

Geography Curriculum Rationale



CORNFIELD SCHOOL

LEARNING FOR LIFE

INTENT



Alignment to National Curriculum

The Geography curriculum at Cornfield follows the national curriculum to ensure that students are able to progress consistently throughout their learning experience, whilst fostering a natural curiosity of the world around them. Through a variety of topics, the core frameworks of location and place, human and physical, map skills and fieldwork are covered.



End Points

There are 3 learning end points throughout Key Stage Three. As students progress through their learning journey, each end point will develop their investigative skills and provide them with an opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills and theory that they have accumulated throughout the year. As students enter Key Stage four, they transition into their Entry Level qualification where the learning end points are segmented into an exam, a fieldwork investigation and a personal project of their choosing.



Sequencing

The Geography curriculum has been designed with students' starting points in mind and as such the learning journey has been sequenced to ensure that all students will possess the knowledge and skills needed to move beyond surface level learning. The geography curriculum reflects the interdependence of the world in which students find themselves, where the application of core concepts to understand new ideas will allow students to progress and develop their identity as geographic enquirers.



Addressing Social Disadvantage

Students at Cornfield arrive with a wide variety of cultural capital and embedded understandings of the world around them. The Geography curriculum aims to provide all students with the tools they require to be critical thinkers and to understand the social structures around them. In highlighting the wonders and issues of the contemporary world, the geography curriculum intends to raise students' aspirations and promote social mobility.

IMPLEMENTATION



Pedagogical Approaches

The frequent retrieval of prior learning increases the transference of understanding into long-term memory thus, reducing the strain on students' working memory when learning new things and improving metacognition skills. As such, Geography lessons incorporate spaced retrieval practice to enable students to apply their previous understanding to new concepts or topics. This both relieves pressure on working memory throughout the learning journey and increases the amount and depth of what pupils are able to learn.



Promoting Discussion and Understanding

In Geography students are encouraged to work both independently and collaboratively in order to enhance their skills in articulation and communication. Critical knowledge and skills are delivered in chunks to ensure that students can fully grasp the concepts before moving into deeper learning where discussion and debate will take place. Through practical enquiry and exploration students will discuss their understanding and questioning will promote the link to prior learning to deepen students' comprehension.



Knowing More and Remembering More

The spirals nature of the Geography curriculum ensures students re-visit core concepts throughout their learning journey, each time allowing them to add more depth and complexity to their current understanding in order to reveal the intertwined nature of their learning. As such, students are encouraged to perceive the natural world from a variety of perspectives, each time requiring the recall of previous learning. The use of Do Now's and plenaries ensure the verification of learning and check for student misconceptions across the Geography curriculum.



Teacher Assessment

Students' understanding will be assessed both formatively, through a variety of questioning techniques and retrieval activities and summative, through end of unit assessments designed to allow students to draw upon all of their learning to demonstrate their depth of their understanding. In conjunction these serve to highlight the progress students have made in their learning and identify misconceptions before moving onto new learning. Directed Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT) is given to students halfway through their topic to verify learning before continuing with the unit.

IMPACT



Approach to Assessment

The use of formative and summative assessments alongside the review and retrieval of students' learning will provide the teacher with a full view of the progress students have made throughout their learning. The spiral manner in which the topics are delivered provide the students with the opportunity to correct and deepen their understanding at critical points, such as the start of the lesson and through DIRT activities.



Progress Data

Student work, in class attitudes and fieldwork investigations will inform the data collected across the course of students' learning journeys. Progress and targets will be available for students and parents/ carers simultaneously through EarWig and the use of individualised tracking in the classroom tailored to each student. Practical learning will provide evidence of student understanding applied within real world contexts.



Students' Work

Student understanding often transcends the worksheet, which can serve as a barrier to many student's learning and impede their full potential. As such students will demonstrate their geographic understanding practically wherever possible. Students will be given agency over the format and presentation of their ideas in order to promote their enjoyment of learning, and to ensure that the work produced best reflects the students level of understanding.



Feedback to Students

Feedback within the Geography department takes a holistic viewpoint, whereby students will be given verbal feedback consistently throughout their lessons. This allows a dialogue to be opened between the student and teacher where productive discussion can take place as to how students can improve their understanding and deepen their learning. Simultaneously, students are able to review their progress and develop their communication skills to become more effective and active learners.