


Meadowside Community Primary & Nursery School

A Member of **The Challenge Academy Trust**

Geography Curriculum Policy

Policy written by	K. Whittaker (DT Coordinator) D. Clay (Curriculum Coordinator)
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Head teacher	Mr S Wright 
Chair of Governors	Mr P Calrow

'Where Learners Grow'

Geography Curriculum Policy

Curriculum Intent

Our Curriculum Intent

1. Language Development

Our curriculum aims to be talk and vocabulary rich to help counter inequality, widen access to learning and improve life opportunities [1]. Therefore, Language Development is key to the curriculum at Meadowside. Research has shown a language and communication deficit for some pupils, particularly pupils from low-income households. Our school has a higher level of deprivation among our pupils (see IDACI rating) and therefore language development is key to the educational success of our pupils. If we are to achieve our mission statement, ensuring that they fully access their next steps in education and go on to engage in the wider world work and to build a better future individually, locally and for the wider world, then language development must be central. Our curriculum aims to be talk and vocabulary rich to help counter inequality, widen access to learning and improve life opportunities. Talk can also foster empathy and understanding contributing to the development of our attitudes and values shown below.

- **Teaching of Oracy** is key to this language development. 'Great speakers are made, not born' (Gaunt and Stott) [2]. We aim to employ strategies throughout the curriculum to develop the physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional aspects of learning.
- **'Dialogic teaching'** harnesses the power of talk to engage interest, stimulate thinking, advance understanding, expand ideas, and build and evaluate arguments, empowering students for lifelong learning and democratic engagement.' (Alexander) [3]
- **Vocabulary Development** "By closing the vocabulary gap for children within our classroom with their peers, we can offer them the vital academic tools for school success, alongside the capability to communicate with confidence in the world beyond the school gates" (Quigley) [1]. Vocabulary development is pivotal to our curriculum and it is planned, sequenced and explicitly taught.
- **Reading** Dickenson et al [4] suggests that "reading offers our children the opportunity to hear new vocabulary items embedded in varied grammatical sentences. Books written for children use well-formed, relatively short sentences that are rich in varied vocabulary. Furthermore, books often use the same words in diverse grammatical constructions, offering implicit lessons in how words are used. The texts of books tend to have more low-frequency words than does spoken language [5] and books encourage use of a wider range of words than would occur in everyday conversations. Senechal and her colleagues [6], consistently finds that "parent reports of shared reading were a robust predictor of children's receptive and expressive vocabulary" (page 179). "

2. Knowledge

- The teaching of **knowledge** is central to our curriculum. Throughout the curriculum, both substantive and disciplinary knowledge is specifically chosen and deliberately sequenced to ensure retention over time. The teaching of knowledge is spaced and revisited in order to have long term impact, in line with the research of Foot-Seymour and Wiseheart [7]: 'If the goal is for students to retain as much information as possible, teachers need to be aware of **cognitive strategies** like the spacing effect so they can make small changes to their teaching practice to help students become more successful.'
- The curriculum is organised to enable children to build webs of knowledge (**schemas**), with explicit links being drawn between new and existing knowledge [8].
- According to Blooms, the teaching of knowledge underpins **critical thinking** and a child's ability to go deeper in their learning [9]. When knowledge is secure and links have been made, children are encouraged to take this knowledge deeper and apply this critically in different situations. Oracy development then allows children to express their thinking and views.

[1] The Vocabulary Gap, Chris Quigley

[2] Transforming Teaching and Learning Through Talk, Amy Gaunt and Alice Stott

[3] <http://robinalexander.org.uk/dialogical-teaching> (July 2020)

[4] How Reading Books Fosters Language Development and the World (November 2011)

[5] Beginning Literacy and Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School, D.K. Dickenson and P.O. Tabors (2001)

[6] A model of the concurrent and longitudinal relations between home literacy, M Senechal in Handbook for early Literacy Research, S.B Neuman and D. K. Dickinson (2011)

[7] Judging the credibility of websites: an effectiveness trial of the spacing effect in the elementary classroom, Foot-Seymour and Wiseheart (2022).

