

## **Year 7**

Location Knowledge and Places.

Understanding of Physical Geographical Processes.

Understanding of Human Geographical Processes.

Geographical Skills.

Enquiry Skills/ Decision Making, Applying Knowledge.

As students start their Geography journey with us at Blatchington Mill, we aim to provide them with the tools they need in order to progress throughout key stage 3 and beyond as they become global citizens. In Year 7 we are very conscious that our students joining us from primary feeders have a widely differing experience of Geography at Key Stage 2. Some students will have had a basic introduction to some initial geographical techniques & issues, whereas others will have had virtually no exposure at all.

One aspect we are acutely aware of is that students' basic knowledge of the **local area, places of interest, and generally a lack of spatial awareness of their immediate environment** is worth developing. Students joining BMS have foundation level **geographical knowledge of places**, both in the **UK & throughout the world**, and so we try to introduce case studies and locational features wherever possible to increase their understanding.

We aim to give a broad & balanced introduction to Geography – including both human & physical aspects of the subject. We also feel that as Geography is the study of the world around us, we should give students topics which are both relevant to their lives now & in the future. Therefore the 5 topics chosen in Year 7 reflect that ethos – **1) Population, 2) Map Skills, 3) Weather & Climate, 4) Migration, 5) Rivers and Flooding and finally 6) a Fieldwork Project centred around Hove Park.**

### **Autumn Term**

#### **Population**

We begin our geographical journey by discovering '**Population**', introducing students to a variety of graphical & data skills within a familiar context. Specifically, this topic looks at interpretation of some unique graphical information particular to Geography including **population pyramids** and the **demographic transition model**.

With the **world's population growing at 100 million people per year**, we aim to teach students how this can be managed, and look at the **specific demographics of where this is occurring**. We **compare & contrast Low Income Developing Countries (LIDCs) with Advanced Countries (ACs)** and consider the different **causes of population growth and decline**. Students are encouraged to build transferable **skills** to help **analyse news, internet coverage & social media to overcome bias & misconceptions**. These skills are of benefit in life as a whole as much as in geographical study.

Students will develop a broad range of skills through this unit as we introduce them to command words, interpreting images and evaluative skills, as well as being able to apply theory to their first case studies- our students will understand and recognise **why population is falling in countries like Japan, and look at the impacts of this & how this is just as damaging as rapidly rising populations in LIDCs**. Our students will have their first experience of geographical enquiry by **investigating why population change in Japan has led to an increase in crime rates amongst the elderly**. In contrast, we will look at the reasons why a rapidly increasing population brings about issues and the connections with development and wealth.

## Map Skills

Another set of key skills which students need as they progress on their geographical journey are **'Maps Skills'**. This topic gives students a thorough understanding of **map skills** which can be used all the way up to GCSE level & beyond. We start by giving them experiences of understanding and interpreting map symbols before moving onto **4 figure grid references**. Students then progress and expand their understanding by **including far more detailed & complex 6 figure work**, allowing them to analyse their surroundings in greater detail. **We teach students how to measure straight line distances, and progress on to more difficult measuring skills. Measuring height on maps** is taught to an advanced level, including **contouring, layer colouring & spot height** recognition, before requiring students to evaluate the complexities of **contour mapping & interpret contour patterns** relating them to the shape of the land.

One of the underpinning factors throughout KS3 & beyond is the **analysis & interpretation of data**, and we continue to introduce students to a range of **geographical skills** through studying maps, articles, websites and texts. These include specific **graphical skills, image analysis & data analysis**.

Once students are confident at using **map evidence** and **data analysis** we then utilise those skills to encourage them to **plan a journey within their local area**.

By doing this we widen their experience of their local surroundings & teach them to develop a richer understanding of their place and how those places vary through the eyes of a geographer. This then leads students to appreciate the value of locational importance in informing their place's individual **physical & human geographical** characteristics.

## Spring Term

### Weather and Climate

As we hit the wettest and coldest time of the year, we begin the first of our physical geography topics; **'Weather & Climate'**. This is the first of three weather related units in KS3 which follow a logical progression, moving on to 'Extreme Weather' in Year 8 & then 'Climate Change' in Year 9. As well as being an interesting & engaging topic that will affect our students in their future lives, it gives them an insight into the complexities of weather prediction & forecasting, preparing them for outdoor events, planting seeds, and summer BBQ's!

