

Geography

Murlough Nature Reserve Field Trip

Last October we went on a Geography field trip to Murlough Nature Reserve. One group went in the morning and the other in the afternoon. After a quick 45-minute bus trip to Murlough, we started out by walking through the sand dunes to the beach where we carried out some tests on the natural landscape. We started off by comparing pebble sizes from the back of the beach to the front of the beach to find out how the tide affects the size and shape of the pebbles.

After the results were in, we carried out research on longshore drift. This involved putting a stick in the water and seeing how far it moved from its original position using the tide. While carrying out the experiment a few of us decided to go further in the water than others and got drenched in the process.

Our final experiment of the day was finding out whether the waves at Murlough beach were constructive or destructive. The majority ended up being constructive; this

was due to short fetch over the Irish Sea and the calm weather we were experiencing.

After this we decided to chill out on the beach, while some of us decided to turn into 'Olympic swimmers' jumping over the waves. The fun eventually ended as we had to go back to the bus and return to school.

Overall, the trip to Murlough was the main highlight of Year 9 and we all enjoyed it in our own way.



Geography

Year 10 Newcastle Trip

Harriett McClelland 10E

On 28th of September Year 10 went on a Geography Trip to Newcastle, County Down. We carried out tourist surveys on the tourist attractions in the area. Having made a list of the main tourist attractions, we decided on an age group that are more likely to use it and give it a rating of 1 -5; one being poor and five being excellent. We also made a tally chart of all types of tourist accommodation including hotels, B&Bs and apartments. Finally, we drew a field sketch of a tourist attraction- our group decided to draw the promenade area.

Once we had completed all our work we engaged in helping the local economy by buying some food and ice cream. The time flew by as we were having lots of fun and it was an amazing time, definitely a 10/10 experience.

The tourist facilities were really good and we decided by the end of our trip that Newcastle is a family friendly town with lots of touristy things to do on a family day out.



Geography

Fieldwork

Katie Maginnis and Connie Lyons



In June 2024, our Year 11 GCSE Geography Class embarked on an exciting fieldwork trip to the Rocky River in the Mourne Mountains.

Due to the large number of students who picked Geography, we had to split the four classes into two groups. Fortunately for the second group, they experienced a dry, clear, crisp day; however, the first group's spirits were dampened by the heavy rain and wind (surely an inevitability when traversing the Rocky River).

The groups headed off at the start of the school day with coats on and wellies in hand. After arriving, the students walked for 45 minutes until they reached site one. The pupils had to collect data on pebble size, river depth, velocity and river width. It suddenly dawned on them that they would in fact have to get in the river! Following the crazy, chaotic yet careful journey down to site three and after many stumbles, trips and falls, the students indulged in their lunch and admired the brilliant, breathtaking and beautiful landscape of the Mourne Mountains. After enjoying the views and food, the groups descended down the remaining three sites, lifting pebble after pebble, taking measurement after measurement and compiling data upon data. After a successful day's work we headed back to school for a well-earned rest.

Overall, the fieldwork trip to the Rocky River was not only educational but also a memorable experience for all, providing hands-on learning opportunities that will undoubtedly benefit expertise in the subject.



Geography

Magilligan Trip

Sarah Hylands

Just a few months into starting AS Geography, both classes trekked to Magilligan to complete the field work for our Unit 3 exam, accompanied by our amazing Geography teachers: Mrs Dreading and Mr Reaney. After a long bus ride, Mrs Dreading's class arrived at Magilligan. We had already heard many tales about the previous day's trip from the other Geography class, who had got to experience this before the rest of us. The fear of thunder and rain hung over us as we prepared for our adventure out to the Umbra sand dunes, where we would put our newly learnt Geography skills for our Unit 3 exam to use.

After a pilot test in the classroom where the equipment was demonstrated to us, we confidently headed out, assured that we knew how to be successful in our fieldwork. While escaping rain, hail, and snow we measured: soil pH, vegetation type and light intensity to name a few. Trudging along, we avoided trip hazards and holes (at least most of us did), putting our risk assessment into action while showing off our fashionable outfits (wellies and raincoats have never looked so good!)

