

GEOGRAPHY

What is the importance of the subject? Why should pupils be studying it? Why should they care about it? How might the subject link to the real world/ real life scenarios?

"Geography underpins a lifelong 'conversation' about the earth as the home of humankind. Geography therefore contributes to a balanced education for all young people in schools, colleges and other settings."(A Different View, GA 2009) Geography is challenging, motivating, topical and engaging. In our diverse society students need, more than ever before, to understand other people and cultures. We believe that geographical knowledge, concepts and skills are essential components of a broad and balanced curriculum. Geography makes a major contribution to students' physical, intellectual, social and emotional development. As Professor Andrew Goudie puts it, 'What other subject tells us so much about the great issues of our age? Geography must be a rigorous study of the real world. It must seek explanations about how the world works and help us think about alternative futures.'

Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human and physical processes that shape them and the people who live in them. It helps students to make sense of their surroundings and to gain a better appreciation and understanding of the variety of physical and human conditions on the Earth's surface.

The Geography Department aim to:

- Stimulate students' interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth's surface.
- Foster students' sense of wonder at the beauty of the world around them.
- Help students develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat and thereby enhance students' sense of responsibility for the care of the earth and its people.

What are the key concepts or big ideas underpinning the subject?

As students of Geography, pupils are supported in developing a range of personal and academic skills which will help in the investigation of a broad range of ideas and concepts. These ideas and concepts include:

Environments

Students investigate a range of environments that may be natural and/or cultural. They have particular characteristics and features which can be the result of natural and/or cultural processes. The particular characteristics of an environment may be similar to and/or different from another. A cultural environment includes people and/or the built environment.

Perspectives

Students consider different ways of seeing the world that help explain differences in decisions about, responses to, and interactions with environments. Perspectives are bodies of thought, theories or worldviews that shape people's values and have built up over time. They involve people's *perceptions* how they view and interpret

environments) and *viewpoints* (what they think) about geographic issues. Perceptions and viewpoints are influenced by people's *values* (deeply held beliefs about what is important or desirable).

Processes

Students learn how a sequence of actions, natural and/or cultural, that shape and change environments, places and societies. Some examples of geographic processes include erosion, migration, desertification and globalisation.

Patterns

Students consider how patterns may be spatial: the arrangement of features on the earth's surface; or temporal: how characteristics differ over time in recognisable ways.

Interaction

Students are encouraged to make links between different areas of geographical study. Interaction involves elements of different environments affecting each other and being linked together. Interaction incorporates movement, flows, connections, links and interrelationships which work together and may be one or two way interactions. Landscapes are the visible outcome of interactions. Interaction can bring about environmental change.

Change

Students learn about the constant changes occurring in both physical and human geography. Change involves any alteration to the natural or cultural environment. Change can be spatial and/or temporal. Change is a normal process in both natural and cultural environments. It occurs at varying rates, at different times and in different places. Some changes are predictable, recurrent or cyclic, while others are unpredictable or erratic. Change can bring about further change.

Sustainability

Involves adopting ways of thinking and behaving that allow individuals, groups, and societies to meet their needs and aspirations without preventing future generations from meeting theirs. Sustainable interaction with the environment may be achieved by preventing, limiting, minimising or correcting environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as considering ecosystems and problems related to waste, noise, and visual pollution.

These key concepts are significant in their own right and are also interrelated.

What topics will the pupils be studying in each year group?

Topics Studied in Key Stage 3.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Map Skills	Coastal Landscapes	Population and Settlement
Comparing Countries	Global Ecosystems	Tectonic processes
Tourism	Weather Systems	Glaciation
	China	River Landscapes

Topics Studied in Key Stage 4

Year 10	Year 11
Landscapes of the UK: Physical landscapes Geomorphic processes River landscapes Coastal landscapes	Ecosystems of the planet: Global Ecosystems Tropical Rainforest Coral Reef
People of the UK: UK's trading partners Diversity in the UK Development in the UK UK's population Urban trends in the UK	People of the Planet: Global development Uneven Development Ethiopia Global urbanisation
UK Environmental challenges: Extreme weather Resources Ecosystems Energy sources	Environmental Threats: Climate change Atmospheric circulation Extreme weather events
Geographical skills and Fieldwork	Geographical skills and Fieldwork

Topics Studied in Key Stage 5

Year 12	Year 13
Coastal Landscapes	Earths Life Support Systems (Ecosystems)
Changing Spaces, making places (Urban)	Global Migration
Hazardous Earth	Power and Borders
Geographical Skills	Disease Dilemmas
Independent Investigation	Geographical Skills
	Independent Investigation

What key capacities / skills will the pupils develop?

