Clevedon School Geography Curriculum: Statement of Intent

"Geography is a subject which holds the key to our future." Michael Palin

Purpose of study:

Our curriculum gift is to instil a love of learning about the world around us for all our young people. Our curriculum aims to develop student's understanding of **places, people and the processes that shape our planet**. Through coverage a diverse range of **human and physical** topics, our students develop an understanding of how **systems interact** to create the world we live in today. The geography curriculum is an academic and rigorous curriculum, which places a large emphasis on **knowledge**. The geography curriculum also gives students the **skills** to use this knowledge to think deeply about key geographical concepts and processes and make **synoptic links** between different areas of the subject. Geography is also fundamental in teaching students about **scale,** both **spatially** by understanding our **local, national and global** geography and **temporally** by analysing how places have changed over time.

Central to the curriculum is the **application** of this knowledge to answer complex questions developing skills of **critical thinking, analysis and evaluation**. Furthermore, students will develop geographical skills, gaining confidence **in interpreting information** from maps, graphs, data and photographs. In teaching students to think like geographers, our curriculum equips students with the skills to ask **geographical questions** and be critical of what they see.

Through study of geographical **concepts** and **issue-based** geography, students can view places **synoptically** to understand why places and people exist as they do. We have prioritised this powerful geography as it gives students the gift of being able to **critically view** the world and, through their knowledge of human and physical geography, explain the **processes** that have shaped and are continuing to shape the planet. In doing this, Clevedon geographers understand their roles as **global citizens** and that their **local actions**, and those of other people, can have **global effects**.

Above all, geography at Clevedon School focuses on the students; from those who will gain knowledge, skills and confidence in understanding the processes of our world to those who will achieve geography excellence and pursue a university course or career in geography. We aim to inspire young people to be inquisitive, ask questions, seek answers and foster a passion for exploring and understanding our world that lasts a lifetime.

The Clevedon way promotes character, ambition and community in our curriculum:

Our curriculum focuses on our young people becoming global citizens in their local, national and global community. At Clevedon School, we celebrate diversity, and the curriculum therefore explores and celebrates a range of global places, cultures and traditions. This relies on our curriculum drawing on accurate, up to date representations of places and cultures in our ever-changing world and how changing socio-economic circumstances and changes in physical environments impacts on quality of life and well-being. The very nature of geography is that it is constantly evolving, and, for that reason, our curriculum is continuously updated to make certain that students are learning accurate, contemporary content. Students will be developed holistically, encouraged to become the best versions of themselves by emphasising their role in order to better understand how their actions impact on others and the wider environment, and to be empathetic about other people's lives.

Students leave geography in Year 9, Year 11 or Year 13 with a thorough understanding of local, national and global communities. Mindful that our students finish their school study of geography at different points, we ensure that our KS3, KS4 and KS5 curriculums foster this journey to becoming global citizens. Fundamentally students are encouraged to study the interconnected nature of our world and reflect on their role in our every changing planet. We want students to become aspirational in their power to make impact and champion sustainable change. Our subject builds character as a result of engaging in real world issues through debate and justifying their viewpoints. Students are compelled to weigh up various viewpoints and arguments to arrive at their own informed conclusions, always supported with evidence. Students leave geography equipped with the skills of enquiry, investigating fertile questions, mathematical, statistical and graphical skills, that allow them to explore geographical questions and issues far beyond their school lives.

Our curriculum is ambitious for all learners:

Our curriculum is planned with life after school in mind. In geography at Clevedon School, we root learning in real life and real-time, in order that students see the links between school and the world beyond our walls. We prepare them for life after Year 11 and Year 13 by developing their skills in enquiry, questioning, evaluation and develop well-reasoned arguments and justification, both written and oral. The nature of geography is that it is cross-curricular and equips them with life-long skills such as literacy, extended writing, maths, statistics, graphicacy, cartography. Our passion is that as many students as possible continue the study of geography at GCSE and A Level so, to enable them to access these courses, we have made sure that our KS3 curriculum includes the core knowledge and skills that allow them to progress. We ensure pupils from all cultural and social backgrounds are engaged through our study of diverse places and people in our curriculum. Students engage with diverse places, cultures and societies and are compelled to understand various life experiences that are different to their own.

