



Curriculum Statement

Our Curriculum Philosophy.

**“The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled”
Plutarch**

To enable children to ‘Love Learning’, they need a curriculum which kindles the fire of enthusiasm for learning and inspires them to be lifelong learners. A curriculum which provides them with the foundations of knowledge on which to build, in a way that suits their own interests and personal strengths. To result in children being both interested and interesting.

To achieve this, we believe that children need a broad curriculum, where substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge from each curriculum area is taught in a way which is sequential, interlinks with other subjects and builds progressively over time. Thus, enabling a child to apply this knowledge in purposeful outcomes. Our curriculum is based on research finding of cognitive science.

***Substantive Knowledge** is knowledge accrued by the discipline, for example, History: knowledge of the events of the Second World War. Science: Newton’s three laws of motion.*

***Disciplinary Knowledge** is how the academic discipline accrues said knowledge, for example, Source analysis. Empirical experimentation. Conjecture and proof.*

Our curriculum aims to provide children with the ‘**bigger picture**’ of their world, through the knowledge they acquire.

The Intention of our Curriculum

We have developed a curriculum which equips children for life at school within the Embark Family and beyond, for the 21st and 22nd centuries. We are mindful that children have been born who will be alive in 2100!

We have therefore created a curriculum which has been created around the idea of developing, **global citizens**, who have strong **values and attitudes** with the **knowledge** required to support this. Children who use their acquired knowledge to think critically, work co-operatively, value equality, diversity of opinion and ethnicity, have strong global awareness and a sense of social justice.

Reflecting on the changing world and research from the Oxfam Global Citizenship Guides, led us to think about our curriculum differently. In order to develop learners who can thrive and be successful in the future world, we re-evaluated key questions behind our curriculum:

- **What knowledge is it important to learn?**
- **How can we develop learning and metacognition skills in individual children?**
- **How does learning happen most effectively?**
- **How do we evaluate that success?**

We intend all learners to have a curriculum that equips them with **knowledge, both disciplinary and substantive**, which they need to embrace the opportunities and challenges they encounter in life. To help shape a future they want to live in, and to be a global citizen who contributes to and values their world. We want children to have the motivation to explore areas of personal interest and talent, by loving learning and loving life.

This will be achieved through units of learning which develop knowledge, through issues relevant to the children's world:

- **Identity and Diversity**
- **Peace and Conflict**
- **Social Justice**
- **Saving our Environment**
- **Our Heritage**
- **Our World and Beyond**

These themes will be used as a thread to link knowledge within a topic. They will provide a relevant real-life context and encourage children to make deep, lasting connections between learning and understanding the world they live in.

High quality texts are selected to be the stimulus for each topic, which facilitates exploration of the Global theme. This provides opportunities to build on knowledge and develop values in a way which connects to children's lives:

- Who they are
- How they fit into the world
- How they contribute and respond to it.

(See EMBARK 'Global Themes Progression' document)

Substantive Knowledge Development :

As individual school teams, Curriculum Leaders have developed a Long-Term Substantive Knowledge Plan which is customised to their setting. This plan ensures coverage of the substantive knowledge required by the National Curriculum.

Disciplinary Knowledge Development:

As collaborative teams, Curriculum Leaders, from schools across EMBARK, have developed Disciplinary Knowledge Progression documents for each subject, which also includes vocabulary to be taught at each stage. This ensures that whilst teaching substantive knowledge, we also provide children

with age appropriate acquisition of disciplinary knowledge, which they need in order to succeed and ensure learning sticks.

(See EMBARK 'Disciplinary Knowledge Progression' documents)

How we Implement our Curriculum

Curriculum Linkage:

During their time at school children will learn, through the curriculum, of the three Key Stages: EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The curriculum design of each are different, so they are age appropriate, however, within EMBARK they are unified by the use of the Global themes, the planning of connectivity between learning in different subjects, and the use of high-quality texts.

Our EYFS Curriculum is created around the key areas of learning, using a series of seasonal themes. Child led learning and interests are then seized by the adults working with them, in order to probe understanding, and challenge to deepen learning. The Global themes are introduced at this stage through assemblies, and where child led learning enables a teacher to facilitate learning, in one of the early Global theme outcomes.

At Key Stage 1 and 2, our Curriculum is designed around the six Global themes. The topics build on the texts and substantive knowledge, which has been learnt in EYFS, in order to deepen that learning.

We have created topics, which are drawn from a central high-quality core text, linking to the global theme. This provides real life connections between knowledge in different subjects and real life.

High Quality Sequential Planning:

Using the Long-Term planning for both Substantive Knowledge and Disciplinary Knowledge, teachers plan units of learning for each subject which are matched to the needs of the cohort they teach, by responding to current formative assessment.

