

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Geographical Association

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Secondary KS3 Geography Quality Mark Award Winners announced

In recognition of excellence in teaching and learning in geography

At the beginning of a new school year, and at a time of continuing concern at the health of geography in school, the Geographical Association is delighted to announce that a further twenty schools have been awarded the **Secondary Geography Quality Mark (SGQM)**. The SGQM, sponsored by the Action Plan for Geography and the DCSF, is now in its second year and is rapidly becoming recognised as the national standard for the teaching of geography in schools.

Furthermore, eight schools, two of whom gained the SGQM in 2007, have been awarded the coveted Centre of Excellence status. This 'gold' standard recognises the contribution made by geography departments in the wider community through the provision of training opportunities for teachers from other schools and the regional dissemination of quality approaches to the teaching of geography.

Two schools in Suffolk, Hardwick Middle and Hadleigh High, have a particularly special reason to celebrate. They were both awarded the SGQM, and also achieved Centre of Excellence status. However, the geography curriculum leaders in both schools are connected in another way – as husband and wife! *"We are glad we both achieved the award, it would have been awkward otherwise!"* commented James Woolven upon receiving the award. Vicki, his wife said *"We are very competitive... the Woolven household currently lead a quarter of the (SGQM) Centre's of Excellence!"*

The award winners are:

(* denotes Centre of Excellence*)

Allerton Grange School, Leeds, West Yorkshire

Aylesbury High School, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

Bishop Justus C of E School, Bromley, Kent

*Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Hove, Sussex *

Dover Grammar School for Girls, Dover, Kent

Drayton Manor High School, London

Eggars School, Alton, Hampshire

*The FitzWimarc School, Rayleigh, Essex *

*Hadleigh High School, Ipswich, Suffolk *

*Hardwick Middle School, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk *

Hindley Community High School, Wigan, Lancashire

*King Edward VI Five Ways, Birmingham *

Oldbury Wells School, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

Riddlesdown High School, Purley, Surrey

Sedgehill School, London

Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, Rochester, Kent

*St John Fisher Catholic High School, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire *

*Stopsley High School, Luton, Bedfordshire *

Tendring Technology College, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex

*The High Arcal School, Sedgley, West Midlands *

The Queen Katherine School, Kendal, Cumbria

Thorpe St Andrew School, Norwich, Norfolk

In these schools geography is led by enthusiastic curriculum leaders who are able to inspire their colleagues, and value the important contribution that geography makes to the curriculum throughout the school. Teachers show confidence in developing the subject, use creative approaches to stimulate learning and place a high value on using real life, meaningful issues to promote understanding.

David Lambert Chief Executive of the GA says *"In the early years of the twenty-first century, there is no more relevant subject in the curriculum than geography, helping young people to understand the world and their place in it. The Secondary Geography Quality Mark provides a 'must have' form of professional recognition for geography teams in secondary schools nationally. It is a professional development tool which supports 'living geography' in schools and at the same time helps to prepare the Self Evaluation Form for Ofsted."*

The Secondary Geography Quality Mark award winners will be acknowledged at The GA Annual Conference 16 – 18 April 2009, held at The University of Manchester.

Ends

Note to Editors

For further information contact: Justin Woolliscroft sgqm@geography.org.uk

For further information visit: www.geography.org.uk/sgqm

Summaries of the moderators' comments are available from the school.

Each school that has achieved the Secondary Geography Quality Award is actively working to raise the standards of geography teaching and learning for their pupils. Further information about the award can be accessed at:

The Geographical Association

The Geographical Association (GA) is a subject association with a mission to further the teaching of geography and to communicate the value of learning geography for all. The GA was founded in 1893 and has around 6,000 memberships including teachers in primary and secondary schools and further education, academic geographers, universities and teacher educators and trainers. For more information visit www.geography.org.uk