Elm Academy Geography Strategy

To ensure we have a highly successful Geography curriculum at Elm Academy we have carefully selected and organised content that we believe will not only support pupils with the substantive knowledge linked to the subject but will also help them to understand the complex nature of our world, expose them to diverse cultures in a range of continents and equip them with the disciplinary skills they need to progress effectively onto the next stage of their educations. Our Geography curriculum is sequenced from Reception to Year 6 with key concepts meticulously mapped out. Elm Academy's Geography curriculum is built upon the following key geographical concepts:

- Place
- Space
- Scale
- Envrionment
- Interconnections
- Physical & Human processes
- Fieldwork

All of these key concepts are planned to work together to ensure that pupils can remember more and learn more by weaving 'Key Concepts and Linked Skills' throughout units of learning so that children have time to practise, discuss, reflect and revisit knowledge.

We understand that Geographers think about the world spatially. 'Spatial thinking is a unique way of thinking about the world and interacting within the world. Spatial thinking involves visualizing, interpreting, and reasoning using location, distance, direction, relationships, movement, and change in space.'[1] Therefore, we ensure that pupils use skills they have learnt previously and are shown how to intertwine these effectively to reach geographical conclusions.

'Thinking like a Geographer'[2] is a key element of our curriculum and is something we instil in our pupils through use what they know in a range of contexts, think about alternatives and to consider a range of influences of decisions made. These points have been considered throughout the design of the whole Geography curriculum. To develop this further we have chosen to take an 'Enquiry Approach' which can also develop pupils' disciplinary knowledge. Each unit has an enquiry question which pupils will unpick, through careful teacher guidance and monitoring, throughout each unit of learning, evolving their geographical skills as they go.

Our precisely thought-out medium term plans (MTPs) ensure that curricular goals become increasingly challenging, encouraging pupils to build on prior knowledge and apply this to a range of contexts. Content is revisited appropriately with prompts on the plans of when a skill has been taught previously to support teacher subject knowledge. Case studies on our plans are considered regularly to ensure they provide sufficient depth of understanding, broaden pupils' knowledge of the world today and reflect the dynamic nature of geography whilst also aiming to given pupils 'real-life' opportunities to study e.g. local areas. Alongside this, our MTPs also highlight potential misconceptions that pupils may have to ensure these are addressed swiftly and pre-empted to support a solid understanding.

To check pupil understanding, we use a mixture of formative and summative assessment to monitor the progress pupils are making within Geography. This is recorded on our online assessment tracking system to ensure that any gaps in pupil knowledge are recorded so they can then be addressed and checked, regardless of if the pupils' change year groups.

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[1] Spatial Thinking – The National Geographic Network of Alliances for Geographic Education

[2] Geography Subject Review, Ofsted 2021