

ESW / Teign School Geography Curriculum

“The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.”

Barack Obama

Geography is the study of the physical features of the earth and its atmosphere, and of human activity as it affects and is affected by these, including the distribution of populations and resources and political and economic activities. The world is an amazing place, and we aim to awaken students to that same sense of awe and wonder that led us to become Geographers, whether it is ripple in the sand or the largest mountain range in the world.

The Geography Curriculum is designed to enable students to be curious, compassionate and interested in the world. They will develop an understanding of the substantive knowledge of both human and physical processes and the interactions between these that shape natural and human environments over different times and scales.

We study a broad range of physical, ethical and moral key issues that are facing our planet in order to develop a passion and belief that as global citizens they can action change at a variety of scales. We use a range of contemporary globally significant examples and case studies to illustrate the concepts and enrich the students understanding and enthusiasm. We take opportunities to study outside the classroom and the college site in every year.

Students will also develop procedural knowledge skills which will enable them to be successful in Geography but also transferable to other subject areas and life beyond the classroom.

KEY STAGE 3

Knowledge

Students begin with the building blocks of Geography by defining place and understanding the factors that affect our local place including fieldwork on our local coastline. Students learn how to locate places map skills including using Atlas' and OS Maps. We compare and contrast different places and landscapes on a range of scales and a range location across different continents. We investigate the physical factors that shapes these such as tectonics and human factors that shape these such as international development and migration.

In Year 8 students continue to develop understanding of places and processes in different spheres such as through weather and climate, ecosystems and urbanisation and economic activity. Throughout their journey students are challenged to understand concepts and evaluate cause, effect and response.

In Year 9 students investigate substantive knowledge of global human processes of development, globalisation and international decision making in more depth, building on KS2

and providing the building blocks for GCSE and beyond. Students then investigate the coastal and river process that have shaped the UK and their local environment.

Concepts

Throughout KS3 students are taught through the fundamental concepts of Geography. These include exploring different **places** at different **scales** and how they have changed over **time**. These places are shaped over time by human and physical **processes**. Students are challenged to think about how places and people are **interdependent** for example how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems. Students also investigate how these processes (mainly human) can cause **inequality**. People and places are also at **risk** and therefore we always need to think **sustainably** and encourage students to realise they can action change.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

Student will build on their knowledge of maps and atlases and apply and develop this knowledge routinely in the classroom

Student will be able to interpret Ordnance Survey maps in the classroom and the field, including using grid references and scale, topographical and other thematic mapping, and aerial and satellite photographs are introduced in Year 7 and revisited throughout their learning journey.

They will use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) such as Arc GIS and Google Earth to view, analyse and interpret places and data.

Use fieldwork in contrasting locations to collect primary data, analyse and draw conclusions from geographical data, using multiple sources of increasingly complex inform.

GCSE

Students follow the AQA GCSE Specification. This separates Geography into three broad disciplines. Living with the Physical Environment, Challenges in the Human Environment and Geographical Applications and Skills. Whilst this allows students to study discrete topics in Geography in an accessible format. It builds on the foundations laid in Key Stage 3 of place it also challenges them to think synoptically and make links between the different topics.

“Our specification enables a variety of teaching and learning approaches. This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them. Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. We created this specification with help from teachers and subject experts and we’re confident you’ll enjoy teaching it as much as your students will enjoy learning. Upon completion of this two year course, students will have the skills and experience to progress onto A-level and beyond.”

[AQA Specification](#)

Living with the physical environment

- [Section A: The challenge of natural hazards](#)
- [Section B: The living world](#)
- [Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK](#)

Challenges in the human environment

- [Section A: Urban issues and challenges](#)
- [Section B: The changing economic world](#)
- [Section C: The challenge of resource management](#)

Geographical applications

- [Section A: Issue evaluation](#)
- [Section B: Fieldwork](#)

Fieldwork

Students complete two fieldwork enquiries in human and physical environment. These include a visit to an urban area and coastal landscape.

A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY

Students follow the **AQA A Level Geography Specification**. This contemporary and engaging course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at GCSE while encouraging students to explore the complex interactions between people, places and environments. Students develop a deeper understanding of geographical processes, patterns and issues at a range of scales, from local to global, and are challenged to think synoptically, critically evaluate evidence and construct well-supported arguments.

Why study AQA Geography?

- **Contemporary and relevant content**
Students investigate some of the most pressing issues facing the world today, including climate change, global governance, migration, urbanisation, resource management and changing places.
- **Strong preparation for higher education**
The course develops critical thinking, independent enquiry, data analysis, decision-making and fieldwork skills that support progression to university-level geography and a wide range of related disciplines.
- **A balanced approach to human and physical geography**
Students study both physical and human environments and explore the links between them, developing a holistic understanding of geographical issues.
- **Independent investigation opportunities**
A significant fieldwork and research component allows students to undertake their own geographical investigation, fostering independence and academic enquiry.

Paper 1: Physical Geography

Water and Carbon Cycles

- The water cycle and its systems and stores
- Water security and sustainability
- The carbon cycle
- Energy security and climate change

Coastal Systems and Landscapes

- Coastal processes
- Landforms and landscapes
- Coastal management and sustainability

Hazards

- Tectonic hazards
- Volcanic hazards
- Seismic hazards
- Storm hazards and associated risks

Paper 2: Human Geography

Global Systems and Global Governance

- Globalisation
- International trade and development
- Global governance of resources and environments

Changing Places

- Place identity and representation
- Factors influencing place character
- Demographic, economic and social change

Contemporary Urban Environments

- Urbanisation processes
- Urban change and regeneration
- Sustainable urban development

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA): Independent Investigation

Students complete an individual investigation of **3,000-4,000 words** based on a question or issue they have identified independently. The investigation must draw upon fieldwork undertaken by the student and relate to any aspect of the A Level specification.

The investigation enables students to:

- Develop an original research question.
- Design and carry out geographical fieldwork.
- Collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data.
- Evaluate methodologies and findings.
- Communicate conclusions through extended academic writing.

The NEA encourages independence, critical thinking and the application of geographical theory to real-world contexts, providing excellent preparation for higher education and future employment.

Assessment Overview

Component	Assessment	Weighting
Paper 1: Physical Geography	Written Examination (2 hrs 30 mins)	40%
Paper 2: Human Geography	Written Examination (2 hrs 30 mins)	40%
Non-Exam Assessment	Independent Investigation (3,000-4,000 words)	20%

This course equips students with a sophisticated understanding of the world around them, fostering analytical, evaluative and investigative skills that are highly valued by universities and employers alike.

Mr Watkins – Subject Leader of Geography