



Knowledge and skills: Introduction

At Sonning, we first considered the concept of knowing more, doing more and remembering more. Therefore, from our research, we have a shared and consistent understanding of different types of knowledge. Each subject will have a different ratio of distribution for these types of knowledge, and the types of knowledge can (and most often do) intersect.

1. Knowledge refers to the body of facts, information, understanding, principles and concepts etc. of a subject. In other words, this could be referred to as the main component knowledge that pupils might learn (e.g. knowing capital cities or names of countries/continents), as well as the understanding that pupils may develop about how those facts were established (aka disciplinary knowledge). Finally, as well as considering how a fact was established, we may also consider its degree of certainty and how it continues to be revised. Pupils need to know information in some form in every subject, even in practical subjects, because there will be an element of theory behind the skill that can be shown/displayed.

2. Skills refers to the techniques required to complete a procedure or task. It is the 'know how' of the processes required in a subject (e.g. using equipment accurately to measure rainfall or temperature changes). Skills are often incremental and require regular practice. It is about being able to know how to actually demonstrate that skill or procedure.

Building strong foundations for the years ahead with knowledge and skills

KNOWLEDGE

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Pupils need to know information in some form in every subject, even in practical subjects, because there will be an element of theory behind the skill that can be shown/displayed.

This can be framed as the statements 'To know how to...' or 'I am able to...'.

The illustration shows a hand placing a block labeled 'KNOWLEDGE' on top of another 'KNOWLEDGE' block. To the right, a 'SKILLS' block is placed on top of another 'SKILLS' block. The blocks are arranged in a staggered pattern, forming a foundation.

SKILLS

“Skills” refers to the techniques required to complete a procedure or task.

It is the 'know how' of the processes required in a subject (e.g. throwing a ball, drawing a timeline and placing events on that timeline, or conducting an enquiry). Skills are often incremental and require regular practice.

It is about being able to know how to actually demonstrate that skill or procedure.

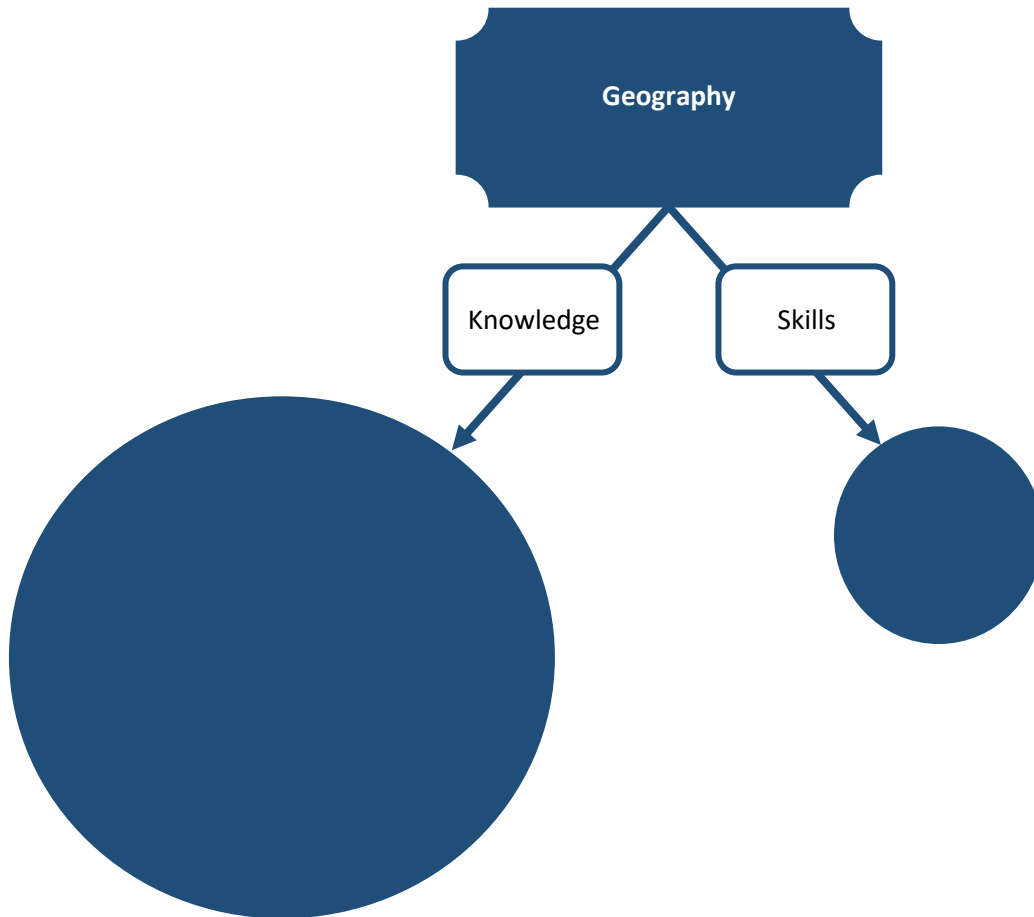
This can be framed as the statements 'To know how to...' or 'I know how to...'.

