanities Club' is offered to students in years 7-9.
- Trips to Formby Beach, The River Bollin and Iceland also bring the Geography Curriculum further to life.

KS3 Geography:

KS3 Curriculum Rationale

Geography is a synoptic subject in which students must master a variety of skills, knowledge and processes in order to progress through the KS3 curriculum. The KS3 curriculum has been structured in a way which allows students to embed and master key knowledge and processes and apply their learning to new topics and concepts. The KS3 Geography curriculum is broad and diverse and allows students to journey to vast and exciting locations from within their classroom and beyond it.

By the end of KS3, all students will:

- Develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- Understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- Be competent in the geographical skills needed to:
Collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
- Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

KS3 sequencing and structure:

Year 7 Geography: Places, Processes and Population

In year 7 students begin their journey with a unit on the core skills which make an excellent geographer. Whilst building up these skills they explore their local area and the British Isles, ensuring that the unit is personal and relevant to them. Students then apply their newly acquired cartographical skills to a study of Britain's Coasts. Key processes such as erosion, transportation and deposition are investigated in this unit including how the weather changes coasts. Within the next unit students delve further into Hazardous Weather and complete a fieldwork activity investigating clouds. Students continue to study Hazards when they progress next to the 'Tectonic Hazards' unit. This allows students to apply cartographical skills and key processes to new knowledge and locations around the world. A study of China follows this unit as students were introduced to the Yankee River within the previous topic. Students study 'how China has changed the world and how the world has changed China' and focus on how China is becoming a Newly Emerging Economy. China's drastic development is attributed to its large working population, a theme continued within the final year 7 topic area 'World Population'. Students investigate population trends using graphs and data to assess the impact changing population will have on St Helens and the wider world.

Year 8 Geography: Connections, Globalization and Opportunities

In year 8 students consider how a growing population effects the natural world with a study of Ecosystems. Students investigate world biomes and consider their location, key features and climate. A continent which is greatly affected by climate is Africa, the next year 8 unit of study. Students dive into this diverse landscape to assess what life is like in a Low Income Country. Continuing with themes of challenges, students then continue to study the Somalia War within the Conflict unit. Students consider how conflict can be caused by exploiting resources and therefore the next programme of study in year 8 is Economic Activities. Students delve in to discuss how economic activities vary around the world, along with analysing changing employment in their own region of St Helens. Students end year 8 with a further study of development; India. Themes of migration, population change and development are further embedded within this unit and students also apply knowledge gained in years 7 and 8. The China unit provides an excellent comparison to India, and the Population and Economic Activities units provide essential skills and context which will be applied and practiced.

Year 9 Geography: Management, Development and Sustainability

In year 9 students begin their study with a unit focused on Glaciation and Cold Environments. This unit provides an excellent opportunity to revisit cartographical skills as students explore new parts of the world. Key processes are also revisited and a fundamental basis for the upcoming Rivers unit is established. Students continue to study water and how it changes the landscape as they move on to explore Soil. Within this unit students explore how water impacts and leads to the formation of soil, which is also a very engaging fieldwork opportunity which students are able to enjoy on the school grounds. Students are now at the point in their KS3 3 study that they are becoming 'Excellent Geographers', the following unit assesses the core fundamental skills which are needed to achieve this status. Students apply their knowledge of Soil, Ecosystems, Climate Change and Deforestation and apply this to a case study of the Peruvian Amazon Rainforest and how it can become more environmentally sustainable. Students continue to consider the theme of sustainability with a very relevant study of Sustainability, Development and Globalisation. Students pull together they knowledge, skills and concepts from years 7 and 8 and apply them to the question; How can development be sustainable?

KS3 Assessment for learning

Students complete a 'Big Write' Key Assessed Task each half term. Within these assessed tasks key geographical concepts are assessed formatively and summatively. KS3 N/C geographical skills:

- Collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
- Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.



KS3 Homework

All KS3 students must be set at least one piece of homework every two weeks. This homework will be marked and rewarded with an ATL and sanctioned with class teacher detentions if not fully completed to a good standard.

