Richard Lander School

Statement of Intent

Every subject maximises the potential of each student, enabling them to become successful learners, confident learners and responsible citizens. We will ensure that all students are well prepared for life and work and keen to make a positive difference to the world they live in.

Geography

Intent
We believe that our students deserve an interesting, relevant and engaging geography curriculum; rich in skills and knowledge that challenge and support all learners to fulfil their potential and be the best they can be. The geography curriculum aims to stimulate the curiosity of students by questioning the world in which we live in, investigating global geographical issues and as a result understanding their role in society. The curriculum helps students to challenge misconceptions, whilst enabling students to understand the interconnectedness of both human and natural processes. As a results our students become independent lifelong learners, that understand different values and attitudes.

Skills
Geography uses a wide range of skills including location and place, data collection and interpretation, statistics, questioning, forming hypotheses, research, structuring arguments, fieldwork methodologies and contextual knowledge.

Developing these skills in geography enables our students to transfer skills to their other subjects and from the classroom to the outside world. These skills enable students to build knowledge of their surroundings in the local area as well as globally. The curriculum will equip pupils to use geographical thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Our students are taught a wide-ranging combination of skills drawing in ideas from many sources. This ability to view issues from a wider perspective is appropriate for working in many different areas.

Purpose of Study
Geography is a relevant and highly interconnected discipline which has a value in everyday life. Students explore case-studies in both the UK and from around the world, which are regularly updated to illustrate current issues and make topics relatable for students. We seek to promote an interest and curiosity in the human and physical world. A high-quality geographical education will enable students to become well informed adults and prepare them for their future.

Aims
The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all students:

- 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
- are 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.

Assessment:

Key Stage 3 assessment:

The students have three formal assessments per year linked to our data download information gathering.

The assessments are based on geographical skills, knowledge and understanding, and opportunities for extended writing in a higher tariff based question. An example would be 'to what extent is the Penan Tribe under threat?' Prior to each assessment students have access to knowledge organisers for revision and recall. After the assessment and marking has occurred – students have DIT within lesson time to improve the questions with the department focusing on improvements for the essay style question.

The class teacher reviews data and amendments are made for DIT and reviews across the department if changes need to take place for the next academic year of teaching.

Key Stage 4 assessment:

The students are assessed using previous exam papers and questions we have devised based on the assessment format at GCSE. These take place regularly through each teaching unit and at the end of unit, assessment in exam conditions takes place in class – as well as at the end of year 10 and year 11 PPEs in the hall under formal exam conditions.

Recall assessment occurs throughout lessons with quizzes and simple knowledge based tests across year 10 and year 11. Use of IT based assessment tools, for example Seneca, allows the department to identify any areas of weakness from students answering questions in homework tasks and staff can adapt lessons to ensure all gaps are closed as they progress through KS4.

Rationale

The topics taught are within a knowledge engaged curriculum as skills are taught within the application of knowledge and geographical themes:
Year 7 themes focus on a global tour visiting different regions from the Middle East, Russia, Natural Hazards and Development, covering both human and physical themes with geographical skills embedded within the learning. Year 8 themes focus on global and sustainable issues – ecosystems and interactions, energy and resource issues, weather and climate change. The knowledge gained in year 7 and 8 is then applied to key themes within year 9 in Population, physical topics of Rivers, Coasts and Global Issues.
Key Stage 4 topics are taught through themes linked to the GCSE AQA Geography Syllabus – with Year 10 units of study – Challenges of Natural Hazards, Challenges of the Urban World and then UK Physical Landscapes – Rivers and Coasts. Geographical Investigations are also carried out during year 10. Year 11 themes studied include: The Living World, Changing Economic World and Challenges of Resource Management, as well as Issue Evaluation preparation. The Key stage 4 curriculum travels across both the human and physical units of study with geographical skills embedded into lessons to support the geographical applications approach.
The key stage 4 learning journey links and build key concepts and use the assessment objectives to support their progress across the GCSE.

As pupils progress through Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time. We aspire to develop global citizens who recognise the responsibility they have to other people as well as to the sustainability of our planet, in a rapidly changing world.

The Geography department implements a holistic approach that goes beyond the national curriculum, encompassing the unique nature of Richard Lander School and the local context of our students as well as developing their knowledge within the field of geography, within society and the workplace.