



Geography

Head of Department: M Butcher (m.butcher@lsf.org)

Exam Board: Cambridge IGCSE (0976)

Pupils studying Geography for IGCSE will follow the Cambridge IGCSE Specification. This specification highlights the critical importance of Geography in understanding the world and for stimulating an interest in places, whilst providing a very solid foundation for the study of Geography at AS and A Level.

The content focuses on current issues, such as climate change, globalisation, economic progress, urban regeneration and management of world resources, whilst also providing an insight into the processes that shape our planet.

A main focus of the course is to develop an understanding of physical and human processes and factors that produce diverse and dynamic landscapes as they change over time, often due to the work of man. This includes the interdependence of physical environments and the interaction between people and the environment, as well as an understanding of the need for sustainable management of both physical and human environments. Pupils will learn to appreciate the differences and similarities between people, places and cultures leading to an improved understanding of societies and economies.

Teaching will make use of varied resources, including maps and visual media, as well as more complex technologies such as GIS (Geographical Information Systems) and remote sensing, to obtain, present and analyse information. Routine lessons and fieldwork will develop essential **transferable skills**: literacy, graphicacy and numeracy, problem-solving, decision making, synthesising ideas, identifying issues and communicating findings. Throughout the course, a strong emphasis is placed upon the development of cartographical and ICT skills, the promotion of independent learning and teamwork.

The course is linear and there is no controlled assessment, but pupils will be involved in fieldwork, the collection of primary data, report writing and analysis based on first-hand data collection. Fieldwork visits are a fundamental element of the course as they are a means of contextualising pupils' learning and contributing to their cognitive development, thus enabling pupils to understand the relationships between geographical factors. Physical and human fieldwork is conducted in the local area through river and urban-based studies, and coupled with optional visits to Norway and Iceland, there are invaluable opportunities available to help develop the full spectrum of geographical skills. There are a range of awards and societies on offer to pupils which help to strengthen their skill set and broaden their understanding of the important role which Geography has to play in everyday life. These include the Young Geographer of the Year Award, the International Global Citizens Award and Eco Club.

Syllabus Content

There are three curriculum themes:

Theme 1: Population and Settlement

- 1.1 - 1.4 Population
- 1.5 - 1.7 Settlement

Theme 2: The Natural Environment

- 2.1 Earthquakes and volcanoes
- 2.2 Rivers
- 2.3 Coasts
- 2.4 Weather
- 2.5 Climate and natural vegetation

Theme 3: Economic development

- 3.1 Development
- 3.2 Food production
- 3.3 Industry
- 3.4 Tourism
- 3.5 Energy
- 3.6 Water
- 3.7 Environmental risks of economic development



Assessment

The course is assessed using the 9-1 grading structure. Three written examinations are taken at the conclusion of the course in Year 11:

Paper 1 - Geographical Themes

The paper tests the pupils' knowledge of the elements contained within the three themes studied, including reference to case study examples. Candidates answer three questions in total, one question selected from a choice of two within each of the three themes. Questions are structured with gradients of difficulty and are resource-based, involving problem-solving and free response writing. Each question is worth 25 marks and the total for the paper is 75 marks (weighted to 100). The paper accounts for 45% of the total marks and is 1-hour 45 minutes in duration.

Paper 2 - Geographical Skills

The paper tests the candidates' skills of application, interpretation and analysis of geographical information. The first section assesses cartographic skills, through the interpretation of a 1:50000 or 1:25000 topographical map. The second section comprises of five short 8-mark questions which assess candidates' ability to complete and interpret data response material in graphical, diagrammatic, photographic and written form. Questions do not require specific information of place. The total for the paper is 60 marks; it accounts for 27.5% of the total marks and is 1-hour 30 minutes in duration.

Paper 4 - Alternative to Coursework

Candidates answer two compulsory questions, completing a series of written tasks based on a topic within any of the three themes. The questions involve an appreciation of a range of techniques used in fieldwork studies. Questions test the methodology of questionnaires, observation, counts, measurement techniques, and may involve developing hypotheses appropriate to specific topics. The processing, presentation and analysis of data will be tested. To prepare the pupils thoroughly for this paper, we conduct a fieldwork day and series of practical tasks that will provide them with a secure grasp of the route to geographical enquiry. The total for the paper is 60 marks. The paper accounts for 27.5% of the total marks and is 1-hour 30 minutes in duration.

A more detailed outline of the specification can be found on the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) website: Cambridge IGCSE Geography (0976)

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-geography-9-1-0976/>

The interdisciplinary nature of the subject and the range of topics studied in IGCSE Geography ensure that there are strong cross-curricular links with other subjects, notably the Sciences. Geography is almost unique in the range of key transferable skills that pupils gain from studying it. This all helps to ensure that Geography pupils are extremely well prepared for a variety of careers, ranging from medicine to law, accountancy, business and engineering. Furthermore, we hope that through studying the subject, pupils will be inspired to become global citizens by evaluating their place in the world and exploring their own values and responsibilities to other people and to the environment.

Geography is a popular subject and it typically attracts a large cohort of pupils. With commitment and hard work, pupils can expect to achieve a very good grade.