Further units in KS3 look at the increasing concerns and impacts of weather **in the UK** and elsewhere, but the Year 7 unit gives our students a basic understanding of meteorological processes. **We focus on the three main types of rainfall that impact on the UK – convectional, relief & frontal – and how these are affected by air pressure & weather systems.**

We will use professional Met Office equipment to develop **skills in measuring micro climatic patterns** around the school, and help to **interpret & analyse weather patterns**. Students can then relate this back to the previous unit & **reflect on how this can impact urban planning** – especially in areas of high flood risk.

Students go on to differentiate between weather & climate, and use this knowledge to use & **interpret climate graphs** from **around the world**. They can then carry this knowledge and these skills forward to subsequent years, especially when looking at Climate Change in Year 9 – probably the most important topic taught in the department, due to the massive impact it is going to have on our young people.

## Migration

Geography is a synoptic subject, with many geographical themes running concurrently through each topic. As a result, we choose to return to a topic centred around **demographics and population** in the second half of the spring term, to encourage our students to **recap previously taught knowledge and practice applying their understanding to a new element of population studies**.

**Migration** is a topic right at the forefront of political debate, especially with the political uncertainty affecting the UK at the present, and we therefore look at some of the **complex reasons for migration**, and whether those are influenced by desire to move or necessity. We aim for students to show empathy & understand the reasoning behind migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and **focus not only on migrants to the UK**, but also between other countries, with an emphasis on the current situation between **Mexico & the USA**. Students will become competent in identifying both **push and pull factors** which influence peoples' decisions to migrate.

This topic also allows students to look at and address some commonly held misconceptions regarding migration. We address the different types of migrants, identifying **key terms for people who move around the world for a variety of reasons**, so that students can understand that the act of migration is simply a process which many people undertake. We are also careful to address the **current refugee crisis**, equipping the students with the **geographical and emotional intelligence** to empathise with people who move away from their homes involuntarily.

## Summer Term

### Rivers and Flooding

Following the unit on 'Weather and Climate' we introduce students to '**Rivers and Flooding**'. This topic starts by looking at the **teaching of the hydrological cycle & looking at factors that affect the water distribution**.

Students are introduced to **rivers and river systems**, and can build on and expand this knowledge later on in KS4. **They are given a thorough knowledge of the features of a drainage basin & evaluate & analyse** the differences between **river discharge and channel size & features along the rivers' long profile**. **They are taught an understanding of the geomorphological factors that impact upon physical features of the river valley system, and relate this to geological processes**.

Students are encouraged to reflect on the many **complex human** & physical factors that cause flooding, and, building on the **transferable media interpretation skills** developed in the previous unit, research, evaluate & analyse topical floods, both here and abroad. Students are expected to look at how **humans experience & manage flooding** & compare & contrast how this differs according to the level of development of each particular nation. **They build on previous experiences with data to monitor flooding and relate this to case studies in the UK, looking in particular at human influences on flooding and the impact this has had on urban areas prone to flooding**.

### Hove Park- Fieldwork

Finally, we tie all the units together by going back to our local area to look at an introduction to the processes of geographical enquiry by studying the physicality & **human influences** that have shaped '**Hove Park**'. Many students walk through the park on a daily basis, and almost all have visited – but we try to show them the importance of the park within the urbanity of our city, and why such spaces are necessary in our lives.

We do this by introducing students to their first experience of **fieldwork – a vital skill**, not only at KS3 level, but preparing them for the geographical enquiry skills they will need at KS4 & beyond. The **fieldwork helps students develop techniques in data presentation, analytical skills, self – confidence & the ability to form a sustained & logical conclusion.**

Students look at **Hove Park** on many levels. **They look at the history of the park, and why it was protected as a green space at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**, and whether those values are still valid, or even more valid today. They learn about the shifting landscape of the park, and how it was seen as a ‘green lung’ as the city expanded rapidly in the inter-war period. **They then look at the management & use of the park**, and ascertain whether it is sustainable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, before turning their thoughts to the future. They compare the area with **Copenhagen’s** zero carbon ideal, and whether such a future management strategy should be prioritised for the coming years.