



Curriculum Statement for Geography Intent, Implementation and Impact

At Laurel Avenue Community Primary we define learning as a change to long term memory. Our aims are to ensure that our pupils experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge, that will support them in later life.

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps and a range of investigative and problem-solving skills both inside and outside the classroom.

As pupils study geography, they encounter different societies and cultures. This helps them to 'think globally', realise how nations rely on each other and can inspire them to think about their own place in the world and their responsibilities to the environment.

Through social interaction and planned practical experiences, children are able to build up an awareness and understanding of firstly their own community followed by the wider national / international environment.

Our curriculum includes 'Threshold Concepts' (the ideas that shape pupils' thinking), taken from Chris Quigley's 'Essentials Curriculum' in each subject to track pupils' learning through the Milestones.

Each Threshold Concept is explored within different contexts so that it has tangibility and meaning. Breadth of contexts ensures that children gain relevant knowledge and can transfer this knowledge.

Our Aims – The Essential Characteristics of our Geography Curriculum

We aim to ensure that all pupils gain:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like.*
- An excellent understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected and how much human and physical environments are interrelated.*
- An extensive base of geographical knowledge and vocabulary.*
- Fluency in complex, geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques.*
- The ability to reach clear conclusions and develop a reasoned argument to explain findings.*
- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity as shown in interpretations and representations of the subject matter.*
- Highly developed and frequently utilised fieldwork and other geographical skills and techniques.*
- A passion for and commitment to the subject, and a real sense of curiosity to find out about the world and the people who live there.*
- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment.*

Curriculum Intent

Our Curriculum is underpinned by our core values and the three drivers. We use both the EYFS framework and the National Curriculum to shape the content and expectations of our curriculum. The Chris Quigley Essentials curriculum is used to help us structure this in each year group and look at progress within each phase. We have structured this so that each year group has:

- a) A clear list of what must be covered.*
- b) The threshold concepts pupils should understand.*
- c) Criteria for progression within the threshold.*
- d) Criteria for the depth of understanding (Basic, Advancing and Deep)*

1. Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.

Our drivers are identified as:

Ambition and Possibilities

- To have a life-long love of learning that inspires them to look to the future*
- To have high expectations of themselves and their future*
- To recognise opportunities beyond the local community*
- To increase knowledge of different career choices*
- To develop self-confidence and a 'have a go' attitude*

Process

- Planning to ensure opportunities to raise children's self-belief and develop a positive attitude towards risk and challenge*
- Focus on ambition, identifying different jobs and possibilities through topics, visits and visitors; role models for success*
- Regular opportunities to work as a team, especially Key Stage 2*

Life Skills and Enterprise

- To develop questioning and research skills, applying to a range of hands-on learning experiences*
- To work effectively as a team to organise themselves and create an end product*
- To work independently and be organised and ready for learning*
- To listen and communicate with others*
- To complete set tasks in a given period and not give up*
- To have excellent attendance*
- To think 'creatively' to solve problems*
- To be equipped for life beyond Primary School*

Process

- Opportunities for learning through each of the 5 learning skills - reflective, relationships, resilient, resourceful and risk taking will be provided*
- Through each topic, children will have opportunities, through a wider range of skills based lessons, to take ownership of their learning and direct it more*
- Wider opportunities for learning beyond the curriculum to equip children with relevant life skills; health and economic well-being, cooking, e-safety*

Encouraged expectation that children attend school and are ready to learn with appropriate equipment and kit and take responsibility to be ready and prepared

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

To experience opportunities that broaden their horizons

To enhance their insight into the community and world by providing meaningful learning opportunities

To celebrate/appreciate diversity and culture at national and international level

To widen general knowledge

To give opportunities to pursue their own lines of enquiry

Process

Using the 'news flash' feature of Espresso and First News newspapers to keep in touch with current issues

Providing opportunities through visits, local exploration and the use of visitors to ask questions and explore the diversity of people, society, culture

Discussing local and global issues and the impact that they have

Asking questions and research historical events in the local and wider communities

2. Cultural capital gives our pupils the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

For example; cultural weeks, field work and educational visits.

3. Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for pupils to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.

4. Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and threshold concepts. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied.

5. Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over, and gradually build understanding of them.

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Investigate places

This concept involves understanding the geographical location of places and their physical and human features.

Investigate patterns

This concept involves understanding the relationships between the physical features of places and the human activity within them, and the appreciation of how the world's natural resources are used and transported.

Communicate geographically

This concept involves understanding geographical representations, vocabulary and techniques.

6. For each of the threshold concepts there are three milestones, each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the threshold concepts, provide a progression model.

7. Knowledge categories in each subject give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts:

Location

Physical Features

Human Features

Diversity

Physical Processes

Human Processes

Techniques

8. Knowledge webs help pupils to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema.

9. Cognitive science tell us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time.

10. Within each milestone, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep. The goal for pupils is to display sustained mastery at the advancing stage of understanding by the end of each milestone and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the deep stage. The time-scale for sustained mastery or greater depth is, therefore, two years of study.

The Diagram below shows a model of our curriculum structure:

Curriculum Map for Years 1 and 2			Curriculum Map for Years 3 and 4			Curriculum Map for Years 5 and 6		
Threshold Concepts								
Milestone 1			Milestone 2			Milestone 3		
B Year 1	A Year 1/2	D Year 2	B Year 3	A Year 3/4	D Year 4	B Year 5	A Year 5/6	D Year 6

11. *As part of our progression model we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who argue for direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery-based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem-based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the reversal effect.*

12. *Also as part of our progression model we use POP tasks (Proof of Progress) which shows our curriculum expectations in each cognitive domain.*

Implementation

13. *Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; three main principles underpin it:*

- *Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.*
- *Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.*
- *Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.*

14. *In addition to the three principles, we also understand that learning is invisible in the short term and that sustained mastery takes time.*

15. *Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema.*

16. *Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content.*

17. *Through the use of 'Know Its' taken from the topic webs, children are given opportunities to periodically revisit knowledge gained within current and previous Milestones and relate it to current learning.*

18. *We use an enquiry based approach to develop both substantive and disciplinary knowledge by allowing students use the same methods as a professional geographer when investigating an aspect of geography.*

Impact

19. *Because learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term.*

20. *We do, however, use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practice. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long run.*

21. *We use comparative judgement in two ways: in the tasks we set (POP) Proof of Progress) tasks, see point 12) and in comparing a pupil's work over time.*

22. *We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations (see point 11).*

Monitoring

The Geography subject lead and class teachers are responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in Geography. The subject is responsible for supporting teaching staff in the teaching of Geography, and for providing a strategic lead. The subject lead completes an annual report where they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicate areas for further improvement. Throughout each academic year, the subject lead will undertake the monitoring of Geography across the school.

Signed:

Chair of Learning, Teaching and Achievement Committee

Signed:

Subject lead

Reviewed: February 2024

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