

Geography curriculum at Brownhills Ormiston Academy



The departments vision

The Geography department aims to motivate and involve students in world issues both in their immediate vicinity and globally. Through our broad, challenging and knowledge rich curriculum we foster a spirit of enquiry and continual improvement, developing geographical skills to solve real-world problems. Geographers are charged with the task of viewing the world through two lenses: one being geophysical—studying physical landscape of our angry earth and the other being socio-economic— learning about the importance of society and understanding how economic change can shape our lives. Our curriculum supports reading, literacy, and numeracy skills, making links across the curriculum between subjects to bring our learners to academic excellence and ensure students have transferable skills.

Sequencing of lessons

We sequence KS3 lessons to develop mastery of our key themes in geography: resources, resilience, development, globalisation, inequality, systems, sustainability, risk and fieldwork/ skills. In year 7, student will begin studying geographical skills and local Geography. They complete onsite fieldwork in their first half term, exploring the school site and the environmental quality. Students will then expand their geography to a larger scale, looking at how countries have become 'superpowers' over time, the continent of Africa and a unit taught through the 'Almighty dollar' book by Dharashini David, following the journey of a single dollar to show students how global economics really works.

Year 8 topics of study focuses on the challenges to our world, including our angry earth, and a specific investigation into breaking down geographical misconceptions through 'Factfulness', a book by Hans Rosling.

Students in year 9 study the global issue of climate change and sustainable development. They will also study 'Prisoners of Geography' by Tim Marshall: where students focus on cultural capital, the media, the Middle East, and current topical issues. This also allows students to focus on British Values, to consider potential solutions to conflict. Through this unit we aim to promote learners who are thoughtful, caring, and respectful of other communities.

When students enter KS4 they commence their GCSE course of study. Units are separated into physical, human, and geographical skills/fieldwork studies. The physical geography units include natural hazards, rivers, coasts, and the living world. The human geography units consist of urban challenges, our changing economic world and resource management. Students also complete two fieldwork studies, have a clear focus on geographical skills and complete a decision-making exercise.

Assessment

Students in Geography receive regular formative assessments, practicing recall and applying knowledge in different contexts to extend the breadth and depth of their understanding. This allows learners the opportunity to address misconceptions and embed their learning. Peer and self-assessments are built into the learning journey and schemes of learning to address misconceptions and to ensure students are able to progress. To improve oracy in geography we complete midpoint oral assessments, where students verbalise their knowledge and apply it to assessment questions.

At the end of each unit or topic covered, students will sit a formal summative assessment, focusing on their ability to recall and apply knowledge to geographical questions. After each assessment, students complete a 'response to marking' section, ensuring students can evaluate their own strengths and areas for improvement.