Curriculum Overview - Thomas Hall 2025/2026

Geography

Calendar markers: HT (before week 9), X-mas (before week 16), HT (before week 22), Easter (before week 28), HT (before week 33)

Year 7

Week Beg.	Unit	Description
1–2	Introductory Unit:	**Developing core geographical concepts:** We look at the 3 strands of geography, how geography in linked to our lives and are introduced to longitude, latitude & co-ordinates.
3–8	Why is our world amazing?	This introductory unit is designed to spark curiosity and wonder about the diversity and complexity of our planet. Students are introduced to the concept of global geography by exploring extraordinary physical and human features of the world — from natural wonders like the Amazon Rainforest and the Himalayas to the cultural, economic, and environmental significance of world regions such as Europe, Asia, and South America. The unit builds key locational knowledge and basic map skills while encouraging students to appreciate the richness of Earth's landscapes and the interconnection between places, people, and environments. It sets the foundation for future geographical study by emphasising the importance of spatial awareness and global citizenship.
9–15	Why are ecosystems so different?	In this unit, students explore the diversity of global ecosystems, focusing on the unique characteristics, climate patterns, flora and fauna, and geographical distribution of ecosystems such as tropical rainforests, deserts, tundra, and grasslands. They investigate the physical and climatic factors that influence where biomes are found and why they differ so dramatically in structure and biodiversity. Through the use of maps, data, and case studies (e.g., the Amazon Rainforest), students gain insight into the interdependence of biotic and abiotic components within ecosystems. They also begin to understand the human impact on ecosystems and the importance of sustainable management in the face of climate change and deforestation.
16–21	Is there a development gap?	This unit introduces students to the concept of global development, inequality, and the varied levels of prosperity around the world. Students explore the causes and consequences of the development gap through a geographical lens, investigating key indicators such as life expectancy, education, income, and access to resources. By comparing countries at different stages of development, learners develop a critical awareness of global disparities and the complex factors influencing them — including historical, environmental, political, and economic influences. Through engaging case studies, students examine real-world examples of countries both overcoming and struggling with development challenges. The unit encourages students to think about the roles of aid, trade, and international cooperation in addressing inequalities.
22–28	How does ice and water shape our landscapes?	In this unit, students explore the powerful role of natural processes — particularly glaciers, rivers, and coastal forces — in shaping the Earth's surface over time. Beginning with an investigation of glaciation, students study how ice has sculpted iconic landscapes through processes such as erosion, transportation, and deposition. This is followed by an exploration of river systems, including key processes (e.g. hydraulic action, abrasion), landforms (e.g. meanders, oxbow lakes), and floodplain features. Finally, the unit examines coastal environments, focusing on how waves shape the coastline through erosion and deposition to create features like headlands, bays, spits, and beaches. Throughout the unit, students apply and consolidate map and GIS skills, interpret OS maps, and use cross-sections and contour lines to understand landform formation and topography.
29–35	How diverse is Africa?	This unit explores Africa's rich physical and human geography while challenging common stereotypes. Students begin by studying the continent's diverse landscapes, biomes, and climate zones, before examining how Africa's colonial past continues to shape its development — with a focus on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They investigate variations in development, population growth, and the drivers of migration to Europe. The unit also introduces natural hazards through African case studies, including tectonic activity in the DRC and extreme weather in Mozambique. It concludes with a look at Botswana as a model of positive development, encouraging reflection on Africa's future.
36–38	Fieldwork Project	An introductory unit exploring fieldwork techniques. This will be a study on the sustainability of Thomas Hall School site - understanding the impact that we have on the environment around us.
39	Enrichment	
40	Fieldwork Project	

