

Intention of Geography

Geography at Melton Vale Sixth Form College develops a specialised knowledge, enabling the scientific study of the physical world as well as furthering human geographical understanding of people, their links to place and the environment. Moreover, the study of Geography develops the interests of young adults in the world around them. The concept of long-term sustainable development is woven into the two year programme of study, as is the considered study of other places, people and culture.

Current global changes lead to intelligent discussion and debate about issues such as population increase, climate change, pollution and the increasing demand for water, energy, land and mineral resources. The power of geographical understanding along with considered debate produces real-world solutions and practical decision-makers.

No other subject enables students to analyse the complexity of people-environment interactions at all geographical scales, and appreciate how these underpin understanding of some of the key issues facing the world today. A deepened knowledge and understanding of specialised concepts is prioritised. These include the concepts of causality, systems, equilibrium, feedback, inequality, representation, identity, globalisation, interdependence, mitigation and adaptation, sustainability, risk and resilience. Specifically, an understanding of natural processes such as photosynthesis, respiration and geological sequestration is coupled with an appreciation for the role of human agency in impacting and changing these processes. Hydrocarbon extraction and burning, deforestation and urbanisation are not considered in isolation, but are seen as an integral dynamic part of our relationship with the natural world.

Students are 'synoptic' in their thinking, recognising the inter-connectedness of different human and physical processes. In recognising these links, learners become more effective decision-makers and understand the ways in which values, attitudes and circumstances impact on the way humans approach sustainable management of different landscapes. Substantive examples include the rationale and evaluation of different strategies of coastal intervention and the mitigation and adaptation of risk across tectonic and atmospheric hazards. Throughout, students learning is centred on a wide range of global examples facilitating a fundamental appreciation of geographical location, sense of place and cultural attitudes.

In seeking this detailed understanding of the world, a confidence and competence in selecting, using and evaluating a range of quantitative and qualitative skills and approaches develops and becomes an integral part of

their studies. Nowhere more is this clearer than when students undertake their non-examined assessment (NEA) – a personal investigation of their own design and implementation. Here, students understand the fundamental role of fieldwork as a tool to generate new knowledge about the real world, and become skilled at planning, undertaking and evaluating fieldwork in appropriate situations.

Cultural understanding of distant places and peoples becomes more nuanced through A-Level study. From studying lived experiences in 'Banglatown' in Brick Lane, to using 'insider' poetry about the California Hills, to the cultural importance of river restoration in Seoul, South Korea. MV16 geographers are taken out of their comfort zone and attain a more enriched awareness of place and difference.

The wealth of geographical understanding students develop aids in the quest to become active, responsible citizens – whether it is towards their respect for people or for the natural environment. From analysing and manipulating complex data, to communicating both quantitative and qualitative information to an audience, geographers are always practising key skills. They tackle problems through different perspectives, debate real-world challenges and become practically- focused global citizens.