Geography

At New Line Learning Academy, our intent is to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to become informed, curious, and responsible global citizens. Our Geography curriculum is designed to inspire a fascination with the world and its people, nurture an appreciation of diverse cultures and environments, and develop a strong sense of environmental stewardship. Through engaging and challenging enquiries, we empower students to explore key global issues, understand complex physical and human processes, and consider their own role in shaping a sustainable future.

We deliver the National Curriculum for Geography, which ensures that all pupils:

● Develop a contextual knowledge of globally significant places, both terrestrial and marine, including their distinctive physical and human characteristics and understand how these provide a framework for interpreting global patterns and processes at local, national, and international scales.

● Gain a deep understanding of the processes that shape the physical and human geography of our planet, recognising how these are interconnected and change over time. This is enriched through interdisciplinary links, particularly with science and citizenship.

● Become confident and competent in the geographical skills needed to collect, analyse, and interpret a wide range of data gathered through fieldwork and practical investigations, strengthening their understanding of key geographical concepts.

● Learn to interpret and evaluate a variety of geographical information sources, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS), to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills.

● Effectively communicate geographical information in a range of ways, through maps, data presentation, and extended writing, developing their ability to explain complex ideas clearly and persuasively.

This academic year:

In Year 8 Geography, students deepen their understanding of our complex and interconnected world through a series of thought-provoking enquiries. They begin by exploring Russia's vast and diverse landscapes, uncovering how geography shapes human life and opportunities. Pupils then investigate the dynamic forces that make our planet restless, examining earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis and their impacts on different societies.

Next, they turn to global development, questioning why inequalities exist and what can be done to close the development gap. Students then explore how places change, studying urbanisation, migration, and the challenges and opportunities of growing cities. They continue by examining Africa, developing a nuanced understanding of its physical and human geography, the impacts of development, and future prospects.

Finally, students investigate the powerful role of rivers in shaping landscapes and supporting life,

while considering the importance of sustainable management.

Through these diverse topics, Year 8 Geography empowers students to think critically about global issues, develop empathy for different communities, and understand their own role as responsible global citizens.

Year 8 Geography	
Term One: How does Russia's geography impact it?	
Big Picture	In this enquiry, students investigate Russia as a fascinating and vast country, exploring how its unique geography shapes life, opportunities, and challenges for its people. Students learn that Russia's sheer size, physical landscape, diverse biomes, and harsh climate conditions all play significant roles in its development, identity, and global influence.
Zoom in	Students examine: • the physical landscape of Russia, from its mountains and tundra to expansive plains and forests. • They study Russia's climate zones, including the effects of permafrost and the challenges posed by long, severe winters. • Pupils explore Russia's biomes, learning how they affect biodiversity and resource distribution. • They also look at where people live, population patterns, and why large areas remain sparsely populated. • Special topics include the impacts of the Chernobyl disaster and the role of GIS in investigating vast and complex geographical data.
Pitch it up	This enquiry challenges students to connect physical geography with human life and economic activity. Pupils consider how geographical factors influence Russia's population density, urbanisation patterns, economic development, and global relationships. Students will also analyse Russia as a tourist destination and reflect on the future opportunities and constraints shaped by its geography.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should understand basic concepts of climate zones, biomes, and population distribution from Year 7. Familiarity with general map skills and basic human geography terms will also support learning.
Wider framework next steps	This enquiry builds knowledge that supports global locational awareness, development studies, and further exploration of physical geography processes, including tectonics and biomes.
Curriculum hinterland	Studying Russia introduces students to the concept of continental-scale geography, geopolitical influence, and environmental challenges. It connects to energy resources, trade, and global environmental issues like nuclear accidents and their long-term impacts.

Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Understanding the diversity and challenges of life in different parts of Russia. Moral: Reflecting on the human consequences of environmental disasters like Chernobyl. Spiritual: Developing awe for Russia's dramatic natural landscapes and extreme climates. Cultural: Learning about Russia's cultural heritage and its influence on global culture and politics.