Year 8

Week Beg.	Unit	Description
1–2	Reviewing core geographical skills	At the start of Year 8, students revisit key geographical skills to prepare for more advanced topics. They practise interpreting social, economic, and environmental factors, using OS maps, and analysing data through graphs and maps. Core techniques like TEA for data interpretation and PEEL for structuring written responses are refined to build confidence in critical thinking and communication.
3–8	How am I linked to climate change?	In this unit, students explore the science and geography behind climate change, with a focus on understanding how individuals, communities, and countries contribute to and are affected by global warming. They examine the natural and human causes of climate change, the role of greenhouse gases, and the social, economic, and environmental impacts felt across the world — from extreme weather to changing ecosystems. Case studies and simulations help students evaluate the consequences of inaction and explore strategies for mitigation and adaptation. Throughout, students reflect on their own carbon footprints and consider how lifestyle choices and policy decisions influence the global climate.
9–15	How Risky are Natural Hazards?	This unit introduces students to the physical processes behind natural hazards, including earthquakes, volcanoes, tropical storms, and extreme weather events. Students explore the distribution, causes, and impacts of these hazards, as well as the varying levels of risk faced by communities depending on development, location, and preparedness. Through global comparative case studies like Eyjafjallajokull in a HIC and Fuego in a LIC, students analyse how people adapt to and manage hazards, and why the same hazard can have drastically different outcomes in different development level countries around the world. The unit encourages critical thinking about resilience, inequality, and the increasing impact of climate change on hazard frequency and severity.
16–23	Is Asia the most diverse and dynamic continent in the world?	In this unit, students explore the complexity and contrasts within Asia, the world's largest and most populous continent. They begin with a study of the Middle East, examining the region's physical geography, cultural and religious diversity, conflict, and resource distribution. Students then shift focus to South Asia, exploring rapid urbanisation through a case study of Mumbai, one of the world's fastest-growing megacities. Throughout the unit, students consider how economic growth, social change, and environmental challenges shape daily life in contrasting parts of Asia. They also explore how Asia's global influence is growing, while evaluating whether diversity brings opportunity, challenge — or both.
24–30	What is extreme weather?	This unit introduces students to the science and geography behind extreme weather events. Students begin by defining what constitutes "extreme weather" and how it differs from regular atmospheric conditions. They learn how geographers measure and analyse weather data before exploring the causes, formation, and impact of tornadoes and tropical storms. The unit includes an engaging look at the role of storm chasers, helping students understand risk-taking and data collection in the field. Students investigate the structure, development, and effects of tropical storms, leading to a detailed case study of Cyclone Phailin in India. By the end of the unit, students can evaluate the hazards associated with extreme weather, consider how people respond, and reflect on the role of climate and vulnerability in shaping outcomes.
31–38	What's the Problem with Russia's Resources?	This unit explores how Russia's geography, history, and global power are closely tied to its vast natural resources and unique physical landscape. Students begin by developing locational knowledge of Russia's size, population distribution, biomes, and climate, before exploring how its natural wealth has shaped both its past and present. Lessons then move through key historical and geopolitical turning points, including the Russian Revolution, the conflict in Crimea and Ukraine, and Russia's ambitions in the Arctic. Students investigate Russia as a fossil fuel superpower, and assess the environmental consequences of resource exploitation — including case studies on Chernobyl and Salisbury (2018). The unit ends by evaluating Russia's environmental future, its global influence, and the challenges of balancing power, politics, and sustainability.
39	Enrichment	
40	What's the Problem with Russia's Resources?	

