

# ST RICHARD'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE



## Geography Department Information Booklet



Welcome to the Geography Department at St Richard's Catholic College.

We work in a department where we hope to inspire the next generation of geographers. We hope that the lessons that we teach stimulate an interest in and a sense of wonder about the world and....

- help young people make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world
- explain where places are, how places and landscapes are formed, how people and their environment interact, and how a diverse range of economies, societies and environments are interconnected ....
- build on pupils' own experiences to investigate all scales, from the personal to the global.
- encourage questioning, investigation and critical thinking about issues affecting the world and people's lives, now and in the future.
- provide hands on experiences and out of classroom opportunities regularly to bring the subject to life.
- inspire pupils to become global citizens by exploring their own place in the world, their values and their responsibilities to other people, to the environment and to the sustainability of the planet.

We do this through:

- Strapping crampons on to our boots and going for a guided walk on the Golheimajobull Glacier, Iceland made of ice over 1000 metres deep. The view from there, of one of Iceland's greatest wildernesses, was magnificent. Bubbling mud, steaming and hissing soil and the Strubbur Geyser are all natural features that many of us will remember for years to come. Pupils in Year 10 and 11 got soaked through by the water from the geyser falling from a height of 40 metres. They won't forget it in a hurry!
- Our annual residential trip to the Isle of Wight with Year 9/10 pupils which is now in its fourth successful year. Pupils learn about geology, coastal management, urban change as well as having the chance to team build using the PGL facilities. It's a great way to start their GCSE course.



- Visiting our local shores to examine the landforms and features of the coastline and assess whether they are the result of coastal processes as well as review its management. Talking to visitors, residents and the National Trust gives our pupils at both KS3 and KS4 a real appreciation of what is happening on their doorstep.



- We run Geography Awareness Weeks which promote a greater appreciation amongst young people of how we encounter geography in our everyday lives. Activities vary from those with form tutors to quizzes organised at lunchtime. It is great to see all year groups as well as staff participating and having fun with geography.
- We support an indigenous tribe in Kenya and help pupils learn first hand about sustainable development and the importance of fairtrade, as well as their role in challenging uneven economic development.
- We support any opportunity to develop pupils' geographical awareness, entering competitions, running trips and gaining awards for our efforts.



It's a busy department with lots of opportunities to bring geography to life and to see its relevance on everyday lives.

*"I really enjoyed this trip. It was very educational. I learnt loads for my GCSE. It's been such an amazing time and I made loads of new friends."*

*"After the long days, we had free time and football which was great. We finished the great day with hot chocolate and cookies. I could happily have stayed for a week."*

*"I really enjoyed this trip to Isle of Wight. We got to climb hills and see some amazing sights. I even found a 300 million year old trilobite fossil!"*



## **A Brief Introduction to the Department**

The current Geography Department at St Richard's consists of specialists who teach Geography at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

### **Department Staff**

- Mrs P Hoyle Assistant Principal, Subject Leader for Geography
- Mrs J Massey Geography teacher
- Mrs C Akraasi Geography teacher
- Mrs N Campbell, Teaching Assistant for History and Geography

### **The Curriculum**

#### **Key Stage 3**

Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups in Years 7-9. In Year 7 there is also a nurture group for pupils with additional needs to help ease their transition into college life. The curriculum follows the National Curriculum for Geography and pupils are taught for half the year before moving to their History specialist teacher for the rest of the academic year. The Geography curriculum is taught in the following way:

Year 7: 3 x 50 minutes each week } for half the  
Year 8: 3 x 50 minutes each week } academic year  
Year 9: 2 x 50 minutes each week

In term 4 of Year 9, pupils begin their chosen Humanities GCSE subject (Geography or History).

#### **Course Outline**

<b>YEAR 7</b>	<b>YEAR 8</b>	<b>YEAR 9</b>
Our Local Region	Understanding our Coastline	Asia
Kenya	Brazil	Glaciation
Rivers	World Inequality	Tectonic Hazards

#### **Additional Stand-Alone Lessons**

The department also ensures current issues and events are marked through additional stand-alone lessons. These include:

One World Day  
Geography Awareness Week

#### **Key Stage 4**

In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to be taught in mixed ability classes and pupils with additional needs are supported by our TA and the class teacher. All pupils choose to study either Geography or History at GCSE level.

Years 10 and 11: 3 x 50 minutes each week

## **Geography: AQA Specification A**

Course content

### **Unit 1: Living with the Physical Environment**

The challenge of natural hazards

Physical landscapes in the UK

The living world

Geographical skills

Externally examined in June Year 11

Worth 35% of the GCSE - Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

### **Unit 2: Challenges in the Human Environment**

Urban issues and challenges

The changing economic world

The challenge of resource management

Geographical skills

Externally examined in June Year 11

Worth 35% of the GCSE - Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

### **Unit 3: Geographical applications**

Understanding issues from pre-released materials

Fieldwork

Geographical skills

30% of the total marks - Duration: 1 hour

## **Assessment Framework for GCSE**

Pupils are assessed regularly within each topic area using a mixture of class and homework exercises. Formal assessments are sat for each unit and pupils are expected to achieve within one grade of their target. Intervention is put into place as necessary to ensure that progress is made in all areas. This is run after school and at lunch-time on a weekly basis and parents are kept fully informed.