Sonning's Infographic on Knowledge and Skills



Knowledge distribution

We recognise that different subjects have different weightings of knowledge and skills. The infographic below highlights what we consider to be the ratio of each form of knowledge within this subject:



Our vision

Geography at Sonning Church of England Primary School engages and inspires children to learn about the world around them. Pupils are taught by using key questions in each lesson/unit to help them develop new knowledge and begin to apply specific skills which are taught and modelled. This includes using (where appropriate and practical to enhance the learning) skills such as field and map work. We take the pupils' backgrounds and experiences into consideration where it can enhance the curriculum, choosing countries or areas to study which are relevant to our cohorts. This includes utilising our local area and surrounding areas. However, we ensure this does not affect the clear progression we have developed for this subject. Geography at Sonning Church of England Primary School allows children to understand more and more about our world, as well as how they can respectfully interact with the environment and the cause and effect of human and physical actions.

Early Years Foundation Stage (Acorn class)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), geographical learning is primarily embedded within the 'Understanding the World' area of learning, which encourages children to explore their environment, recognise differences between places and begin to develop a sense of the world around them. Through observation, discussion and hands-on experiences, children explore features of their local environment, discuss seasonal changes and learn about different places, people and cultures. These foundational experiences prepare children for the Key Stage 1 Geography

Sonning Church of England Primary School

Curriculum Vision: Geography I4



curriculum, where they begin to develop more structured geographical knowledge, such as naming continents, oceans, and UK countries, as well as using maps and basic geographical vocabulary. The emphasis in EYFS on curiosity, observation, and discussion supports the later development of geographical skills, ensuring a smooth transition into the National Curriculum, where children deepen their understanding of physical and human geography, locational knowledge and fieldwork.

Key Stage 1 (Beech and Chestnut classes)

In Key Stage 1 (KS1), pupils develop knowledge about their local area, the UK and the world. Pupils learn to name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans, as well as the four countries and capital cities of the UK and its surrounding seas. They use simple geographical vocabulary to describe physical features (such as beaches, rivers and mountains) and human features (such as towns, roads, railways and shops). Pupils are introduced to basic map skills, including using world maps, atlases and globes, and they learn simple compass directions. They also undertake fieldwork, observing and describing their local environment and using basic geographical skills such as creating simple maps and using symbols in a key.

Key Stage 2 (Fir, Holly, Maple and Oak classes)

In Key Stage 2 (KS2), pupils build on the knowledge and skills they have developed in KS1 to include specific studies of Europe, and North and South America. They develop an understanding of key physical and human geographical features, including climate zones, biomes, rivers, mountains, volcanoes, earthquakes and settlements. Pupils learn to use maps, atlases, globes and digital mapping to locate countries and describe geographical features. They develop skills in using grid references, compass points and Ordnance Survey map symbols. Comparative studies deepen their understanding of geographical similarities and differences between regions in the UK, Europe and the wider world. Fieldwork plays a key role, enabling pupils to collect, analyse, and present geographical data to deepen their understanding of physical and human processes shaping different environments.

Building strong foundations through experiences

To complement the curriculum, there are visits from experts, themed class events and educational visits, and local area visits, all of which enhance pupils' understanding and provide varied learning experiences.

The curriculum

At Sonning, we follow the National Curriculum for all our subjects. To ensure the National Curriculum is covered effectively, there is an edited version of the National Curriculum which has notes to highlight where in our Unit Maps a statement or section is covered within our strategic documents and planning.

Curriculum structure

Units are taught using blocking, with one covered every term (usually, one unit takes approximately 1 half term, but this is flexible). This allows time to go into depth in a unit, but having one unit per term ensures the time between units does not adversely affect the ability to build on prior skills and knowledge. We use retrieval practice, knowledge organisers and other methods to ensure that pupils are prepared for their subject and focus on the right objectives during lessons. Subject-specific vocabulary is taught and we aim to deepen understanding through questioning.