Year 9

Week Beg.	Unit	Description
1–7	What makes our Living World work?	In this topic, students explore how life on Earth is connected through natural systems. They begin by studying global biomes like rainforests, deserts, and tundra, and how these large ecosystems are shaped by climate and biodiversity. We then focus on a small-scale UK ecosystem (pond), learning how food chains, food webs, and the balance between living and non-living components keep it functioning. Students consider how changes to one part of an ecosystem can affect the whole. Finally, we study Malaysia's tropical rainforest, examining its biodiversity, threats like deforestation and agriculture, and ways it can be managed sustainably to protect people and the planet.
8–12	Why do people live in the Desert?	In this topic, students explore the features of hot desert environments, focusing on the Thar Desert in South Asia. They learn how the landscape, climate, and wildlife are adapted to extreme conditions. Students then examine how people live and work in the desert, considering the opportunities (like farming, tourism, and energy) alongside the challenges of water scarcity, population growth, and environmental damage. The unit encourages sustainable thinking about how to manage fragile environments responsibly.
13–15	Why do we need to Manage Resources?	In this unit, students explore the importance of food, water, and energy as essential resources for human survival and economic development. They examine how access to these resources affects people's well-being and compare resource availability in the UK with global patterns. The unit encourages students to consider how growing demand, waste, and inequality make sustainable resource management a major challenge for the future.
16–20	Why does Antarctica matter?	This unit explores Antarctica's unique geography and why it matters globally. Students investigate its landscape, climate, and importance for climate regulation, wildlife, and scientific research. They examine animal adaptations, the Antarctic Treaty, and the historical Race to the South Pole, comparing the journeys of Amundsen and Scott.
21–26	What's the future of Energy?	In this part of the unit, students take a closer look at energy — how it is produced, consumed, and distributed. They explore different types of energy (renewable and non-renewable), and how the UK's energy mix is changing in response to environmental pressures, technological advances, and public demand. Students examine the social, economic, and environmental impacts of energy use and consider the challenges of meeting global energy demand sustainably. They evaluate how countries can balance energy security, affordability, and sustainability, and what role individuals and governments play in shaping a cleaner energy future.
27–34	How do Natural Hazards shape our world?	In this unit, students are introduced to the world of natural hazards, focusing on those caused by tectonic activity such as earthquakes and volcanoes. They explore what makes an event a hazard, why some places are more vulnerable than others, and how people are affected differently in high-income and low-income countries (HICs and LICs). Students examine real-world case studies to compare the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tectonic hazards, and evaluate how responses — including emergency aid, planning, and prediction — can reduce risk. The unit encourages students to think critically about why poorer communities are often hit harder, and how hazard management can save lives.
35–38	Why should we protect our Oceans?	This interdisciplinary unit (with Evironmental Science) explores the importance of oceans in supporting life, regulating climate, and sustaining economies. Students investigate marine ecosystems, coral reefs, and animal adaptations, alongside threats like overfishing and plastic pollution. Ethical debates and media analysis, including Blue Planet, help students understand human impact and consider solutions for ocean conservation. We plan to carry out an ocean's based project focusing on Plastic Pollution of our local waterways - culminating in an organised litter pick event.
39	Enrichment	
40	Oceans Unit	

YEAR 10

Week Beg.	Unit	Description
1–6	UK Landscapes - Coasts	Physical Landscapes in the UK – Coasts including Processes, landforms and management techniques with specific examples from the UK.
7–8	Physical Fieldwork	Students will collect, analyse, and evaluate primary and secondary data to draw conclusions about geographical issues and processes. This includes using various data sources like fieldwork data, GIS, and visual/graphical data.
9–16	Weather Hazards & Climate Change	Natural Hazards - weather hazards including an LIC case study and the causes and effects of climate change.
17–21	Urban Issues & Challenges - Rio de Janeiro	Urban Issues and Challenges – The global pattern of urban change, trends in HICs and LICS, factors affecting urbanisation and a case study of a major city in an LIC which illustrates its importance, causes of growth, opportunities and challenges.
22–27	Economic Change - Development Gap	
28–33	UK Landscapes - Rivers	Physical Landscapes in the UK – Rivers, Processes, landforms and management techniques with specific examples from the UK.
34	Revision	
35	Mocks	
36	Mocks	
37–38	Fieldwork & Skills Review	Students review their earlier physical fieldwork by revisiting the enquiry question, methods, and data collected. They focus on interpreting results, identifying key findings, and developing evaluation skills by assessing reliability and drawing valid conclusions. The unit also prepares them to clearly present their fieldwork for the GCSE exam.
39	Y10 Work Experience	
40	Mock Feedback Week	

YEAR 11

Week Beg.	Unit	Description
1–6	UK Landscapes - Coasts	Physical Landscapes in the UK – Coasts including Processes, landforms and management techniques with specific examples from the UK.
7–8	Physical Fieldwork	Students will collect, analyse, and evaluate primary and secondary data to draw conclusions about geographical issues and processes. This includes using various data sources like fieldwork data, GIS, and visual/graphical data.
9–12	November Mock	Disruption due to mock exams
13–16	Economic Change - Nigeria	Changing Economic World – a case study of a NEE to illustrate its importance, changing industrial structure, TNCs and the impacts of development.
17–19	Economic Change - UK Futures	Changing Economic World - Looking at the economic past and futures of the UK
20–21	P2	Focus revision and practice on Paper 2 (Human)
22–23	P1	Focus revision and practice on Paper 1 (Physical)
24–25	P3	Focus revision and practice on Paper 3 (Pre-release & Fieldwork)
26	Revision	Paper 2 focus
27	Revision	Paper 3 focus
28	Pre-release	2026 walk through
29	Revision	Paper 1 focus
30	Revision	Paper 2 focus
31–32	GCSE Exams	
33–34	GCSE Exams	
35–40		