Resources
Read: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2g3d2p/revision/1 Watch: Russia from Above (documentary), BBC Earth Russia features. Do: Explore interactive GIS activities mapping Russia's regions and biomes.
Assessments
Students will create a detailed geographical profile of Russia, including physical and human characteristics, and present an analysis of how geography shapes opportunities and constraints. They will also complete a decision-making exercise on regional development or tourism in Russia.

Term Two: Why is our planet restless?	
Big Picture	In this enquiry, students explore Earth as a dynamic and ever-changing planet. They discover why earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis occur, and how tectonic activity continually reshapes landscapes and affects communities globally.
Zoom in	Pupils examine: • Earth's structure, the theory of plate tectonics, and processes such as continental drift. • They investigate how and why earthquakes and volcanoes occur, and how these hazards impact people differently depending on levels of development (e.g., Haiti vs. Iceland). • Students also explore tsunamis, including a case study on the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and analyse the human and environmental consequences of these powerful natural events.
Pitch it up	Students are encouraged to evaluate how countries can prepare for and respond to tectonic hazards. They consider why some areas are more vulnerable and explore the effectiveness of different responses. Critical thinking activities include designing evacuation plans, creating hazard maps, and debating the best strategies for risk management.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should understand basic Earth processes from science lessons and Year 7 units on physical geography. Map skills and familiarity with continents and oceans will support learning.
Wider framework next steps	This enquiry builds a foundation for studying natural hazards in more depth at GCSE, as well as topics like climate hazards, resource management, and global interdependence.
Curriculum hinterland	Students develop empathy and understanding of human vulnerability to natural events, supporting ethical perspectives and global citizenship. This connects to themes in disaster relief, development, and engineering solutions.
Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Understanding community preparedness and resilience. Moral: Debating fair allocation of aid and resources in disaster responses. Spiritual: Reflecting on the power and unpredictability of nature. Cultural: Learning about cultural practices and beliefs in hazard-prone areas.
Resources	
Read: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zj39q6f Watch: "The Day the Wave Came" (2004 tsunami documentary), National Geographic volcano and earthquake specials. Do: Virtual hazard simulation games and BBC Bitesize hazard quizzes.	

Assessments
Students will produce a hazard case study comparing two locations (LIC and HIC) and create an emergency action plan for a chosen hazard, demonstrating understanding of impacts and responses.

Term Three: What is development?	
Big Picture	This enquiry explores global inequalities and the reasons why some countries are wealthier and healthier than others. Students investigate development indicators, the development gap, and the challenges and solutions to closing this gap.
Zoom in	Students will study • the development indicators that measure quality of life, including GDP, literacy rates, and life expectancy. • They explore why the development gap exists, focusing on historical, political, and environmental factors. • Pupils analyze case studies, such as Kenya, to understand barriers to development. • They also consider the role of multinational companies (MNCs), globalisation, and sustainable development goals (SDGs) in shaping progress.
Pitch it up	Students are encouraged to debate whether aid and trade really help developing countries and to assess the impact of different development strategies. They will investigate whether it is possible to close the development gap and consider their own role as global citizens.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should have a basic understanding of economic and social differences around the world from previous geography or current affairs learning.
Wider framework next steps	The knowledge gained here supports further studies in globalisation, sustainability, population, and resource management at GCSE and beyond.
Curriculum hinterland	This enquiry supports an understanding of fairness, equity, and global responsibility. It connects to discussions about consumption, environmental ethics, and future development challenges.
Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Considering the lives and needs of people in different parts of the world. Moral: Debating the fairness of resource distribution and aid strategies. Spiritual: Reflecting on the values of community and cooperation. Cultural: Understanding cultural diversity and how culture shapes development pathways.
Resources	
Read: https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/ Watch: "Hans Rosling: 200 Countries, 200 Years" documentary. Do: Use online gapminder tools to explore development indicators interactively.	

Assessments
Students will design a presentation evaluating different strategies to close the development gap and propose a personal action plan for promoting global development awareness.

