

Purpose:

Our Trust exists to create transformational educative opportunities in a shared culture of collaboration.

Geography - Conception of Quality

Geography is a 'world discipline' where the natural and social sciences come together. Our knowledge of the world and its people form the bedrock of our own sense of place. Through study we gain a greater appreciation of locations and the physical/human processes that give them meaning and identify. Over time we gain an increasingly complex understanding of where we fit in and what we can contribute.

Contents

- * This document sets out our shared 'conception' of effective geography teaching.
- * It draws upon our collective expertise and is evidence/research informed.
- * It references insights from Ofsted, the DfE, the EEF and other organisations invested in research and 'best bets'.
- * This is not an exhaustive list of factors that can create quality!
- * Our key reference points for statutory requirements are: [The National Curriculum](#), [The Ofsted handbook / research and reports](#) /& [SEND COP](#).

Contact Details

Telephone:
01782 228912

Email:
info@creativelrng.com

The Curriculum - what we want children to learn



Substantive Knowledge:
"Where's where and why what's there"

Key curriculum thoughts:

- ⇒ The geography curriculum should form an overall **progression model** from the early years onwards - topics do not sit in silos - they should combine to form a rich schema about the world and its people.
- ⇒ A '**less is more**' approach can enhance what pupils know, remember and can do in geography - places should be carefully chosen and their position in the progression model clearly justified.
- ⇒ Developing knowledge of **place** is cited by academics as the most important aim of study. The curriculum should guard against outdated/inaccurate representation of places (single stories).
- ⇒ Designing a coherent curriculum for **fieldwork** is a priority - children should gain increasing familiarity with how geographers carry out their work.

Locational knowledge

- ◇ Building locational knowledge is directly linked to place - it helps pupils consider their own identity, where they live and what this means for them and the people they share it with.
- ◇ Locational knowledge also supports an appreciation of scale.
- ◇ Children should gain automaticity in pinpointing continents and oceans, and over time, absolute positioning (e.g. latitude and longitude).

Place knowledge

- ◇ Place brings meaning to locations and processes.
- ◇ Teaching starts with familiarity and increases in scope and scale.
- ◇ Children's understanding of place develops an appreciation of why people form connections with different locations.

Human and Physical Processes

- ◇ Knowledge of human and physical processes can be quite hierarchical. That is to say, it is useful for children to gain an understanding of some aspects of knowledge before others. Many physical processes are driven by atmospheric condition - knowing foundational knowledge relating to the water cycle, can support later learning about biomes.
- ◇ Human and physical processes interact - this shapes and changes landscapes and environments.

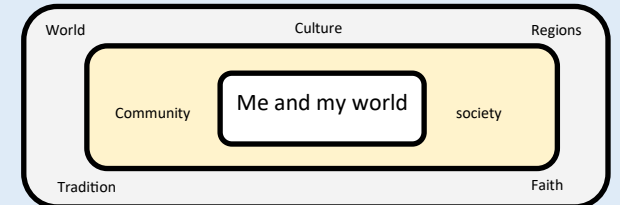
Geographical skills

- ◇ The curriculum builds from basic observation in early years (daily weather) to more complex changes in later study (erosion and people's perceptions of different locations).
- ◇ Children should repeatedly practice their geographical skills to improve fluency over time.

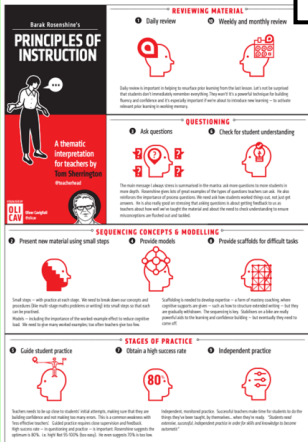
Disciplinary Knowledge:
knowing how geographers create meaning.

- ◇ The exact definition of disciplinary knowledge is not entirely settled. There is no formal consensus about its meaning.
- ◇ That said, it is understood as 'the knowledge of how geographical knowledge is formed, debated and contested - this is akin to second order concepts in history).
- ◇ Disciplinary thinking can be supported by considering how topics might be underpinned by enquiry questions - these questions then deliberately link knowledge and provide space for enquiry to be taught. Teachers can model how geographers collect, present and analyse data to reach conclusions.

Geographical knowledge incrementally builds from EY onwards....



Pedagogy - how we help children to learn



We use Rosenshine's principles of instruction to help guide our approach to teaching (image reproduced here from Tom Sherrington).



Review - 'the most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows' (Ausubel) - this should be the overriding thought as teachers plan for geography. Activating relevant prior learning is crucial. This review should take account of how pupils gain an increasing awareness of location and place as they learn and grow.

Questioning - we need to ask lots of questions in depth and encourage children to increasingly structure their thinking around substantive and disciplinary concepts over time.

Sequencing concepts and modelling - 'memory is the residue of thought' (Willingham) - thinking carefully about what children 'attend to' is the secret to remembering. Well designed activities, that are appropriately sequenced and chunked are important. There should be ample practice at every stage. Clear worked examples (modelling) and structures and supports to manage cognitive load (scaffolds) help children journey from novice to expert.

Proficiency requires Practise - practice through different stages from guided to independent as children build automaticity.