3. Skills

- **Cognitive and Meta cognitive strategies** are used by staff in delivering the curriculum, as we believe that the children need to know how best they learn in order to improve learner agency. Therefore, ideas such as cognitive load, working memory etc. are taught throughout the curriculum so that they can develop this understanding.
- While the teaching of disciplinary knowledge is key to progress in subjects, children require the opportunity to turn this knowledge to **practice and apply** skills. Our Curriculum planning ensures that these opportunities are embedded for all children.

4. Attitudes and Values

Personal

- Developing **growth mindset** [10]. Rather than simply praising success, we praise effort and persistence. We believe the best thing to do is to teach children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort and keep on learning. For children who find work easy we make sure they encounter more difficult tasks. Our children recognise that effort, persistence and good teaching are what help them improve.
- Developing **intrinsic motivation** and **self-efficacy** [11]. Throughout the curriculum we aim for the children to see themselves as readers, writers, mathematicians, artists, musicians etc. We want their motivation for them to work in this way to be down to their understanding of themselves and the potential they have.
- We recognise the responsibility we have for the **physical development** and the **well-being** of our pupils. Our approach to our curriculum aims to build self-esteem, a respect for self and others, kindness and resilience, with staff modelling across the curriculum how to deal with challenge and adversity. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support. British Values permeate through the curriculum.
- Both the teaching of oracy and knowledge underpin the children's ability in **critical thinking** [9].

Local, Societal and Global

- As an Inclusion Quality Mark flagship school, **inclusivity** is key to our culture as a school. Within the curriculum, we aim to celebrate difference and **diversity**.
- **Sustainability** is one of the key themes that is going to prepare our children for life in the future. Key questions about sustainability form central parts of our curriculum.
- The **Rights Respecting** agenda plays a key role in school life at Meadowside and provides a strong ethos to foster purposeful learning attitudes and positive relationships. This initiative underpins the school's aims to provide a values-led curriculum. The children learn about their own responsibilities, through learning about their own rights and the rights of others, as set out by the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

5. Geographical Intent

Within our Geography Curriculum, we want to foster an enjoyment of the subject and love of learning about Geography. We want to ensure that the children have the key skills necessary and encourage our students to find ways to use and apply their learning to make a positive difference in the world.

At Meadowside, through quality first teaching, we apply a progressive model of geography teaching, through which children develop an understanding of the complexity of our planet, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between them and the natural world, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time. We are committed to promoting and reinforcing the relevance and benefits of geography in education. Our aim is to develop our students' geographical understanding whilst supporting pupils to gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of the past, present and future of the natural/physical world.

[8] Making Kids Cleverer, David Didau

[9] Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, BS Blooms (1965)

[10] Mindset, How you can Fulfil Your Potential, Dr Carol S Dweck (2006)

[11] Toward a Psychology of Human Agency, Bandura, A (2006)

Geography has never been more important in helping us to understand our rapidly changing world. It makes a vital contribution to our knowledge of the environmental and social challenges facing us and how we should tackle them. We believe that the teaching of geographical skills, where the children ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement can be used both now and in their adult futures to enable them make a difference in the world.

Implementation

Our Geography curriculum is planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before. We recognise that new learning is fragile, so our approach is generative and sticky, enabling our pupils to make links between new and existing knowledge to aid long term retention. Learning is sequenced to ensure that there are opportunities for spaced learning and links between curriculum areas are explicit allowing children to build a detailed schema across other subjects.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, Geography is taught termly through 6 stand-alone hour long lessons that allows a longer session focused on field work and application of skills and knowledge. Additional opportunities are planned throughout the year for the enrichment of our curriculum, for example, 'World Earth Day'.

Within the curriculum, the key knowledge and skills for each year group can be seen in our progression maps. These have then been broken down into topics in our long and medium-term planning, which class teachers then use to plan progressive and engaging lessons. These divide geographical skills into three themes: geographical knowledge (the UK and local area; the world and its continents); geographical understanding (physical and human themes, understanding places and connections, map skills) and geographical enquiry (fieldwork). The knowledge and skills seen in our progression map are then broken down into topics in our long term planning, which class teachers then use to plan progressive and engaging lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils will have extended their knowledge and understanding beyond their local area to include the United Kingdom and Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should have developed their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

1. Language development

Within Geography, oracy opportunities are planned into the curriculum that allow children to develop the physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional aspects of learning. Opportunities are planned that allow children to debate, present, explain, discuss key aspects of Geography and be able to give their opinions on all aspects taught.