We returned to our rooms and settled in, ready for the famous Magilligan meal. Mountains of chips and pasta bolognaise awaited us downstairs and didn't last long

as a herd of hungry lower sixths tucked in. Our nighttime entertainment followed. Mr McConnell brought out his game show, making us see everyone's dark side as our competitive spirits took over. After lots of laughs and complaints about the point system, we finished the night with Uno and Dobble before everyone went to bed in anticipation of the day of learning to come.

The sun rose and the Banbridge Geographers ate breakfast and made their way to the classroom to go over the fieldwork experiment of the past day. While it was the longest Geography lesson we ever experienced, it was kept entertaining by Mrs Dreading, Mr McConnell and LOTS of snacks. After completing our fieldwork booklets with graphs and spearman's rank we packed up our rooms and headed to the bus for the journey back to Banbridge.

All in all, a huge thank you to the staff at Magilligan, but in particular Mrs Dreading, Mr Reaney and Mr McConnell for helping us in our fieldwork and our AS Geography learning experience.

Overall, the trip to Magilligan was very insightful and enjoyable. We appreciated the experience and the opportunity to escape from the classroom (at least the classrooms in Banbridge).



Geography

Trip to Iceland

Lydia Newbert

Last October, A Level Geography students embarked on a breathtaking trip to Iceland, known for its dramatic landscapes and geothermal wonders.

Day 1: A Warm Welcome in the Land of Fire and Ice

Our adventure began early, with a 6:15 am departure from Banbridge Academy on the 30th of October 2023, setting the tone for a packed itinerary. After a quick flight from Dublin Airport, we landed in Keflavik, greeted by a freezing Icelandic weather. Our first stop: the world-famous *Blue Lagoon*. The mineral-rich geothermal waters were a soothing introduction to Iceland. Floating in the warm, rich blue waters while surrounded by steam was surreal. We got to enjoy the complimentary drink and face mask, making it a perfect start to the trip.

Later, after settling into the Cabin Hotel, we wrapped up the evening with a meal followed by a peaceful walk into Reykjavik. We even got to see the Northern Lights!



Day 2: The Golden Circle Wonders

On Tuesday morning, we set out on the iconic *Golden Circle tour* - one of Iceland's most popular sightseeing routes. Our first stop was *Pingvellir National Park*, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and the birthplace of Iceland's ancient parliament.

Next, we visited the famous Geysir geothermal area, where we watched geysers erupt dramatically launching hot water skyward. The nearby *Gullfoss waterfall*, with its thundering waters cascading into a deep canyon, was a sight none of us will forget.

The day ended with a fascinating visit to the *Hellisheiði geothermal power station*, where we learned about Iceland's innovative use of geothermal energy. We returned to our

hotel for a relaxing evening filled with games, laughter, and fun, thanks to Mr. Reaney and Mr. O'Shaughnessy.

Day 3: Exploring Iceland's South Coast

Wednesday was dedicated to Iceland's stunning South Shore, where we witnessed firsthand the power of its volcanic landscape. Our journey took us over the lava fields around *Hengill Mountain* and through the *Hellisheiði pass*, offering panoramic views of Iceland's rugged terrain and distant, snow-capped mountains like *Hekla* and *Eyjafjallajökull* (try saying that 5 times fast).

The tour included stops at two of Iceland's most impressive waterfalls: Seljalandsfoss, where some brave souls ventured behind the 60-meter cascade, and the mighty Skógafoss, a waterfall that left us all in awe with its sheer power and beauty.

One of the highlights was walking on the famous *Black Sand Beach* in the small village of *Vík*. The stark contrast of the black sand against the crashing waves made it unforgettable!

Our final stop was at the *Mid Atlantic Ridge*, where Iceland was being pulled apart by the geological forces that shape the land. On the way back we had some trouble with the bus, but we were soon (after an hour) back on the road again! The day ended back at the hotel with an evening stroll to pick up some souvenirs, a perfect close to an adventurous day.

Day 4: Farewell, Iceland

The final morning came too soon. At the crack of dawn, we bid farewell to Iceland and its otherworldly landscapes. The early departure from Keflavik Airport marked the end of our unforgettable journey, and by lunchtime, we were back at Banbridge Academy.

A special thanks goes to our teachers, who made this trip possible and ensured it was both educational and immensely fun.

Iceland, you were spectacular – we won't forget you!