For our Pupil Premium and SEND students, we support them to achieve their potential by, first, getting to know each child, rather than viewing them under a homogenous label. We know what sparks interest in each of our students and what extra tools and support we can give them to aspire to and achieve their potential. We ensure that our curriculum is structured in a way that allows students to become fluent in the knowledge and skills, before then going on to master them. Our curriculum maintains high expectations for all pupils whilst giving them every opportunity to succeed and celebrate their knowledge and skills.

We have exceptionally high expectations of our high prior attainment students and those with high aspirations. Our curriculum conveys our teachers' passion for the subject, and we ensure that our HPAs are really challenged. All lessons feature 'Go Green' extension tasks that push HPAs beyond the fluency of our curriculum and challenge them to engage with rich tasks that demand higher order thinking. We insist that our HPAs go beyond the core knowledge and broaden their schemas with hinterland knowledge, thus allowing them to gain a truly synoptic understanding of our world and achieve brilliance in geography.

Our curriculum is sequenced to enable our students to progress to brilliance:

Learning is an alteration in long-term memory. With this in mind, we structure our curriculum in a way that forces students to retrieve, practice and embed knowledge and skills into their long-term memory. Rather than teaching whole, discreet topics, our curriculum is designed in a way that concepts and processes are interleaved across five years constantly building on previous knowledge and skills. We are mindful however that each year ensures progression so when we re-visit topics in subsequent years, we go into more detail and demand higher order thinking each time. Concepts are introduced gradually so that pupils gain a solid understanding of them before moving on. They are then built on as the curriculum progresses and continually linked back to so that students develop the knowledge and understanding to apply them in a variety of contexts. This approach allows pupils to see the synoptic links between different elements of the curriculum and ensures the concepts are regularly revisited without pupils experiencing cognitive overload. We incorporate spaced practice and retrieval such as 'Do Now' starters, high frequency low stakes quizzing, knowledge and skills retrieval menus and exam questions on previous, older content. We are explicit in our curriculum about how new learning links to previous learning and thus allow students to unlock and access schemas, making new learning 'stickier'.

Our curriculum is a 7-year backwards planned curriculum in order to equip students with the core knowledge and skills to study geography for many years. The concepts that underpin our curriculum are fundamental to a student studying geography to degree level and beyond. We interleave our curriculum topics around several key geographical themes: place, space, scale, interdependence, physical and human processes, environmental impact, sustainable development, cultural awareness and diversity. By doing this we ensure we return to our substantive concepts regularly to build students mastery and expertise in geography. For example, we first visit environmental impact and sustainable development in Year 7 weather and climate, this knowledge is retrieved and developed in Year 8 through study of the Sustainable Development Goals, the impact of climate change on extreme environments and the changing face of Africa. In Year 9, this understanding is extended by asking students what makes some places riskier than others, investigating the impact of globalisation on lower-income countries and people and, finally, when we sum up three years of geographical study by asking "what of the future?". For those that continue in GCSE, this substantive knowledge is requisite but also challenged in their study of hazards, development dynamics and urbanisation and then put to the test when exploring an issue focused on the interdependence of people and the environment.

Our KS3 curriculum is enquiry driven with each topic titled with an enquiry question and each lesson titled with a fertile question to spark the imagination. Time constraints mean that we cannot study all the topics in our KS3 curriculum that we would with unlimited time, so we have prioritised the most fundamental, most relevant and, crucially, the topics we feel are **most useful** for our students in understanding our world whilst at school and, importantly, in their adult lives. The

duration of our topics in Year 7 and 8 are, on average, six hundred minutes (plus homework). We have planned topics of this duration to allow the depth of study in geographical topics, without sacrificing the breadth required to understand local and global geographical issues. Our experience of Year 7 students is that they do not arrive with the crucial KS1 and KS2 geographical concepts and skills embedded in their long-term memories so a key tenet of our KS3 curriculum is to force recall and, where necessary, re-teach this knowledge to ensure they are embedded in long-term memory along with the new knowledge and skills to allow progression. In Year 9 we embrace double the teaching time and so spend on average, 1000 minutes (plus homework) on 4 enquiry questions focusing on geographical issues that both impact our students' lives and the lives of others, both now and in the future.