



Geography Curriculum

"More than ever we need the geographer's skills and foresight to help us learn about our planet - how we use it and how we abuse it"

Michael Palin

Geography Department:

Mr M Pitman: Subject Leader

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Overview

We all live our lives geographically. Planet Earth is our home. It is awesome, diverse, inspiring and ever changing. The Geography team at St Wilfrid's seek to familiarise students with this world we call home, encouraging them to think critically about our actions on both local and international scales. We do this through studying a range of relevant and up to date topics, making frequent cross curricular links and challenging students to make links between what we study in lessons and what happens in their own lives.

Keystage 3

Geography is taught in Years 7, 8 and 9. Subject content is varied with a mix of physical and human Geography topics. Year 7 is started with a baseline assessment, giving the department an idea of each student's prior knowledge in the subject on entering key stage 3. The year group then go on to be introduced to the subject throughout the first half term, building skills such as map reading and co-ordinates. Having built up some basic geographical skills, we then move on to look at our local area, Crawley, focussing on its history, the changes that have occurred and what may happen to the area in future. Following this study, Year 7's will continue to broaden and extend their horizons throughout the remaining terms, looking at the British Isles, the continent of Africa and finally studying the mainly physical topic of coasts, erosion and protecting the coastline from retreat.

Year 8, begins with a topic based on biodiversity, ecosystems and protecting wildlife. We study the stresses and strains being placed on our natural world by humanity and ways that we can reduce this pressure. At this point students will gain evaluative skills, understanding why conflicts occur between different interest groups and evaluating what the best options would be for future development, socially, economically and environmentally. We also continue this theme about how humans are exploiting earth in the topics of "energy", "climate change" and "Antarctica", suggesting sustainable ways to protect the environment.



Year 9 is full of topics that can be very easily related to what is seen on the everyday news. The year is started with tourism and how human actions can both benefit and damage an area. We focus on Spain and Mallorca since these are places that many students will have visited, making it more relevant for them. Following this comes the topic of “restless earth”. This topic combines both physical and human geography. Students explore why tectonic processes and hazards occur, the impacts that these hazards can have on people, the economy and the environment and student will leave this topic with a sound understanding that hazards cannot be prevented, but that places can be prepared for them, reducing their impacts. Particularly interesting case studies such as Haiti versus California and the 2004 Boxing day tsunami vs the 2011 tsunami challenge students to explore how economic development may allow certain locations to be less affected by the hazards they encounter than other less developed nations. This leads into the topic of development and globalisation, looking at the spread of global brands and their impact on people in rich and poor nations. The year is rounded off testing the skills that the students have gained. Students are given a very loose rein and allowed to work independently in a decision making activity based on the European Union. Students must decide whether it is best for Britain to be part of or to leave the European Union.

Keystage 4

GCSE Geography is an optional subject in Years 10 and 11. We follow the Edexcel ‘B’ Geography specification. This has three units that cover a range of physical and human topics, building high level skills such as analytical and evaluative skills. The course is broken down below:

	Global Geographical Issues	UK Geographical Issues	People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions
Content overview	Hazardous Earth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies of tropical storms and tectonic hazards Development dynamics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study of an emerging country Challenges of an urbanising world <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study of a mega city in a developing or emerging country 	The UK’s evolving physical landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 studies of coastal and river landscapes and issues Fieldwork investigation: physical The UK’s evolving human landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study of a dynamic UK city • Fieldwork investigation: human 	People and the biosphere Forests under threat Consuming energy resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All three topics will form the basis of a decision-making exercise where students draw together understanding and skills from the whole course.
Assessment Overview	Worth 37.5% Total 94 marks Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes	Worth 37.5% Total 94 marks Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes	Worth 25% Total 64 marks Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Keystage 5

Geography is also offered at AS and A2 level. We follow the Edexcel ‘GCE in Geography’ specification. Students who have just begun A-level Geography in 2016 will follow a 2 year course, sitting exams at the end of Year 13. Topics covered in Year 12 include globalisation, coastal zones, tectonic activity and regenerating places, providing a wide range of physical and human geography. A heavy influence will also be placed on literacy and numerical skills in the new A level.

Those sitting the A level exam in 2017 will have sat the AS exam in 2016 and will study the Units below in Year 13:



Unit 3: Contested Planet

This again is worth 60% of the A2 exam marks. Student study a wide range of topics that encompass both a physical and human dimension in each. These topics include energy security, water conflicts, biodiversity under threat, superpower geographies, the development gap and finally the technological fix, which relates to the previous 5 topics. For this exam, students will receive pre-release material to study before the exam. They must pick an additional 2 topics to answer questions on in the exam.

Unit 4:

This unit is aimed at allowing students to work independently choosing one of six optional topics to study in great depth and to be examined on in an essay style exam. The topics open to students include tectonic activity and hazards, cold environments and their change, the food supply problem, world of cultural diversity, pollution and human health risk and finally leisure and tourism in rural areas. Students choose their topic at Christmas time and spend the rest of the year conducting guided research. In this unit, the teacher will step back from the role of teacher to one of mentor, guiding the students. This exam is an excellent way of preparing students for university style work and really allows students to get their teeth into a topic that they enjoy. The exam lasts 1.5hrs and is composed of 1 question for the topic chosen worth 70 marks.

Department Website: <http://geography.stwilfrids.com/>