“An understanding of the natural world and what’s in it is a source of not only great curiosity, but great fulfilment”

David Attenborough

Humanities at Noel-Baker

The Humanities Faculty at Noel Baker Academy is committed in ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in History, Geography and RE, through experiencing expert knowledge rich teaching, which engages and motivates them to work hard and succeed. Along with the knowledge and understanding students develop through the various subject areas and wide basis of topics covered therein, they will acquire essential expertise, which will be invaluable in preparing them for adulthood.

Geography at Noel-Baker

We live in a world of amazing beauty, infinite complexity and rigorous challenge. Geography is the subject which opens the door to this dynamic world and prepares each one of us for the role of a global citizen in the 21st century. Through studying geography, people of all ages begin to appreciate how places and landscapes are formed, how people and environments interact, what consequences arise from our everyday decisions, and what a diverse range of cultures and societies exist and interconnect. Geography is a subject which builds on young people’s own experiences, helping them to formulate questions, develop their intellectual skills and find answers to issues affecting their lives. It introduces them to distinctive investigative tools such as maps, fieldwork and the use of powerful communication technologies. It opens their eyes to the beauty and wonder around them and acts as a source of inspiration and creativity. More than this, it ensures that they appreciate the complexity of attitudes and values which shape the way we use and misuse the environment. Through Geography, people learn to value and care for the planet and all its inhabitants.

Year 7 Geography

Unit 1: Plate Tectonics
Students will begin their journey in Geography at Noel-Baker, through exploring the fascinating tectonic processes which shape our world. Through analysing real-world case studies such as the Fuego Volcano in Guatemala and the Japanese Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011, students will gain a greater understanding of the causes and impacts of a range of tectonic hazards. This topic will build on the students existing knowledge around plate tectonics they will have gained as part of the Key Stage 2 Geography curriculum.

Unit 2: People, Cities and Wealth
This topic will introduce many key themes around Human Geography such as population density, urbanisation and development, which will provide students with invaluable knowledge that will support their future studies within themes around Human Geography. This unit will focus on a diverse range of cities including Moscow and Shanghai, as students will see how different cities face different challenges and opportunities.

Unit 3: Weather, Climate and Ice
Within this unit, students will discover the answers to questions such as why does the UK have wild weather? They will also investigate how and why the climate has changed in the past and how humans are causing the unprecedented climate change we are experiencing today. We will also introduce the important role that glaciers have played in shaping the earth. Students will also be
exposed to various forms of geographical data and will learn how to interrogate and interpret data such as historical climate records.

Year 8 Geography

Unit 1: Tropical Rainforests
Having gained an insight into the themes of climate and weather in Year 7 (Unit 3), students will further explore the processes which dictate the world’s climate. They will see how the climate can influence the environments around the world, and lead to the formation of unique and wondrous biomes. We will explore the Tropical Rainforest, placing a microscope over each layer to see how the vast array of plants and animals have adapted and specialised to thrive in this distinct environment, plus the important role that soil plays within an ecosystem. Pupils will also begin to identify how interactions between the human and physical world can create both threats and opportunities, as they investigate the threats facing the rainforests.

Unit 2: The Development Gap
Building on the knowledge students will have gained around economic and social development in Year 7 (Unit 2), students will look at why some countries are wealthier and more developed than others. Through the analysis of a range of contrasting case studies, students will gain a greater understanding of controversial issues such as gender inequality, colonialism and see how political factors can influence the development of countries. Throughout this topic students will travel the world from the classroom as they will gain a greater insight into what life is like in many different places.

Unit 3: Fieldwork
As Geographers, before we make sense of the world around us, we must find out what is happening. This unit will introduce students to the importance of fieldwork where they will learn valuable skills that will extend far beyond the Geography classroom. Students will experience collecting, analysing and presenting their own qualitative and quantitative data whilst completing their own fieldwork project. This unit will also develop the mathematical skills as students will be working with a wide range of data.

Year 9 Geography

Unit 1: Rivers and Floods
Rivers play an important role in shaping the physical landscape of areas, as well as influencing people’s lives. Throughout this topic, we will take a journey from the source to the mouth of a river, exploring the different beautiful landforms it creates along the way. Students will appreciate how rivers can both benefit and threaten populations, through investigating a wide range of case studies. Looking at the case studies of the York and Kerala floods will enable students to identify solutions to the problems caused by devastating floods.

Unit 2: Renewable and Non-Renewable Resources
Students will examine a variety of different energy resources, exploring the benefits and drawbacks to each. Through investigating geographical data, we will identify who the biggest consumers and producers are and what this means for the future security of different nations. Students will get to have their say on controversial issues such as fracking and nuclear energy, after analysing all of the facts.
Unit 3: Coasts and Climate Change
Having introduced the issue of climate change in Year 7 (Unit 3), we will take a closer look at this controversial issue further and the potential impacts it can have on coastal areas. The aim of this module is to explore coasts as dynamic and changing systems. It will examine different types of coasts both in terms of their landforms and their uses and provide a framework within which students can explore different coastal features and processes.

