

GRAVESEND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

The Department:

The Geography department has a wealth of experience and is exciting, innovative and forward looking. Geography is a thriving and popular subject at Gravesend Grammar School. The department consists of five subject specialists who teach across all Key Stages with a number of staff in the department having additional responsibilities across the school. We are committed to providing the highest possible standards of teaching and learning for our students in a supportive environment. ICT plays an important role in our teaching and students learning, and we are keen to continue to develop this.

The Curriculum

KS3:

At Key Stage 3 students receive 4 one-hour lessons over a two-week timetable. At Gravesend Grammar School KS3 is a 2 year course, with students picking GCSE options at the end of Year 8. The curriculum is innovative, exciting and challenging. A variety of topics are covered and students participate in a wide range of learning strategies, which we aim to incorporate into our teaching styles. Many fieldwork opportunities exist including a microclimates study around the school site (integrating ICT skills- formulae, conditional formatting, kiosk presentations and linked objects), a trip to Reculver in Year 7 as well as integrating virtual fieldwork opportunities and GIS wherever possible.

Topics covered range from place based studies, to thematic Schemes of Work from New India, China and Brazil to Coasts, Geography of conflict and risky world. The focus at KS3 is to enthuse students with an interest in the world around them and start the integration of core skills to support them moving into GCSE.

KS4:

The uptake of Geography for GCSE is a testament to the popularity of the subject within the school. We follow the new AQA syllabus at GCSE maintaining the emphasis on fieldwork opportunities with trips to the Olympic Park and River Warren (Ashdown Forest) to support the skills paper. The curriculum has been designed to stretch and challenge students and there is a clear and focused assessment process in place, linking the new requirements for the GCSE's. We are keen to continue to develop and improve the resources that have been collaboratively planned and provide engaging and stretching lessons. The use of google classrooms and sharing of video links, newspaper articles and interesting websites make students aware of issues in the world around them and aim to create critical citizens of the future. We have decided on Hot Deserts and Food as our optional Units of Study as well as the core content from this new specification.

KS5:

At A Level, Geography is also a very popular option with at least two classes in both Year 12 & Year 13. Many students continue to study Geography, or Geography related subjects at University level. We have recently adopted the New Edexcel A Level Course with the

teaching of Human and Physical Geography as discreet subjects, with specialist teachers for each part of the course. A Residential field trip is currently taken to the Flatford Mill in Suffolk in order to support students to complete their independent investigation. The increased demand and high level thinking skills that the new Specs focus on have required a shift to develop more independent and critical thinkers and the department has begun to implement a large number of strategies to support this, from Roots and Wings activities, to use of google classrooms to sharing articles of interest. We have picked the Coasts, Tectonics, Globalisation and Regeneration topics for Year 12, with synoptic elements integrated throughout the year both in lessons and as independent tasks. The Independent Investigation will be planned and organised in Term 6 of year 12.

Our Resources:

Resources within the department are very good. We have projectors in all classrooms and all teachers have access to extensive DVD and digitalised visual resources (Geography Department Youtube Channel). We have a large stock of fieldwork equipment for use within lessons and during residential or day trips. All rooms in the school have the latest interactive projector / whiteboard technology that was installed in July 2016. Learning can be supported by bookable devices such as chrome books, laptops and tablets. We also have four ICT suites that can be booked to enhance learning opportunities; all teaching staff receive a laptop for use at school and home. The school make use of Google Classrooms, Google Drive, and collaborative working on google apps (docs, sheets and slides). Schemes of work are available with lessons shared across the department via the google drive, but there is always the opportunity to develop, improve and create new resources across the department, especially in light of the new GCSE and A level specifications.

Professional Development:

As a department we feel that the communication of ideas and good practice is an invaluable way of improving teaching and learning within our subject. New ideas are always welcomed and all members of the department are currently encouraged to continue developing professionally along paths of their choosing, whether through use and integration of GIS, Fieldwork elements or to develop their subject knowledge.

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