

## **Curriculum Intent – Geography**

In Geography, students will discover and become fascinated by the linked inter-relationship between physical and human geographical concepts. We want students to be inspired by current affairs: economic development at varying levels of wealth, political instability in the Middle East, the significant threat of climate change and recognise their own 'footprint' and contribution to these topics at local and global geographical scales.

The Geography curriculum is designed to establish a foundation level understanding of both physical and human concepts. Reference to sustainability and fragility of the planet threads its way through each of the 5 years at Horizon Community College. A three-year Key Stage 3, and two-year Key Stage 4 curriculum has been created to develop geographers who understand the threat of global population change and the impact it has at various scales. The curriculum investigates how the physical planet is everchanging and becoming increasingly vulnerable to the impact of human life. All geographers, whether they study the subject for 3 or 5 years, will employ this ability to *think like a geographer*, and practise evaluation in their own careers and lives across the wider school curriculum in Science, R.E and Citizenship. We equip students to be adaptable in their current surroundings and empower them to apply geographical understanding beyond what is taught within the four walls of their classroom.

Year 7 are introduced to Geography through the broad topic titled 'Fascinating Places'. For their first term at HCC, students study the physical and human elements of *Fascinating Places* around the world that members of the Geography department have visited. For example, students engage in the physical geography and topography of Ha Long Bay in Vietnam, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and develop an understanding of why the area is seen as a tourist hotspot. The remainder of Year 7 continues to explore physical and human geographies at different scales before students are exposed to *Global Issues* in Year 8: natural hazards, development, population and energy. By the end of Year 9, students should be able to give a reasoned judgement on global issues and be able to recognise their own responsibility for the sustainability of life on planet Earth. The intent of Key Stage 3 Geography is to expose students to current geographical knowledge, teaching students how to describe, explain and evaluate at varying geographical scales. This establishes not only a foundation for the two-year GCSE (for those students that choose to continue Geography beyond Year 9), but academic skills that support students across the Humanities and English for their final two years of schooling.

After developing the ability to draw upon previous learning and apply understanding of geographical concepts in Year 9, GCSE pupils will engage with the AQA specification armed with the skills to showcase their understanding of the inter-relationship between human and physical geography. The course explores the ever-changing physical landscapes of our world, threats posed to humans, and the techniques used to manage future damage. For example, what does de-forestation of the Malaysian rainforest mean for polar bears in the Arctic? As students grow as geographers, they study

an array of human geographical concepts: how urbanisation creates challenges and opportunities for areas of contrasting wealth across the world, and the pressures that an exponentially increasing global population provokes for the management of our vital resources: food, water and energy.

Unique to other courses on offer at GCSE, students are offered an invaluable opportunity to visit both a human and physical environment in the UK. The first trip investigates regeneration in a local environment, where pupils use a range of medias to evidence their exploration of urban living. On the second trip, students are taken to the coast to witness for themselves the management of a rapidly eroding coastline. They will use geographical equipment to measure the rate of erosion and investigate the effect this has on the local people and UK economy.

Catered to the individual needs of students in the classroom, lessons in Geography incorporate a *hook*, which engages students through curiosity about geographical phenomena, or allows students to recognise how the learning can relate to their own lives. Consistently embedded across schemes of learning, lessons start with a retrieval task relating to learning of the previous lesson, week or topic. Assessing students' understanding at an early stage of each lesson provides the teacher with an opportunity to deliver activities, bespoke to the individual needs of students in each Geography classroom.

Schemes of learning have been crafted in a way which evolves students' ability from Year 7 to explain their learning socially, economically and environmentally, to the capabilities of a Year 11 student who can articulate links between lessons and topics. This is the fundamental skill of evaluation which is taught through the *Geography Keys*. *The Geography Keys* are a set of criteria students can include in a written response to express the complex inter-relationship between physical and human geographical concepts. Ranked from low to high level terminology, the *Geography Keys* are embedded into the entire curriculum that students become familiar and comfortable with when improving their written response.

At the start of Year 7, students are given 'knowledge organisers' that includes key content and statistics that students are required to know for the coming term. This is duplicated for all years. All year groups are then quizzed on sections of their knowledge organiser each week to encourage greater accuracy of geographical written response.

Formative assessment is embedded throughout lessons and teacher practice in Geography. Classroom use of mini whiteboards provide instant feedback for teachers gauging students understanding of basic knowledge. Students are also regularly called upon individually using the *random name generator* to demonstrate their understanding of lesson objectives. At Key Stage 3 summative assessments include a range of figures, arithmetic and finally a question that offers students an opportunity to express their wider geographical understanding, drawing upon criteria

listed from the Geography Keys. It is this final question of KS3 assessment which students complete a progress check to enhance their written response in future assessments. KS4 summative assessments are based solely on past exam questions at the start of the course before developing into whole past papers during Year 10 and Year 11 mock periods when students have learnt enough content.

Geographers at Horizon Community College are given a broad diet of Geography, giving them a vast understanding of the complex inter-relationship between human and physical concepts. Our aim is for students to recognise their *footprint* on the planet but more importantly what they can do to influence its future.