Key Stage 4 Geography
Pupils will sit AQA GCSE Geography at the end of Year 11. The GCSE course enables pupils to build on the knowledge they have gained from Key Stage 3 and 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.

Students will sit 3 written exam papers at the end of Year 11, each covering different aspects of Geography.

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (1 hour 30 minute written exam).
This unit is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places and at a range of scales. The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments, and the need for management strategies governed by sustainability and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction with the Earth and the atmosphere.

Paper 1 consists of
- Section A: The Challenge of Natural Hazards (Haiti/L’Aquila earthquakes, hurricane Katrina and global warming).
- Section B: The Living World (Sahara and Great Western hot deserts and The Amazon tropical rainforest).
- Section C: Physical Landscapes in the UK (Holderness coast and Medmerry and the River Tees/Jubilee River).

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (1 hour 30 minute written exam)
This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a variety of places and at a range of scales and must include places in various states of development, such as higher income countries (HICs), lower income countries (LICs) and newly emerging economies (NEEs). The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments.

Paper 2 consists of
- Section B: The changing economic world (Nigeria, UK and Jamaica)
Section C: The challenge of Resource Management (Food and resources in the UK).

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1 hour 15 minute written exam)

Section A: Issue evaluation (pre – release on an unspecified topic which changes each year, released 6 weeks before the exam).

Section B: Fieldwork (Derby Roundhouse regeneration success and coastal management effectiveness in Hornsea, Holderness).

The Geographical applications unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course of study. It is an opportunity for students to show their breadth of understanding and an evaluative appreciation of the interrelationships between different aspects of geographical study.

The issue section contributes a critical thinking and problem-solving element to the assessment structure. The assessment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources. The issue(s) will arise from any aspect of the compulsory sections of the subject content but may extend beyond it through the use of resources in relation to specific unseen contexts. Students develop knowledge and understanding of physical geography themes in unit 3.1 and human geography themes in unit 3.2.

This section is synoptic and the assessment will require students to use their learning of more than one of the themes in units 3.1 and 3.2 so that they can analyse a geographical issue at a range of scales, consider and select a possible option in relation to the issue(s) and justify their decision. A resource booklet will be available twelve weeks before the date of the exam so that students have the opportunity to work through the resources, enabling them to become familiar with the material. Students will not be allowed to take the original resource booklet into the examination room but will be issued with a clean copy in the exam. Sources could include maps at different scales, diagrams, graphs, statistics, photographs, satellite images, sketches, extracts from published materials, and quotes from different interest groups.

Assessment will consist of a series of questions related to a contemporary geographical issue(s), leading to a more extended piece of writing which will involve an evaluative judgement. Students will apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate the information and issue(s) in the pre-release resources booklet and the question paper. They will also use geographical skills to set the issue(s) in context and to examine conflicting viewpoints about the issue(s).

Students will develop a critical perspective on the issue(s) studied, consider the points of view of the stakeholders involved, make an appraisal of the advantages and disadvantages, and evaluate the alternatives. The exam will also require students to consider physical and human interrelationships and to make reasoned justifications for proposed solutions in terms of their likely impact on both people and the physical environment.

In Fieldwork Students need to undertake two geographical enquiries, each of which must include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. There should be a clear link between the subject content and geographical enquiries, and the enquiries can be based on any part of the content addressed in units 3.1 and 3.2.

For this exam students will have to identify the titles of their individual enquiries. Students will be expected to: 1 apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate information
and issues related to geographical enquiry 2 select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings in relation to geographical enquiry.

**Geography Enrichment Activities**

The Geography department this year is striving to increase enrichment and co-curricular activities through the Duke of Edinburgh awards, Eco schools and increasing fieldwork opportunities. GCSE students will travel to the Holderness coastline in East Yorkshire and undertake coastal fieldwork. They will also look at the regeneration of Derby city centre. At KS3 there is a range of fieldwork opportunities around the school site and around the local community during the summer term.

**Further studies and career progression**

Studying Geography opens up a wide range of careers. As a degree subject, Geography is highly respected by employers. Geography graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment, pursuing a wide range of career paths. It’s often said that there is no such thing as a Geography job; rather there are multiple careers that geographers do. There are a broad range of careers open to a Geography graduate. You could seek work in the private or public sector or in a non-governmental organisation or charity, specialising in an area connected to housing, property, land management, the environment or international development. Alternatively, you could train to become a teacher, take a law conversion course, or apply for the Civil Service Fast Stream or NHS graduate scheme.