



## Hilton Spencer Academy

### Curriculum Intent Statement

#### **Introduction**

At Hilton Spencer Academy, the teaching of our curriculum is based on our basic principle that learning is a change to long-term memory. Our aims are to ensure that our pupils experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

#### **Curriculum Breadth**

The overarching drivers of our curriculum shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities to develop the powerful knowledge and cultural capital that we believe is vital for them to become informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

The drivers within our curriculum are:

Instability, peace and conflict	Getting on and falling out
Sustainability and global awareness	Looking after our world
Power and pivotal people	Playing out part
Identity, diversity and equality	Fitting in and standing out
Revolutions and transformations	Time for a change?
Elements and exploration	Ore and wonder!

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our drivers, cultural capital (see cultural capital statement), subject topics and our ambition for pupils to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars. Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and key concepts. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied. Key concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.

## Curriculum Progression

For each of the key concepts, three phases, each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the concepts, provides a progression model.

Knowledge categories give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the key concepts. Knowledge organisers are linked with these categories in order to help pupils to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema.

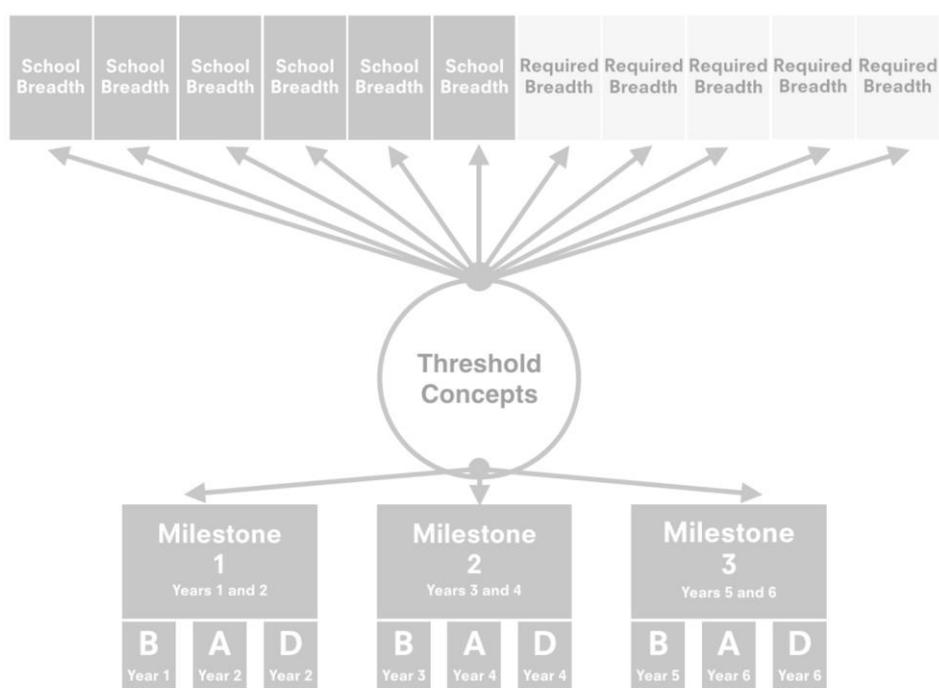
Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding they must first master the basics, which takes time.

Within each phase, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep. The goal for pupils is to display sustained mastery at the 'advancing' stage of understanding by the end of each phase and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the 'deep' stage. The time-scale for sustained mastery or greater depth is therefore two years of study.

As part of our progression model we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who argue to direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery-based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem-based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the reversal effect.

Also, as part of our progression model, we use POP tasks (Portrayal of Progress) which shows our curriculum expectations in each cognitive domain.

Diagram of Curriculum Intent model:



## **Curriculum Implementation**

Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; three main principles underpin it:

- Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.
- Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.
- Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

In addition to the three principles we also understand that learning is invisible in the short-term and that sustained mastery takes time. Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema. Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content.

Class teachers are responsible for planning the curriculum for their class. They make decisions about what resources and materials they use, and how they differentiate them appropriately. They do this using their professional knowledge and expertise, sharing best practice and providing support for each other, focussed on outcomes for individual pupils.

Subject leaders and senior leaders are responsible for designing the progression in core knowledge, skills and concepts into year group plans. They ensure that all teachers are familiar with curriculum expectations through training, monitoring and coaching, with a focus on ensuring that outcomes can be achieved by all pupils.

## **Impact**

Because learning is a change to long-term memory it is impossible to see impact in the short term. We do, however use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practise. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long-run.

We use comparative judgement in two ways: in the tasks we set (POP Tasks) and in comparing a student's work over time. We use learning walks and classroom visits to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

Class teachers routinely evaluate the progress of pupils within and across lessons using the curriculum frameworks to make judgements. They use this information to analyse how effectively pupils are achieving or exceeding expectations and to adapt their planning accordingly. Teachers provide Subject Leaders with timely summative information about the outcomes of pupils in their class.

Subject Leaders and Senior Leaders routinely evaluate the summative outcomes for their area of responsibility. They use this analysis to identify any necessary actions that develop the quality of provision in their subject, to moderate assessments, and to benchmark outcomes against expectations beyond Hilton Spencer Academy.