Dialogic teaching empowers students to challenge each other's views, expand ideas and build and evaluate arguments. We want the children to challenge each other's views that will lead them to a deeper understanding of the topics we are teaching. Group work is planned in and central to our teaching of Geography.

Development of vocabulary in Geography is vital in them closing the vocabulary gap that research shows exists between them and their peers from more affluent areas. Vocabulary is explicitly planned, taught and assessed, ensuring a thorough grasp of new language. New vocabulary is collected during a topic so that it can then be referred back to in subsequent lessons, promoting sticky learning and scaffolding all children in retaining key language and information.

Reading is a crucial part of the development of vocabulary and of language development. A range of quality primary and secondary text based sources are used within lessons across the school to enrich the children's experience and to promote the application of geographical skills. For example, maps are the 'tool' of the

geographer through which geography is recorded, analysed and communicated. Developing these skills of decoding, interpreting, comprehending and analysing information from maps is invaluable, not simply to understand where you are and find your way but to recognise the features and aspects of an urban, rural or wild area.

2. Knowledge

Our approach throughout the curriculum is generative, enabling pupils to make links between new and existing knowledge to aid retention. Development of both disciplinary and substantive knowledge is well sequenced to ensure that children know and remember more. This is shown within our progression maps for Geography.

New knowledge is organised in such a way that ensures cognitive strategies, such as spaced repetition, are well thought through and planned in. Following our whole school model for high quality teaching and learning (Appendix 1), we ensure that teaching strategies allow the children to learn more and remember more. The curriculum is organised to enable children to build webs of knowledge (schemas), with explicit links being drawn between new and existing knowledge. These links are highlighted within medium term plans to ensure that staff explicitly make these links when planning lessons.

When knowledge is secure and links have been made, children are encouraged to take this knowledge deeper and apply this critically in different situations. Assessments are made using open ended assessment tasks that allow children to take learning deeper, demonstrating their critical thinking skills.

Low stakes quizzes are planned into Medium Term planning and used regularly to ensure that knowledge is remembered and retained. These form part of our assessment for learning in Geography.

3. Skills

While the teaching of disciplinary knowledge is key to progress in subjects, children require the opportunity to turn this knowledge to practice and apply skills and fieldwork gives our children opportunities to apply these skills. Our Curriculum planning ensures that these opportunities are embedded for all children. Skills that are taught in Geography are progressive and highlighted on our curriculum progression map.

4. Attitudes and values

To develop the children's growth mindset, rather than simply praising success, we praise effort and persistence. We believe learning should be a challenge and within Geography, our children are allowed to make mistakes and learn from them. In Geography, we want learning to be challenging and encourage the children to take risks and ask and investigate their own hypotheses through fieldwork. Our approach to our curriculum aims to build self-esteem, a respect for self and others, kindness and resilience, with staff modelling across the curriculum how to deal with challenge and adversity.

Local, Societal and Global

- As an Inclusion Quality Mark flagship school, **inclusivity** is key to our culture as a school. Within the curriculum, we aim to celebrate difference and diversity. World Earth Day will be a focal point across the school each year to promote the importance and potential of Geography to our pupils. Topics are chosen so that stereotypes are challenged and difference is celebrated.
- **Sustainability** is one of the key themes that is going to prepare our children for life in the future. Key questions about sustainability form central parts of our Geography curriculum.
- Teachers apply a range of strategies within lessons to enable the children to become invested in their education. Practical investigations and LYFTA sessions are selectively used by teaching staff to provide a purpose and structure for curriculum learning. We believe that it is vitally important for children to develop their own opinions and voice about Geography, the impact that our choices have upon the world now and in the future.

5. Developing a love of Geography

Opportunities to develop cultural capital are embedded into the curriculum. Children complete fieldwork in a way that they make visits right stages in their developments and they are encouraged to find out about the world around them.

Children often find joy in their discoveries in Geography and discover the awe and wonder of the world around them through well sequenced trips to complete fieldwork.

Additional enrichment opportunities are provided during World Earth Day.