Adaptive teaching - teachers are alert to the 'demands that learning places on memory' and they make changes to their approach accordingly.

Assessment - checking what children have learnt

Effective assessment is based upon a strong knowledge of its purpose and the intended curriculum



Assessment is understood in three ways: 'for', 'of' and 'as'. There is considerable overlap between each approach...

Assessment for learning (formative) involves providing feedback for practitioners and children that is used to improve teaching and learning. It is used in an 'live' way to adapt the curriculum e.g. checking that children are building greater fluency in applying their geographical skills.

Assessment of learning (summative) identifies when specific curriculum goals/end points have been achieved - it is less frequent than AfL and has limitations as it often provides more limited information about children's security with smaller steps e.g. end of key stage tests such as SATs.

Assessment as learning (the testing effect) draws on the cognitive principle that children are likely to remember knowledge that they re-encounter and retrieve from their long term memory e.g. providing planned opportunities for children to re-encounter substantive knowledge and use this in their fieldwork

Assessment discussions should particularly focus on the needs of the **lowest attaining pupils** - are they building a sound knowledge of geography?

Monitoring and Governance



Monitoring:

- ⇒ This COQ is used to evaluate the impact of the teaching of geography.
- ⇒ There should be a clear focus to monitoring which utilises the **pupil book study** approach we are learning as a Trust.
- ⇒ Ideally, a whole school monitoring schedule, aligned to training, should set out the priorities for the year ahead.

Link Governor visits prioritise 3 themes:

1. Discussing the effectiveness of geography with leaders (with reference to this COQ, the local action plan and outcomes).
2. A focus on the security of **substantive and disciplinary knowledge, how these build over time and the rich knowledge children hold.**
3. The quality of staff training - what is the impact on teaching? What do children know? What can they do?

SEND and Inclusion



Every teacher is a teacher of SEND.

- ⇒ Where appropriate and possible, staff should provide pre-teaching and extra practice as children encounter new and/or more complex knowledge
- ⇒ As much as is possible pupils access the whole history curriculum with appropriate adaptations. Refer to our Trust wide **COQ for SEND.**

Principles for securing '**Greater Depth**':

- ⇒ The principles within this COQ result in children acquiring increasing fluency in recall of both substantive and disciplinary content.

Resources, Environment & Culture



The environment services the geography curriculum.

- ⇒ There are dedicated displays that reference and serve to remind children of the substantive and disciplinary content that they are learning.
- ⇒ The acquisition of vocabulary is carefully thought through - the whole curriculum is discussed and understood by staff.
- ⇒ Geographical locations/places and resources are carefully chosen to support children's mastery of the curriculum.
- ⇒ Pupils are supported to select ambitious texts that relate to their studies in geography and support their growing background knowledge.

Subject Myth Busting



Some common myths about geography:

- ⇒ **The curriculum should emphasise (and to some extent become) a vehicle for teaching climate change and sustainability.** The geography curriculum should teach these areas - they form essential knowledge and are critical for our planet. However, there is a wide body of important knowledge to teach pupils - all of this knowledge has great value. We should also ensure that our teaching is politically impartial.
- ⇒ **Fieldwork can be covered through visits to rivers, national parks and residential.** It definitely can, but, fieldwork is a body of work and a progression model in its own right. It can be taught equally effectively in the school grounds as it can in a national park.
- ⇒ **Pupils remember the curriculum through engaging activities.** This is in part true, however, we must first decide the knowledge that we want pupils to remember before deciding the best pedagogy for pupils to remember that knowledge.
- ⇒ **Single stories** - we should be wary of single stories - they can result in stereotypes and misconceptions that entirely overlook the richness and complexity of areas of the world.

Early Years - Firm Foundations



The geography curriculum begins in the early years - this is where firm foundations are established:

- ⇒ Quality interactions lead to effective communication and language which is at the heart of provision.
- ⇒ The 'understanding the world' curriculum provides the starting point for the whole progression model.
- ⇒ Planning details the vocabulary (especially tier 2/3 words) that children will be introduced to. There are opportunities for children to practice and use the words they learn. This creates readiness for Key stage 1 and beyond.

Research, reading and Staff CPD



This document, and practice within provision, are informed by:

Ofsted [research review](#) and [subject report](#)
[Rosenshine's principles of instruction](#)
[researchED series](#)
[Historical Association](#)
[National Curriculum](#)
[The EYFS Framework](#)

You can find out more about our curriculum for leaders and teachers of geography at:

[Creative Learning Hub.](#)

Our Trust Vision:

| Our vision for pupils: | Our vision for people: | Our vision for communities: |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Strong attendance and outcomes for all. ✿ Freedom and Justice. ✿ A knowledge rich curriculum. ✿ Research/evidence informed teaching. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Collaboration and kindness. ✿ Opportunities to develop and learn. ✿ A focus on wellbeing and workload. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Schools at the heart of the community they serve. ✿ A range of benefits to support families and vulnerable groups. ✿ Ongoing support as pupils transition to their next school and beyond. |

Our Trust Values:

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| Integrity: Courage to do the right thing for the child. | Collaboration: Working together, enabling each other. | Dedication: Committed to supporting and improving. |
| Kindness: Acting with compassion | Understanding (Openness): Listening and valuing one another | Innovation & Creation: Using expertise and research to transform. |