Term Four: How do places change?	
Big Picture	This enquiry helps students understand how human and physical processes shape places over time. Students explore urbanisation, migration, and population dynamics, considering how cities grow and how sustainable planning can shape future living.
Zoom in	Students study: • global population growth, migration trends, and the reasons people move between rural and urban areas. • They explore urbanisation patterns, benefits and challenges of city life, • and investigate strategies to make cities more sustainable. • Case studies include major global cities and local urban areas.
Pitch it up	Students will act as city planners to design their own sustainable city, thinking critically about resource management, social equity, and environmental sustainability. They will consider transport, housing, green spaces, and services.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should understand basic settlement concepts and population distribution patterns from earlier units.
Wider framework next steps	This enquiry sets up future learning on global urban issues, economic development, and environmental sustainability in later key stages.
Curriculum hinterland	Students understand the impact of human actions on the environment and the importance of planning for a sustainable future. This supports ethical thinking and critical analysis skills.
Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Addressing community needs and social equity in city planning. Moral: Evaluating fairness in access to resources and services. Spiritual: Reflecting on the sense of belonging and identity in urban spaces. Cultural: Exploring how migration and globalisation shape urban cultures.
Resources	
Read: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zx72pv4 Watch: "The World's Biggest Cities" (BBC documentary). Do: Interactive urban planning games (e.g., Urban Plan UK).	
Assessments	

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Curriculum Plan
Year 8 Geography

Students will present a model or plan for a sustainable city, justifying their design choices and considering impacts on people and the environment.

Term Five: What are the opportunities and challenges facing Africa?	
Big Picture	In this enquiry, students explore Africa's diverse physical landscapes, cultures, and economies. They investigate development challenges and opportunities, and consider Africa's future in the global context.
Zoom in	Students study: • Africa's physical geography, including deserts, savannahs, and rainforests. • They analyze historical and current development challenges, including colonial legacies, urbanisation, and desertification in the Sahel. • They examine Africa's relationships with global powers, such as China's involvement in development projects, and reflect on the region's future.
Pitch it up	Students are encouraged to challenge stereotypes about Africa, understand its rich diversity, and evaluate the balance between development opportunities and environmental or social costs.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should have a basic understanding of continents and global development inequalities.
Wider framework next steps	This enquiry supports future studies on development, resource management, and geopolitics at GCSE and A-level.
Curriculum hinterland	Students learn to appreciate Africa's complexity and understand the factors shaping its growth and development, supporting empathy and global awareness.
Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Understanding challenges faced by different African communities. Moral: Considering ethical investment and development practices. Spiritual: Appreciating Africa's rich cultural and natural heritage. Cultural: Exploring diverse traditions and contributions to global culture.

Resources
Read: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2n4jxs/revision/1 Watch: BBC Africa documentary series. Do: Explore interactive Africa development maps and resources from RGS.
Assessments

Students will write a report evaluating a development project in Africa and present ideas on how challenges like desertification and urbanisation can be addressed sustainably.

Term Six: How was the world shaped? (Rivers)	
Big Picture	This enquiry focuses on rivers and their vital role in shaping physical landscapes and supporting human life. Students explore river processes, flooding, and river management.
Zoom in	Students learn: • about the water cycle, river courses, and features such as meanders and deltas. They study erosion, deposition, and flooding events, including human causes and consequences. • Students explore river uses, from drinking water and irrigation to hydroelectric power and transport, and evaluate conflicting demands.
Pitch it up	Students act as environmental consultants to propose sustainable river management strategies. They will balance environmental conservation with human needs, applying problem-solving and decision-making skills.
Pre-requisite knowledge	Students should have an introductory understanding of water sources and basic physical geography processes.
Wider framework next steps	This enquiry lays foundations for GCSE topics like coasts, water resources, and natural hazards, as well as future A-level hydrology studies.
Curriculum hinterland	Students understand the powerful role of rivers in shaping land and supporting societies, connecting physical and human geography.
Authentic connections inc. SMSC	Social: Recognising the importance of rivers in sustaining communities. Moral: Debating ethical river use and conservation efforts. Spiritual: Reflecting on the life-giving and transformative power of water. Cultural: Understanding cultural and spiritual significance of rivers worldwide.

Resources
Read: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zs92tfr Watch: BBC "Earth's Great Rivers" series. Do: Explore online river process simulations.
Assessments

New Line Learning Academy
Believe and Achieve

Curriculum Plan
Year 7 Geography

Students will complete a river basin case study and propose a management plan for a river facing multiple pressures, presenting findings to the class.