## **BTEC Technical Award in Travel and Tourism**

The department is currently exploring the possibility of delivering this Award in addition to GCSE from September 2019. This will be determined by pupil take up.

## **Target Grades**

At Key Stage 3, pupils are set target grades that reflect the flight path in line with school policy. Pupils are expected to make at least one level of progress each year.

At GCSE, pupils are set target grades that reflect the GCSE criteria. Work is graded 1 - 9, relating to GCSE grades and past paper questions are marked according to exam board mark schemes. Pupils are entered for the new linear AQA exam.

## **Organisation of Pupils' Classwork and Homework**

All pupils are provided with an exercise book which is covered with a protective plastic cover. All classwork is expected to be completed in the exercise book and should be brought to every lesson. Homework is set on a weekly basis and aims to build on classroom learning through a variety of additional tasks. Increasingly, both class and homework tasks can be found on the school's website and Edulink to support those who have missed lessons or are falling behind. All lessons are planned by the department

and constantly reviewed and improved, in line with National Curriculum and exam board changes. We aim to ensure that we cater for all learning styles and abilities through our differentiated and creative lesson planning.

### **Key Stage 3 and 4 Marking Policy**

Every pupil book is marked at least twice a term, in line with school policy. At Key Stage 3, books are marked using a flight path in line with the school's policy. This provides pupils with an understanding of their progress in relation to their target levels which are set each year. At GCSE, books are marked according to GCSE examination criteria. This provides all pupils with an understanding of their progress in relation to their GCSE target grades which are set each year.

Alongside this, class and homework is marked using a combination of positive and developmental comments.

#### **WWW:**

What Went Well – this is a positive comment about how well the work was completed.

#### **EBI:**

Even Better If – this is a developmental comment aimed at improving an area of the pupil's progress.

### **Peer/Self-Assessment**

Pupils are expected to complete both peer and self-assessments termly with the aim of increasing pupils' understanding of how to make progression. At Key Stage 3, these assessments are made in relation to the levelled assessment grids in their books alongside specific level requirements of the assessed task. At GCSE, these assessments are largely made based on specific examination mark schemes that link directly to the course.

### **GCSE Mock Examinations and end of unit assessments**

Summative assessments are marked in accordance with the mark scheme. There is no requirement for feedback to be written by staff; however, it is advised that identified areas in marking are used to set developmental targets in the pupils' learning. Pupils need to complete a self-evaluation of their assessment and set their own targets to ensure that they progress towards their target grade. The turnaround time for the marking of assessments is 2 working weeks. Mock examination results will not be handed out in advance of the pre-agreed departmental release date.

### **Rewards and Sanctions**

Rewards and sanctions within the department follow those used across the college. We also make use of motivational stickers, postcards home and certificates in all year groups.

## **Department Development**

Formal department meetings happen twice termly according to the school calendar and include the moderation of pupil work, and provide a chance to share concerns and develop teaching and learning resources.

## **Resources**

All courses are backed by a variety of video, GIS, textbook and fieldwork resources. We regularly use laptops for independent learning. We regularly review resources and improve quality as required. The department uses a central set of lesson materials and resources which support consistency in teaching and learning. At GCSE, pupils are given the opportunity to purchase key revision guides and text books and exam paper booklets are widely available at all times.

## **Field Trips**

The Geography department firmly believes that the best form of education is through personal experience. Therefore we offer a variety of residential fieldwork in Key Stage 3 and 4 as well as opportunities to leave the classroom both physically and virtually.

## **Geography**

### **Local Fieldwork**

In order to aid pupils understanding of geography, wherever possible we undergo local fieldwork.

Both Key Stages take part in fieldwork that will lead into class based activities. In Key Stage 3, pupils visit Galley Hill beach, Bexhill CBD, as well as using the school environment as part of our in-class investigations and providing the opportunity to develop their independent working skills.

In Key Stage 4, pupils visit Eastbourne as we examine the techniques that can be used in fieldwork data collection for the exam. This leads into a detailed case study that shows the impact of management on a local beach as well as the urban environment.



### **Isle of Wight**

This long weekend residential provides pupils with the opportunity to experience a variety of coastal features and management as well as urban case studies that are featured in the GCSE syllabus. Pupils get to witness first-hand the coastal systems' management. They visit The Needles, Freshwater Bay and Ventnor and look at two contrasting urban areas.

## Iceland

Pupils at KS4 get the opportunity to travel overseas bi-annually. As pupils study Ice on the Land, the restless earth and tourism in Year 10, Iceland provides pupils with the unique opportunity to look at how the 3 areas are interlinked in an environment unlike any they have experienced. From walking on a glacier to standing at the foot of a volcano, or between 2 tectonic plates. Iceland has scenery and culture that is formed through fire and ice that is explosive.



## GCSE Results

Results for the Geography Department can be seen below.

### 2014/2015

Geography 65% A\*-C

### 2015/2016

Geography 77% A\*-C

### 2016/2017

Geography 88% A\*-C **P8: 1.07 A8: 56.11**

### 2017/2018

Geography 82.5% 4-9 67% 5-9

In 2017 we were in the top 2% of all humanities departments in the country (according to Ofsted).

Results are on an upward trend with our target focused on 100% 4-9 grades, 90% 5-9 grades.

## Geography Department Tweets

Keep up to date with all the latest Geography news with [@StRichardsGeog](https://twitter.com/StRichardsGeog) on Twitter!