No matter what topic is studied within the Geography curriculum, students will gain a wide range of very employable and transferable skills, knowledge and attributes. These include:

- Subject knowledge and **understanding** that is highly relevant to many of the challenges facing society and the environment today.

- Specialist skills (statistical, spatial and environmental analysis alongside other quantitative and qualitative skills).
- Developing **independence** through strong analytical and research skills, critical analysis, ability to judge evidence and work across the social and natural sciences.
- An ability to collect, understand and interpret complex data and **communicate** it to a variety of audiences.
- **Determination** to tackle problems and examine big issues at a variety of scales and from different perspectives.
- Being a **collaborator** by having the experience of working in a team, including through field research.
- Being an **investigator** and showing an interest in how the world works, contemporary issues and other cultures.
- A **positive** approach to learning and working with others.

Geography at Millom School should help students to:

- Develop a strong interest in, and help them identify with their own environment and have an **understanding** of the wider world and their place within it.
- Appreciate the variety of physical and human conditions on the Earth's surface and recognise the interaction between them.
- **Understand** how change can result from physical and human processes.
- Realise that others may hold different beliefs, live in different cultures and have different values to their own and develop a **positive** attitude towards them.
- Encourage sensitivity towards others and develop an **understanding** of and empathy towards the nature of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies.
- Gain a fuller understanding of controversial issues, allowing them the opportunity to **investigate**, make and **communicate** their own informed judgements.
- Have respect for the natural and built environment.
- Show **determination** in building upon their existing geographical knowledge, introducing new concepts as appropriate.
- Acquire a wide range of geographical and other skills.
- Develop an enquiry-based approach towards their work, as working as **investigators** will allow them to extend their intellectual skills through problem solving and fieldwork.
- Enjoy learning and **investigating** things about their world.
- Work **collaboratively** and **independently** to identify potential career paths with a link to geographical study.
- Demonstrate **determination** and confidence to work both **independently** and **collaboratively** as part of a group.
- Become proficient in the applications and uses of ICT.

How are the pupils' learning being assessed in this subject? How does the subject support the learning of all pupils?

The Geography curriculum provides opportunities for students to learn new content and build on geographical skills in a variety of ways. This in turn provides

opportunities for student progress to be assessed in a range of ways. Assessment opportunities include:

- **Formal written assessment.** This form of assessment occurs at a variety of scales. Students may be required to complete short assessed written tasks during the lesson to check depth of understanding in respect to geographical theory or case study detail. There will also be extended formal written assessment on completion of a topic or geographical unit of study. Students in Key Stages 4 and 5 can expect to be assessed using examination-style questions.
- **Classroom discussion:** Students may be engaged in conversation in order to assess the level of understanding and the degree of progress made. These discussions may take a variety of forms including paired discussion, small group discussion or whole class discussion. The nature of the questions used and the effective targeting of questions allow all students to make progress.
- **Classroom debates:** When studying current geographical issues or events, debate may be used as a form of assessment. Students are required to research key issues surrounding the issue in order to make an informed contribution. Understanding may be assessed by the ability of individuals to explain the issue in a persuasive manner and respond to direct questions. This activity will also provide opportunities to assess empathy for different individuals and groups. This form of assessment is made accessible to all students through the nature of the question debated, the complexity of the role adopted and the research material provided.
- **Investigative and research tasks:** During the course of the school year, students will be assessed on the completion of an investigative task. The investigation may be either classroom based or built around a field expedition. Students will be asked to respond to a research question that incorporates both a hypothesis and key questions.
- **Decision making tasks:** Students may work either individually or in small groups in order to produce a solution to a geographical issue. These assessments involve interpretation of a range of different geographical sources / resources in order to produce a supported conclusion. Differentiation of resources make the assessment accessible to all students.
- **Creative / design tasks:** Students may be assessed on their ability to design and / or construct, either a structure or policy to address a major geographical issue.

Learning materials used in assessment vary in both style and complexity. Differentiated material ensures that assessed tasks are accessible to all students, including providing opportunities for stretch and challenge of the more able students. Where formal written assessment is used, differentiation of question is also in evidence and SEN provision is taken into account.

How can pupils progress in this subject?

