

# Geography Department Curriculum Statement



## Intent

Geography is a subject that offers students the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the world; every student is a global citizen. The Geography Department acknowledges the importance that each individual student engages and develops a sense of belonging to their global community.

The Geography Curriculum at Bexley Grammar School is fundamentally designed to inspire and challenge our students. It is ambitious and relevant and helps students to prepare for higher education and beyond with a global perspective rooted in our school ethos: **intellect, empathy and courage**.

At its core, the Geography Curriculum aims to harbour students' curiosity and creativity while supporting them to become independent and critical thinkers. The Curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced to deliver three main aims: firstly, to provide a firm basis in geographical skills, secondly to develop geographical knowledge, and thirdly to ground students' understanding in real world places and relevant topics. The Key Stage 3 Geography Curriculum, which is aligned with the National Curriculum aims to ensure that students who opt to study the subject at GCSE and beyond to IB are able to approach the course with confidence and achieve at the highest level.

## Implementation

### a) Content & Skills

In Year 7 students undertake six sections of work including Map skills, Weather and Climate, and Tourism. All students take part in a trip to the [Docklands](#) which links to the unit on London and explores ideas on regeneration as well as supporting the completion of the KS3 Geography diploma task. Year 8 students study a diverse range of topics including Oceans, Africa, Rivers, Globalisation and Important Places. In depth independent research project on Rivers.

Year 9 is a demanding year as students begin to explore some Geography GCSE topics, along with a range of further engaging and extending topics. Over the course of Year 9 students will study World Biomes and will have the opportunity to explore relevant links while completing a field trip to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. Students then progress to study Urban Environments, Weather Hazards, Climate Change and Geography of Current

Affairs with student-led presentations. A decision-making exercise, related to a current geographical topic, allows students to make a decision based on evidence.

The Key Stage 4 GCSE course is based on the AQA GCSE 1-9 which involves a balance between physical and human geography and is a natural extension to the work undertaken at Key Stage 3. For students that continue with Geography in Year 10, skills and knowledge are built upon and extended to help them achieve the top grades of 8-9. The 2 main GCSE modules: Living with the Physical Environment and Challenges in the Human Environment, are started in Year 9 and continue through Years 10 and 11. The final examined unit in the Geographical application paper, links directly to two fieldwork days in Yr 10 to study Epping Forest biome and Olympic site regeneration for London Sustainable cities which further supports students to further develop and consolidate their essential fieldwork skills.

The Key Stage 5 IB Geography Curriculum is exciting and holistic, as students study a range of both human and physical topics. Both Higher and Standard students study 3 “core” units that include Changing population, Global resource consumption and Climate change. Those students that opt to take Geography as a Higher Level also study Freshwater Environments, and Global Risks and Resilience. There are several fieldwork opportunities for students to take part in. The first trip is in Year 12 and is a study of the [River Darent](#), which links to the Internal Assessment that all students complete as a part of the course. In Year 13 all students explore London and there is an optional international trip to Iceland or Azores. These are popular and awe inspiring trips, a real highlight of the course.

Throughout the Geography curriculum there is an emphasis on literacy skills, including embedding key words into each lesson, and interpreting resources and communicating in extended writing.

## b) Learning environment

The Geography Curriculum supports students to develop a range of transferable skills such as graphical analysis and data manipulation, and these skills are embedded throughout the year for all year groups. ICT is used in lessons to support and extend student learning and to support teaching providing resources to classes. This approach is possible because as a department we have access to a number of PCs within our teaching rooms.

Fieldwork is a unique element to the Geography curriculum and features in each key stage. Yr 7 visit the London Docklands to investigate urban regeneration. Yr 9 visit the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew to investigate a range of world biomes. Yr 10 investigate Epping Forest biome and the Olympic site regeneration. Yr 12 River Darent investigate downstream changes in fluvial process. Yr 13 London urban environment.

## c) Assessment & Feedback

Throughout Years 7-9, students are assessed using a variety of tests, from formal end of unit tests, end of year examinations as well as by extended written work and verbal

presentations. From Year 7 onwards all assessments use the GCSE numerical grading system 1-9, with students developing understanding of what each of these grades represent.

The Geography department is committed to providing high quality feedback personalised to the student and their work, identifying strengths and weaknesses. Verbal feedback is also provided in class while students are working, through discussion and debates, and directed questioning. This feedback is supported by stickers, stamps and postcards rewarding good practice.

KS3 and KS4 assessment includes peer and teacher assessment on the range of subject knowledge and skills. This is commonly completed in purple pen and using language similar to WWW EBI. Progress is tracked through formal assessment, typically at the end of units for Key Stage 3 and KS4 classes. Students are expected to make improvements based on the feedback given. Use of past paper questions is common at KS4 to guide improved exam technique.

Key Stage 5 classes are typically given exam questions and essays throughout the course that are marked using standard markschemes, and the marks are recorded in teacher planners, Google Classroom marksheets and departmental spreadsheets allow monitoring and tracking of progress.

#### d) Monitoring

Department internal tracker spreadsheet organised by year group. Moderated assessment of IA's, moderation of mock exams. 'Book looks' and work scrutiny. Student assessment tracker sheet, students actively involved in the process of recording, reflecting on and improving their work and progress. Open door policy, context sheet, department meeting discussions of individuals to aid transition

## Impact

Geography is a popular subject at GCSE and IB. The department is the most successful option subject in the school. In 2021, Higher IB Geography students gained an average grade 6.7 with a value added score of +0.9 and GCSE Geography students gained an average grade 7.1 with a value added score of +0.1.

The Geography Department has been awarded the Prince's Teaching Institute Mark for the quality of the Geography provision. In addition the department contributes towards the Princes Teaching Institute Schools Programme supporting Geography teaching nationally.