



# GEOGRAPHY

## Intent – What do we learn and why?

The core purpose of our study of Geography at Chosen Hill, and what we want students to gain from it, can be summarised in three statements:

- Geography stimulates a sense of wonder about the world
- Geography inspires students to want to shape a better future
- Geography equips students with skills for the future

*“Geography plays a crucial role in understanding our world. It makes a vital contribution to our knowledge of the rapidly changing environmental and social challenges facing us and how we should tackle them.”*

**Royal Geographical Society**

Geography makes both a distinctive and a wider contribution to the curriculum. It is an essential component in preparing young people for life in the twenty-first century. It is a rich and complex discipline that integrates knowledge from natural sciences, social sciences and humanities to build a holistic understanding of the world. Students learn to question why the world is the way it is, reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for the world, and propose actions designed to shape a socially just and sustainable future. The wellbeing of societies and environments depends on the quality of these interactions between people and the natural world.

The study of Geography enables students to become active, responsible and informed citizens able to evaluate the opinions of others and express their own ideas and arguments. This forms a basis for active participation in community life, a commitment to sustainability, the creation of a just society, and the promotion of intercultural understanding and lifelong learning. The skills and capabilities developed through geographical study can be applied to further education, work and everyday life. Employers and universities see geography as a robust academic subject rich in skills, knowledge and understanding.

## Implementation – How is the curriculum planned?

The Chosen Hill Geography curriculum is planned at three levels to meet our stated intent. Long term planning comprises a Teaching Year Planner showing an overview of all topics covered, roughly by half term period, in each year group along with their key assessment points. At KS3 individual Schemes of Learning show the key learning outcomes for the unit, each with clear links to the National Curriculum Programme of Study and with a wide range of suggested teaching and learning activities designed to consolidate prior learning, and maximise the levels of stretch and challenge necessary to ensure students meet their potential. Topics have been carefully chosen to allow as broad an understanding of the subject as possible for those who do not continue at GCSE level beyond Year 9, while at the same time providing a sound foundation of knowledge and skills for those progressing to KS4 and beyond. We believe it is essential for students studying Geography at KS3 to get as clear an idea of the level of application and academic rigour required for GCSE success before they make their options choices, to allow them to make as informed a selection as possible.

At GCSE we follow the OCR course B ‘Geography for Enquiring Minds’ (J384) over two years. This specification was selected because it encourages students to ‘think like geographers’ by encouraging an enquiry approach to contemporary topics of study. Two fieldwork trips and a wide range of geographical skills are integrated into both the content and assessment giving a holistic approach to the subject, and most closely meeting the needs and interests of our students. Staff follow the programme of study in the specification with units sequenced to integrate fieldwork



opportunities, and students' growing interest and awareness of current affairs as they get older. Geographical Skills (cartographic, graphic, numerical, statistical and enquiry) are mapped across the five years from 7 to 11 to ensure that all students are introduced to, and given the opportunity to consolidate, those meeting the requirements of the GCSE course to make study and assessment as inclusive and accessible as possible.

At A Level we follow the OCR A Level Geography course (H481) over two years. This specification was selected as it allows a broad base of study in developing students' knowledge of both physical and human Geography from a local through to a global scale. Practical fieldwork skills are fully integrated into the programme of study and at least four days are spent in the field, with students are encouraged to think critically about the interactions between people and their environment. Teaching and Learning activities are centred around the programme of study in the specification, with optional units selected based on students' own interests, staff expertise and the opportunities for fieldwork and further research in the local area. Students extend their studies in class using the school library, materials available through the school's VLE and online materials. The Non-Exam Assessment project makes up 20% of the overall grade and encourages students to complete their own piece of guided enquiry research based on a local issue of their choice.

## Assessment – How do we assess student understanding?

In Years 7, 8 and 9 in Geography a range of formative, summative and diagnostic marking and feedback are used to assess students level of knowledge, understanding and skill, with the assessment method being appropriate to the objective and topic area. In addition to the work in their books, students complete a range of formal assessments, with GCSE styles of assessment introduced in format, content and style at the earliest opportunity so students can gain some familiarity with the process. Diagnostic feedback is given at the earliest opportunity, with students 'going green' by noting and making improvements in light of the advice given. At all levels a tracking document is used to monitor the entire cohort, enabling early identification of any progress issues and rapid intervention to be put into place.

At GCSE and A Level students have regular assessments that are put together using real exam questions and mark schemes to give the best possible practice for the exam style assessment they will face at the end of the course. This also allows students to see an accurate current working grade and recognise their areas of strength and areas for improvement, altering their study habits and revision strategies accordingly. Mock exams take place in Years 10-13, usually in the main school hall to again replicate the exam experience as closely as possible. After every exam students receive a full lesson of diagnostic feedback using real exemplar answers and excerpts from mark schemes to show how marks will be applied for the various different styles of question.

## Home Learning

Home learning is an essential element of Geography study used to support, consolidate and extend work covered in the classroom. It allows the promotion of independent learning skills as students apply skills to areas of personal interest, as well as encouraging research creativity and initiative. It will be set frequently and regularly, and will be appropriate to the topic and activities covered. In general, KS3 lessons will have the equivalent of 30 minutes a week, GCSE lessons 1 hour a week, and A Level lessons 3 hours a week in addition to directed study tasks in school. All tasks will be set and monitored through Class Charts, and where possible will be clearly differentiated to provide meaningful and accessible activities for students.