Online tours, guides, videos are used where appropriate

Assessment:

Formative assessment is an integral part of daily lessons and is first and foremost the essence of helping making our pupils make instant progress in their geographical knowledge and in their skills. This is done through a mixture of high-level questioning, discussion, oracy activities and written work.

We use live marking and feedback to enable teachers to target next steps for pupils effectively. Opportunities for children to review and improve their learning are embedded into each lesson. Children are given the opportunity to evaluate their own work, and that of their peers. During and on completion of a piece of work, the teacher responds, identifying areas for development. Children's work is valued, celebrated and displayed around the class and school.

At the end of each term, a written report is given to parents that show whether a child is achieving the required standard in Geography, and these are discussed with parents with strategies to move learning forward being discussed.

Each unit is assessed to show whether a child is at age related levels, exceeding, meeting and not yet met. These provide a 'snapshot in time' of pupils' understanding related to age related expectations; help us to analyse current trends and also hone in on vulnerable groups that might require further support. If a child is working below, specific areas are fed back to parents and also highlighted in the assessments so that future teachers know what areas need more work to ensure a solid foundation to new learning.

Tracking of key groups allows for a better structure to learning and allows the Curriculum coordinator to adapt the curriculum where needed.

Where there is a specific area of learning that a significant group needs reinforcing, this will be done in the "Catch up week" on the timetable.

SEND and Inclusion

At Meadowside we have high expectations of all our pupils. However, we recognise that for some pupils, additional support is needed to ensure they can access tasks and so that they can retain key learning. Tasks are adapted or scaffolded in such a way so as to ensure that they are provide suitable challenges that focus on the Geography specific learning and remove any barriers for learning that stop learning in Geography. Teachers use their pupil passports and appropriate assessments to help inform their planning. This way, a person-centered approach ensures progress is made and makes their learning a personalised experience.

At Meadowside, we want all learning to support independence wherever possible. Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEND are able to successfully access the key content of the Geography curriculum and ensure that no ceiling is placed on their learning and what they can achieve. Promoting independence, we allow the children to feel a sense of equality and belonging in their classroom environment.

Where appropriate, the following strategies could be used for pupils with SEND:

Task Adaptation

- Opportunities for overlearning key knowledge.
- Technology used for recording information. Video recording of work if writing is an issue/use of speechnotes programme or Clicker 7/a scribe/dictation tool on ipad.
- Web based learning for practice and learning of key knowledge.
- Use of concrete resources
- Voice recordings of step by step instructions
- Voice recordings of responses.
- Screen shots and photographs
- Voice recordings
- Peer support for mathematical skills

Scaffolding

- Modeling of work specifically for a small group of children.
- Vocab mats highlighting specific vocabulary for a task
- Broken down instructions for a task.
- Sentence stems from board/worksheet
- Task organiser
- Use of concrete resources
- Further questioning
- Additional focused explanations
- Precision teaching of key knowledge.
- Additional oracy opportunities.
- Peer support.

Additional strategies for pupils will be highlighted as a part of the SEND strategy meetings and in consultation with other professionals. These form part of a child's pupil passport and support teachers in removing barriers for learning.

Where a child struggles with key aspects of learning, it is crucial that we highlight what is key knowledge for a child to move on with their learning. Progression maps highlight which knowledge is the basis for other knowledge later on within the Geography curriculum. Staff therefore provide time for overlearning of this key knowledge where it is deemed appropriate for these children. Support and CPD is given to staff to ensure they have a good understanding of what learning is key to move on. These children are discussed regularly with the SENCo.

Higher Attainers

Opportunities for higher attainers to take learning deeper are planned throughout the curriculum. Open ended tasks and high quality first teaching ensure that learning is taken deeper. Enrichment opportunities are planned throughout the year. Opportunities for children to explore careers in STEM are planned into the curriculum and accessed where appropriate. Where appropriate, visiting speakers from a range of backgrounds are encouraged to come in and support classes in delivering key areas of Geography and find out more about different parts of the world.

CPD for staff

CPD is planned for staff throughout the year and opportunities are planned into our yearly training in line with our school development plan. Staff are encouraged to also complete their own research. Medium term planning explains subject knowledge that will be needed to take learning deeper in Geography. Where appropriate, staff will also find this out by asking questions to staff.