Year 7:

- One hour of independent online study should be set every two weeks on Google Classroom – TBC by the class teacher.
- Students should be set one 'Guided Reading' project per unit.
- Students should be set one 'Geography in the News' project per unit.
- Enrichment: Independent learning for High Ability Students:
 - Project 1: Create your own travel guide of the British Isles
 - Project 2: Select two coasts and investigate their similarities and differences
 - Project 3: Weather study – Fieldwork from home
 - Project 4: Select a case study and investigate the effects and responses to a hazard
 - Project 5: Why was the Baby Milk Scandal so significant?
 - Project 6: Local population study – Fieldwork from home

Year 8:

- Students should be set one 'Guided Reading' project per unit.
- Students should be set one 'Geography in the News' project per unit.
- Enrichment: Independent learning for High Ability Students:
 - Project 1: Select and compare two biomes and their ecosystems
 - Project 2: Compare the geography of Africa and the UK and investigate differences
 - Project 3: Investigation: Why is Heroin a barrier to development in Afghanistan?
 - Project 4: Investigation: How and why is UK employment changing?
 - Project 5: Should India be classed as an NEE?

Year 9:

- Students should be set one 'Guided Reading' project per unit.
- Students should be set one 'Geography in the News' project per unit.
- Enrichment: Independent learning for High Ability Students:
 - Project 1: Case study investigation: Alaska
 - Project 2: Geography in the news: Investigate the causes and responses to flooding
 - Project 3: Soil investigation: Fieldwork from home
 - Project 4: Investigation: Why is Palm Oil a significant threat to rainforests?
 - Project 5: Investigation: How sustainable is St Cuthbert's?

KS4 Geography:

KS4 Curriculum Rationale

At St Cuthbert's we have opted to follow the AQA exam board. This is because out of all exam boards the curriculum is the most diverse, engaging and accessible for our students. We used staff voice to select the units of study and case studies to ensure that the topics we opted for were relevant and appropriate to St Cuthbert's.

The three examinations are:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

What's assessed:

3.1.1 The challenge of natural hazards, 3.1.2 The living world, 3.1.3 Physical landscapes in the UK, 3.4 Geographical skills.

How it's assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG))
- 35% of GCSE

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

What's assessed:

3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges, 3.2.2 The changing economic world, 3.2.3 The challenge of resource management, 3.4 Geographical skills

How it's assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 88 marks (including 3 marks for SPaG)
- 35% of GCSE

Paper 3: Geographical applications

What's assessed:

3.3.1 Issue evaluation, 3.3.2 Fieldwork, 3.4 Geographical skills

How it's assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 76 marks (including 6 marks for SPaG)
- 30% of GCSE
- Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam

The AQA specification provides a broad and coherent course of study along with the application of key geographical skills. During the GCSE course, students will:

- develop and extend their knowledge of locations, places, environments and processes, and of different scales including global; and of social, political and cultural contexts (know geographical material)
- gain understanding of the interactions between people and environments, change in places and processes over space and time, and the inter-relationship between geographical phenomena at different scales and in different contexts (think like a geographer)
- develop and extend their competence in a range of skills including those used in fieldwork, in using maps and GIS and in researching secondary evidence, including digital sources; and develop their competence in applying sound enquiry and investigative approaches to questions and hypotheses (study like a geographer)
- apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts, including fieldwork, and to contemporary situations and issues; and develop well-evidenced arguments drawing on their geographical knowledge and understanding (applying geography).

A strong foundation for GCSE:

The KS3 curriculum has been structured and built to provide a strong foundation for the GCSE syllabus.

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

At KS3, students gain a secure understanding of the Living World and Natural Hazards. In year students study two topics which each cover tectonic and weather hazards. This enabled students to have a good foundation knowledge of the causes, effects and responses to these hazards. Furthermore, in year 8 students study a unit focused on world ecosystems. This enables students to study contrasting biomes and understand how humans effect the natural world. In years 7 and 9, students study Physical Landscapes in the UK extensively as part of the Coasts, Rivers and Soil unit. Students are able to develop knowledge of key principles such as erosion, deposition and transportation. This knowledge is also further embedded during the KS3 Glaciation unit. This curriculum provides a solid foundation for the GCSE Paper 1 studies later.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

At KS3, students investigate Urban Issues and Challenges at great length in various topics. In year 8, students investigate the need for sustainable management in countries such as China and Africa. This knowledge provides a valuable background to the urban issues and challenges unit. Students also investigate the idea of development at great length at KS3. Topics such as Population, India and the Development and Sustainability unit each provide valuable context which prepares students to these key concepts. Students leave KS3 with a knowledge of countries at a varying level of development. Students compare and contrast countries such as the United Kingdom, Africa, China and India in order to understand the difference between HICs, LICs and NEEs.

