Departmental information

Geography

The Geography department consists of a team of three hard working, enthusiastic staff (including the Curriculum Leader) who are committed to the teaching of their subject through modern teaching styles and who have high expectations for all their students. The department has been gaining in popularity among the students over the last few years.

From September 2016 we have been teaching the ‘New’ GCSE AQA Syllabus A and are currently developing schemes of work and resources to aid in the teaching of this syllabus. As a department we have also been developing AfL strategies for teaching and these are now fully embedded in all KS3 and KS4 lessons. All lesson resources are produced by departmental members and are shared in Google Drive for all staff to use.

In Year 7 students study Geography for 1 hour a week and in Year 8 three hours per fortnight. Students who choose to study Geography GCSE do so from Year 9 onwards (Year 9 = 6 hours per fortnight, Years 10 & 11 = 5 hours per fortnight). The Geography rooms all have interactive whiteboards and printers; a department set of 10 Ipads is available for staff to use on a booking system along with sets of school Ipads which can be booked elsewhere. As Geography is a dynamic subject we frequently use technology/ICT in lessons to research current events, such as natural hazards and extreme weather events as well as for the graphing and mapping fieldwork results.

In addition to classroom based learning we offer a range of fieldwork opportunities to students, from using the school’s environment at KS3 to GCSE fieldwork excursions. In the last few years we have run GCSE visits to the Cranedale Centre in North Yorkshire and regularly use Southport/Ainsdale/Formby and Bowness to carry out Physical and Human Geography tasks. This October we are taking a group of 30 students to Sicily which should be an exciting, valuable learning experience for students and staff!

Our department members are committed to the wider development of students, regularly helping out at school events and activities such as the D of E Award. One member of the department has successfully achieved the Green Flag Eco Schools Award for Parklands. Another member of staff has been working with Year 9 Geography Ambassadors to produce a fantastic ‘Hazards’ timeline display.

The department’s results have improved over the last few years and this is something that we strive to improve further in the future. Our results have been consistently in the 70s A\*-C and reflect the learning of the wide ability range of children that we teach.

The department seeks a forward thinking proactive member of staff who will be committed to helping drive the department onwards and upwards. Collaboration and teamwork are a must, as is a good sense of humour.

History

The History department consists of three full-time teachers, two of whom are subject specialists and specialise in early modern and modern History.

Currently, History lessons take place in three classrooms based in the West Wing of the school and one classroom on the South Wing. All rooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards, PCs, printers, Wifi and two have Apple TV. Each classroom is arranged to promote collaborative learning with tables arranged in circles or squares. The department has access to an office, which contains a printer and three computers. The department has a set of 10 iPads, as well as access to the school class sets. There is a real focus on getting the most out of technology in the department, including using the school’s Google Drive.

The History department is proud of its strengths. We firmly believe that all students can achieve and enjoy History. We believe that where pupils enjoy, empathise and truly engage with the subject, attainment will inevitably be high. We are not afraid to challenge students. The new KS3 curriculum has been designed to instill the skills and concepts students need to excel at KS4 and beyond with KS5. The ethos is one of discussion and active learning. Equally though, the department is proud to promote academic thinking and rigour. The department’s teaching focuses on enquiry based learning.

At GCSE we currently follow for Y11 AQA specification B Modern World History, focusing on the Causes of World War One, Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations and Hitler’s Foreign Policy, Hitler’s Germany, the Vietnam War and 1920s Germany. Y8 make their option choices mid way through the year ensuring that Y9 is a foundation year for GCSE using some elements of the old specification and social History. From 2016/2017 pupils will be following the new specification from AQA. This will include Medicine through Time, Elizabethan England, Germany 1890-1945 and War in Asia 1950-1975. We have strong links to the AQA exam board as the Curriculum Leader examines for them.

The department is currently the largest option subject in school. Our take-up consistently reaches in the region of 100 students each year and our results are consistently above national average. 2015 and 2016 were particularly strong years with 86% A\*-C pass rate and 50% of the cohort achieving A\*/A in 2015 and 89% A\*-C and 49% A\*/A in 2016. We feel this reflects the strengths within the department and the consistent development we have made within teaching and learning. Our ethos and vision revolves around collaboration, discussion and questioning, whilst maintaining rigour.

The department runs a very popular educational visit to the First World War Battlefields. This has been running for over 30 years and normally is over-subscribed.

The department seeks a humanities teacher who enjoys History and is willing to rise to high standards set by the department. We desire an individual who will look to become part of a strong, collaborative team. It is essential that the candidate integrates well with people as you will be working between two departments.