Monitoring of Geography

The monitoring cycle is set out by the senior leadership team at the beginning of each academic year. Monitoring includes book looks, lesson visits, learning walks, pupil/staff voice surveys. All monitoring undertaken serves to improve our practice, with the aim of bettering the outcomes for our pupils.

Transition to KS3














At Meadowside, we work closely with our feeder secondary schools to ensure a quality of provision that gives our pupils firm foundations for year 6. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 regularly access Geography transition lessons at the high school that allow them to show the knowledge that they have learnt and to ensure that learning in KS3 successfully builds on the foundations laid at KS2. We work closely with them to provide additional opportunities for more able pupils.

Impact

At Meadowside, we ensure that all students are exposed to rich learning experiences that:

- Enable all students to make good progress in their geographical knowledge, skills and vocabulary from whatever the students starting point may have been. We define good progress as knowing more and remembering more. It is the widening of knowledge, skills, understanding and behaviours.
- Children have self-efficacy and see themselves as geographers. They take an interest in the aspects of geography and the are able to better analyse and understand the world around them.
- We aim to ensure our children have a thorough understanding of sustainability and the importance of this to their lives.
- Our pupils experience a language rich Geography experience which enables them to apply their knowledge as articulate citizens of the future discussing research, knowledge and developments.
- for our pupils to be resilient when completing fieldwork
- for pupils leaving us to be well prepared for the next stage in their lives, particularly for the further study of Geography at KS3.

Appendix 1

 <h1>QUALITY FIRST TEACHING @ MEADOWSIDE</h1>			
MODELLING OF TASK - PREPARED AND LIVE  <p>Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Fourth Principle</p>	REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LEARNING  <p>Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.</p> <p>Rosenshine's First Principle</p>	CHUNKING - NEW MATERIAL BROKEN INTO SMALL STEPS  <p>Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. We try to avoid its overload – presenting new material in small steps and proceed only when ready...</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Second Principle</p>	INDEPENDENT PRACTICE  <p>Independent Practice produces 'overlearning' – a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of the student's working memories.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Ninth Principle</p>
ORACY STRATEGIES - TAUGHT VOCABULARY, ELABORATION, SENTENCE STEMS  <p>At Meadowside we strive to ensure that our children can communicate effectively. Therefore the teaching of oracy strategies needs to be explicit and reinforced in everything we do.</p> <p>Ref: Voice 21</p>	SCAFFOLDING - TEMPORARY SUPPORT TO ASSIST LEARNING  <p>Scaffolds are temporary support to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking out loud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.</p> <p>Ref: Rosenshine's Eighth Principle</p>	RETRIEVAL PRACTICE - INCLUDING SPACED RETRIEVAL  <p>The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in the long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.</p> <p>Ref: Kate Jones Retrieval Practice</p>	HIGHER LEVEL QUESTIONING  <p>Questions allow a teacher to determine how well material has been learned. Higher level questioning also allows the teacher to assess the depth of that learning and to move the learning forward.</p> <p>Ref: Bloom's Taxonomy</p>
TASK ADAPTATION - REMOVING BARRIERS TO LEARNING  <p>We believe that it is crucial to remove whatever barriers stop our children accessing the key learning of a lesson. Therefore tasks are adapted to ensure everyone has access to the learning.</p> <p>Ref: SEND Gateway; Adaptive Teaching for Inclusion</p>	DIRECT INSTRUCTION  <p>Research shows Direct Instruction is key to developing confidence of learners. Skills are introduced gradually, reinforced, and continually assessed.</p> <p>Ref: ResearchED Guide to Explicit Teaching and Direct Instruction</p>	MEADOWSIDE MINDSET - GROWTH MINDSET AND SELF EFFICACY  <p>For children to succeed they need to have confidence in themselves as learners. A growth mindset will support the children in persisting to overcoming whatever gets in their way.</p> <p>Ref: Changing Mindsets and Bandura</p>	(PEDAGOGICAL) CONTENT KNOWLEDGE  <p>The most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teacher's need to be confident not just in the subject knowledge but the best strategies to impart this knowledge</p> <p>Ref: What Makes Great Teaching (Robert Coe)</p>