Paper 3: Geographical applications

Fieldwork is an important component of GCSE History and it is important that student leave KS3 with the ability to formulate a geographical enquiry and complete fieldwork tasks. Throughout KS fieldwork opportunities are built into units of work. For example, waste management on the school site, a coastal study of coastal management, an enquiry into clouds which contributes to the Weather and Climate unit and a soil PH study which supports the Soil and Ecosystems units of work. By the time students leave KS3 they have a solid foundation knowledge of Fieldwork to then work on further via the AQA paper 3 syllabus. Geographical skills are also an important component of paper 3, therefore two units are dedicated to 'Becoming an Excellent Geographer' at KS3, and skills are built into each KS3 unit.



Structure of the GCSE course

In year 10, students begin their GCSE Geography with a study of Energy Resource Management. This study begins the GCSE course as it is such a prominent issue in Britain today and it is extremely relevant to students. This unit links closely to themes studied at KS3 and provides a basis to understanding the issue of sustainability which is relevant throughout the course. Students continue to study the theme of sustainability with a unit of study focused on Climate Change and Natural Hazards. Students apply their previous understanding of renewable energy to reducing the effects of climate change. Students continue in year 10 to study Desertification which is largely caused by Climate Change, allowing students to apply their knowledge to a new topic area. Following Desertification, students then learn about Deforestation which closely linked to the previous concepts already taught. Desertification and Deforestation link closely to Urban Change, which is why students then apply the knowledge gained so far in the course to a study of Rio. Students investigate the environment and improvements within Rio and link this knowledge back to sustainability. Students can then compare and contrast life in Urban Rio, to life in the UK as they study Urban Change. Urbanisation is a key cause of flooding which is why the course is then structured so that students can investigate the Physical Landscapes of the UK, including the causes and effects of Flooding. Coasts then naturally follows onwards as students can apply the concepts and knowledge gained in the Rivers unit, to a study of Coasts. During the Coasts unit students complete their Physical Fieldwork task which links closely to this unit as it is focused on 'Coastal Management' at a local beach.

In year 11, students begin the year studying Natural and Tectonic Hazards. KS3 has provided a firm foundation for this topic and students can apply their knowledge to a variety of case studies of countries with differing levels of development. This theme is studied further in the next year 11 unit, as students investigate the Changing Economic World. Students can assess the responses and prevention methods to hazards used in LICs, HICs and NEEs, and understand why they differ. This understanding is then applied to Nigeria as a key study. A significant contrast to this study is the next unit; UK Economy and Employment. Students apply the knowledge gained so far of development, sustainability and wealth and apply this to the changing UK economy. Students study their local area in a Human Fieldwork task, and study the development of Liverpool. Students then end year 11 with the Issue Evaluation. This is TBC by the exam board but encompasses all of the cartographical, graphical and data analysis skills built up during the GCSE course including decision making.

KS4 Assessment for learning

Students complete a 'Big Write' Key Assessed Task each half term. Within these assessed tasks, all assessment objectives are assessed formatively and summatively.

Assessment Objectives:

The final exams and KATs will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge of locations, places, processes, environments and different scales (15%).
- AO2: Demonstrate geographical understanding of: concepts and how they are used in relation to places, environments and processes; the interrelationships between places, environments and processes (25%).
- AO3: Apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues to make judgements (35%, including 10% applied to fieldwork context(s)).
- AO4: Select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings (25%, including 5% used to respond to fieldwork data and context(s)).

KS4 Homework



All KS4 students must be set at least one piece of homework every two weeks. This homework will be marked and rewarded with an ATL and sanctioned with class teacher detentions if not fully completed to a good standard.

KS4 students should follow the Guided Revision timetable and the class teacher must monitor this engagement through regular low-stakes testing.

Enrichment: Independent learning for High Ability Students: Geography Magazine articles set as extra and additional reading and 'Create your own revision guide' projects for each unit.

Teaching and Learning

Six key principles:

1. Teach to the top, for everyone; always. (Tharby and Allison, 2015)
2. Reading and oracy strategies that ensure all students are accessing our word-rich curriculum. (Quigley, 2018)
3. Ask questions that make students think deeply about their curriculum, checking for misconceptions and building long-term schemas. (Sweller, 1987)
4. Allow students to make links between topics, their vocabulary and their other studies in school, to see the big picture. (Quigley, 2018)
5. Use our expert subject knowledge to explain and model, giving time to practise to allow students to become experts, developing their skills and accessing the best that has been said and thought in our subjects. (Tharby and Allison, 2015)
6. Teachers' expectations of presentation, accuracy and homework enable students to develop a sense pride in their own learning. (Didau, 2015)