Geography

Why study Geography?

GCSE Geography is one of the most relevant and wide-ranging subjects pupils can choose. It helps them understand major global issues such as climate change, flooding, migration, globalisation and energy security, whilst also exploring the physical processes shaping rivers, coasts, ecosystems and hazardous environments. Pupils develop a critical understanding of how people, places and landscapes are connected at local, national and global scales.

The course develops the **transferable skills** valued by pupils, universities and future employers. Using maps, photographs, satellite images, GIS, data, graphs and detailed specific examples to investigate real world issues, they learn to analyse evidence, interpret patterns, make decisions, solve problems and communicate ideas clearly. Geography supports success across subjects such as Science, Economics, Politics, Business and Mathematics, while opening pathways into ambitious future study and careers including law, geopolitics, engineering, finance, energy, planning and the environment.

Geography at GCSE begins in Year 9, giving pupils a strong foundation and time to develop the confidence, knowledge and exam technique needed for success.

A major strength of Geography at the school is the opportunity to learn beyond the classroom. **Fieldwork** is a fundamental part of the course which directly supports preparation for Paper 4, Geographical Investigations. The compulsory Edale river fieldwork day and local urban-based studies gives pupils first-hand experience of collecting, presenting and analysing data.

Optional overseas trips to **Iceland** and **Norway** allow pupils to see world class geography in action, including volcanoes, glaciers, waterfalls, fjords, geothermal landscapes, Eyjafjallajökull, the Golden Circle, impacts of tourism, and evidence of climate change on glaciers such as Sólheimajökull.

Syllabus Content

Pupils study ten topics to prepare for three examination papers. Detailed specific examples are used to illustrate the content of individual topics.

Paper 1 Topics – Physical Geography

1. Changing river environments
2. Changing coastal environments
3. Changing ecosystems
4. Tectonic hazards
5. Climate Change

Paper 2 Topics – Human Geography

6. Changing populations
7. Changing towns and cities
8. Development
9. Changing economies
10. Resource provision

Assessment

The course is assessed using the 9-1 grading structure. Examinations are taken at the conclusion of the course in May of Year 11.

Structured questions test knowledge and understanding of geographical processes, evaluative thinking and analysis of source material including map extracts, graphs, photographs and data tables.

Paper 1 – Physical Geography. The paper is 1 hour 45 minutes in duration; it is worth 75 marks and accounts for 36% of the total GCSE exam marks.

Paper 1 explores the physical processes that shape the world around us. Pupils develop a strong understanding of landscape features, human interactions, the challenges created by natural processes and the extent to which they can be sustainably managed.

Paper 2 – Human Geography. The paper is 1 hour 45 minutes in duration; it is worth 75 marks and accounts for 36% of the total GCSE exam marks.

Paper 2 focuses on the human world, exploring the driving factors and impacts of contemporary issues such as population growth, globalisation, energy security and tourism. Pupils examine how people use, change and manage places at local, national and global scales. The paper follows the same format as Paper 1.

Paper 4 - Geographical Investigations. The paper is 1 hour 30 minutes in duration; it is worth 60 marks and accounts for 28% of the total GCSE exam marks.

Pupils take the Paper 4 examination instead of coursework. This paper assesses practical fieldwork skills and the process of geographical enquiry, including testing hypotheses, collecting data, presenting results, analysing patterns, reaching conclusions and evaluating methods.

At a Glance

Exam Board
IGCSE Cambridge Geography (0976)

Assessment Type
The course comprises of three examinations:

- 36% Exam: Paper 1 - Physical Geography
- 36% Exam: Paper 2 - Human Geography
- 28% Exam: Paper 4 - Geographical Investigations

Fieldwork & Overseas Trips
Fieldwork: Compulsory UK based including river processes and landforms in Derbyshire and urban-based studies in the local area. **Overseas**: Optional 6-day overseas field trips to Norway and Iceland.

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