As Geography students progress through the key stages, they continue to build on a broad range of geographical skills whilst learning fresh content. The structure of the Geography curriculum encourages continuity of learning whilst consistently providing opportunities to consolidate and build on prior learning and

geographical skills. The Key Stage 3 curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils to investigate, be creative and have fun learning about geographical processes and human interactions, as well as giving them a sound grounding and preparing them for the nature of tasks required by the examination board at GCSE. Many of the topics taught and issues considered in Key Stages 4 and 5 are introduced in the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

GCSE Geography naturally leads onto to A-level Geography. Many students find that GCSE Geography also complements science A-levels or BTECs. At A-level, Geography is classified as a **'facilitating subject'** and as such has direct links to a very wide range of Higher Education courses. These include:

- History
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Geology
- English
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Politics
- Law
- Economics
- Business
- Mathematics
- Medicine
- Veterinary Science

Many students who take Geography at A-level progress onto degrees in environmental science, ecology, biology, chemistry, geology and engineering.

How does the subject support careers education, information, advice and guidance? What career pathways can pupils take by studying this subject further?

Geography has clear links to a wide range of career routes within the following fields:

Travel, Tourism and Leisure

A geographer's interest in the uniqueness of different places can be turned into a career with a role in the travel, tourism and leisure sector. This might span working within airlines or travel companies, running educational fieldwork and expeditions, working overseas or helping run a wide range of leisure activities and services. Environmental management is of increasing importance in modern society, presenting a range of opportunities in respect to both research and planning.

Society

Geography can help prepare students for many different roles working within businesses, social enterprises, not-for-profit organisations, and parts of national and local government – all of which provide goods, services and support for people in different ways. Students will need to be able to relate to and understand the needs of different types of people in different situations and develop effective responses.

From consumer research to advertising and public relations, community work to working for the police or a local authority, or as a teacher or in government or as an aid worker, there are a multitude of roles available to geographers within this sector.

The Business World

A geographer's skills of being able to work with statistics and quantitative approaches, synthesise information and hold a broader understanding of society can be very beneficial in the business world. This can be further developed if students undertake specialist training after their initial qualification in geography, such as in financial services, accountancy or law. So whether working in risk analysis, financial services, auditing, as a lawyer for a commercial enterprise, a commercial location analysis, or running their own company, geographers have the capacity to excel in all areas of business. Business opportunities for Geography students range from international corporations to small enterprises and business consultancy.

Development and Global Issues

These roles might be working for an international company with operations in many different countries; for government departments such as the Department for International Development or Foreign and Commonwealth Office; the armed forces; non-government organisations such as the British Council or international development charities or bodies such as the European Commission or United Nations. Students might be involved in trade or international supply chains.

The Built Environment

Geographers can understand different perspectives on where we live and work and their approach can be an invaluable tool in helping to plan new neighbourhoods, and protect or regenerate existing ones. From a small-scale housing consultant to an international construction company, from a planning department to landscape management, transport planning to environmental consultancy, students could develop a career focused on where and how people live.

Geographical Information Systems

It is estimated that 10% of the British economy is reliant on the use of geographic data collected by the Ordnance Survey and the Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Geography and geographical information is at the heart of decision-making; from planning to utilities; emergency services to defence; business and government; planning new sports stadia; and disaster preparedness to environmental planning. This is a growing industry, both in the UK and overseas, which has geography and geographers working at its heart.

How can pupils enrich their knowledge and understanding in this subject?

The Geography curriculum is enriched with regular reference to both local issues and the local environment. In studying geographical issues, case studies are frequently drawn from the local area. The structure of the curriculum lends itself to identifying potential career opportunities and pathways in a variety of settings. These opportunities include working in the field of environmental management, tourism, planning, forecasting, research, business, industry and politics.

Geography is a skills based subject and fieldwork opportunities provide students with the opportunity to develop transferable skills. At Key Stage 3 students experience fieldwork on the school site and in the local community. Both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 students are required to experience a variety of fieldwork activities designed to link the physical and human elements of Geography. Key Stage 4 research activities include work on tourism, coastal management systems and river processes. Key Stage 5 Geography fieldwork includes urban study, consideration of environmental issues and physical geography. A-level students also further develop transferable skills through researching a geographical issue individually, producing a written report that is entered as the Independent Investigation element of the final qualification.

Year 12 students also have an opportunity to enhance their awareness of both the subject and the opportunities that it presents during university visits, including the attendance of subject conferences and lectures.