Unit Maps

Our Unit Maps provide the overview for each subject's unit of lessons for a topic. This includes the following:

Knowledge taught / prior knowledge

Knowing what core substantive knowledge to teach, as well as prior learning which we can build on, is essential to ensuring clear progression and depth of understanding in a subject.

Building strong foundations for the years ahead (Matthew 7:24-25)

Love - Courage - Respect - Aspiration - Curiosity

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Milestones and assessment opportunities

This is covered in more information below as part of the 'Assessment' section.

Concepts

Each subject has concepts which run through every unit and year group. These concepts allow consistency of focus and progression within each concept from unit to unit and year to year. Our key concepts are as follows:

Locational Knowledge	Human Geography	Physical Geography	Map and Fieldwork Skills
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Vocabulary

As part of our focus on oracy, we have developed a list of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to cover within a unit. This vocabulary also links into our knowledge organisers, so that the pupils have access to this essential vocabulary. The vocabulary required in each unit is also part of a wider vocabulary progression document that we have produced.

A knowledge organiser, in line with our school's format, is shared with pupils from the beginning of the unit and referred to throughout lessons to help embed key concepts and vocabulary.

Cross curricular links

It is important to understand how subjects can work with each other, so there are specific links to other subjects outlined in the Unit Maps. However, it is important to note that this does not detract from the focus we have on teaching each unit as part of a discrete subject.

Links with our values, spirituality and organisations

Our school values are part of everything we do. To ensure that is seen within the curriculum, we make explicit links to our values, as well as British Values, spirituality and OECD and UN objectives.

Assessment

When assessing progress, we use a range of methods and opportunities:

Formative assessment

Teachers use AFL strategies on an ongoing basis so that misconceptions can be identified and addressed at the earliest point. It is used to assess pupils' knowledge. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity for self or peer assessment, which will then be used to inform planning, preparation, adaptations and address misconceptions within that lesson, or for the next lesson.

Children are given opportunities to retrieve information and to demonstrate their learning throughout each unit of learning. Each unit includes opportunities for retrieval practice which can be used to reinforce and revisit both learning and vocabulary. These questions are also used as part of retrieval practice, and prior learning will be revisited throughout lessons or units, checking recall of previous lessons. This could be through oracy or written tasks.

Summative assessment: Milestones and assessment opportunities

Our milestone objectives and assessment opportunities ensure that there is clear progression and we know how to assess those types of knowledge and outcomes within a unit. These milestones are derived from the National Curriculum to ensure that staff know the key component knowledge and skills required for pupils to experience progress and success. These are mapped out for coverage and breadth in a separate document.



Measuring impact

We measure the effectiveness of our curriculum in the following ways:

- Pupil data tracking (Sonar and other internal tracking methods)
- Work scrutiny
- Monitoring of lessons and planning (including from SLT, governors and external validation, e.g. TKAT)
- Pupil conferencing.

When evaluating our curriculum, we also ask ourselves the following questions:

Do we provide a high-quality curriculum and inspires pupils?

- To what extent do our children show independence, resilience and high aspirations in the subject?
- To what extent does our curriculum provide new experiences and challenges?
- To what extent do the children engage with high quality resources?

Do we ensure pupils know more, do more and remember more?

- To what extent do children retain the knowledge learnt?
- To what extent does the curriculum build over time?
- To what extent do children make progress against milestones over time?

Does our curriculum allow oracy development and the opportunity for pupils to collaborate?

- To what extent does our curriculum use/teach high quality language?
- To what extent does the curriculum provide opportunities to work collaboratively?
- To what extent does the curriculum support children with oracy skills?

Is our curriculum inclusive?

- How well is learning broken down, explained and scaffolded/adapted appropriately in the subject?
- How well are assessment forms used to inform planning in the subject?
- To what extent does the curriculum meet the needs of all learners including SEND/ EAL etc?

Do we help our pupils become better people in the wider world and prepare them for life in Modern Britain?

- To what extent does the curriculum allow children to take responsibility for their learning?
- To what extent does our curriculum allow for diversity?
- To what extent does the curriculum offer opportunities to present work in creative ways?
- To what extent does the curriculum offer opportunities to discuss content and/or questions and consider them in an open forum?
- To what extent does offer opportunities to utilise the skills of the wider community?

Supplementary support

We utilise the following support within our curriculum for this subject:

- Geography.org subscription
- TKAT subject network meetings
- Local experts and support networks (including Sonning Lock, Reading University and Reading Blue Coat School).