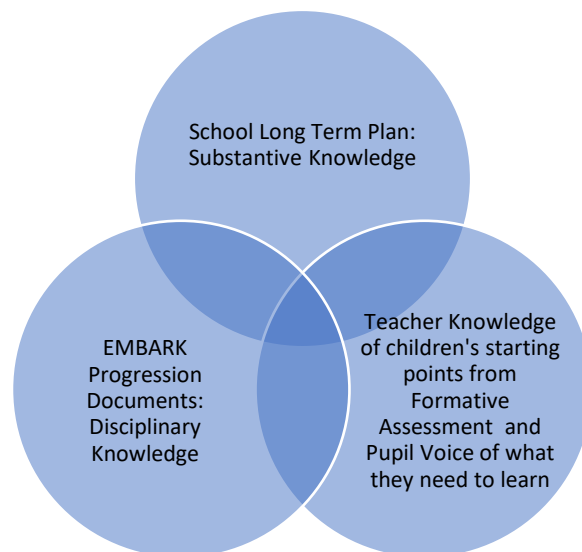


Figure 1: Information used to Shape Planning of Units of Learning

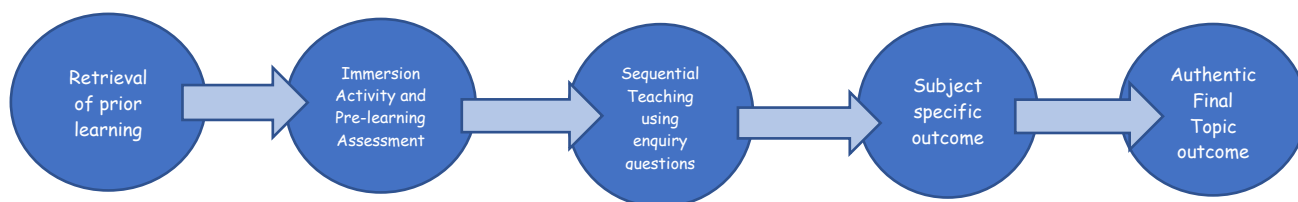


Figure 2: The Sequence of Learning

Planning Rooted in Accurate Assessment:

Learning experiences will only meet the needs of all learners if it builds on current knowledge. Therefore, each unit begins with formative assessment through an **immersion activity**. An immersion activity could be, for example: Exploration of artefacts with children provided with challenge questions, to probe their understanding.

The children's current knowledge is then gathered and assessed through a pre-topic record of learning, for example, a topic Knowledge Mind Map or 'Thinking Square', when children answer questions posed.

Knowledge Mind Maps- are a method of presenting knowledge in a brain-friendly way by making notes (Eva Hoffman 2001), which helps children to remember better, organise better and identify knowledge gaps. Mind mapping brings together the left-brain words, syntax, logic and order, with the right brain, colour, images and the 'bigger picture'. Research shows more connections are made in the brain when both hemispheres work in harmony. In order to use mind-mapping effectively, children will be taught the skills of mind mapping in discrete lessons, before engaging in the process, as part of their curriculum. Age-appropriate examples of mind maps have been developed, so that all children can access the process.

This pre-learning assessment process provides the teacher with an accurate understanding of the different levels of knowledge across the class. It is used to inform the development of the sequences of learning.

Planning Shaped by Children's Voice:

As part of the pre-learning assessment, teachers gather the children's voice about their learning. After assessing what knowledge they have, the knowledge they need to find out is discussed. Children then help to co-construct questions to explore within their learning.

Planned Sequences of Subject Specific Disciplinary and Substantive Knowledge:

The Planning Sequence which is followed is:

1. Teachers take the **substantive knowledge** to be taught from the school's Long-Term plan (National Curriculum content), to develop an **enquiry question**, to focus the children's learning over the topic.

2. Ensure the core **high quality text** and supplementary texts support the intended learning.
3. Develop an **authentic final outcome**, so each subject outcome from each can be applied in a meaningful way.
4. Generate **subject specific outcomes** - the exit knowledge to be used in creating a final outcome. Then break this down to identify what the children need to learn, in order to succeed in this final outcome.
5. Develop a series of enquiry questions for each unit linked to objectives.
6. **Units of learning** are then refined to achieve deep learning in small steps, and vocabulary to be taught is added.

This planned learning clarifies the disciplinary knowledge, substantive knowledge and vocabulary, which will come together in the lesson. These units of learning will have the golden thread of a term's Global theme woven throughout the learning.

The Connected Curriculum:

Each planned sequence of learning for a subject will, where possible, link together and be applied in the **Authentic Final Outcome**. This will have a real purpose and will celebrate the knowledge learnt, for example, in a unit build around **'Peace and Conflict'**, children may learn the chronology of WWII in History, Report writing in English, structures in Design Technology, European countries and cities in Geography and about war artists using 'en plein' air painting to record in Art. All this knowledge may then be applied in creating a Newspaper, for a set date during the war.

The Impact of our Curriculum

There are a number of ways which the impact of the curriculum is measured across a topic, year and a child's journey through school:

Pre-learning revisited:

Children revisit their pre-learning assessment at the end of a topic. This enables them to evidence their progress by adding acquired knowledge and vocabulary through, for example, adding to a mind map, 'Thinking Square' or answering the same question more effectively using their learnt knowledge.

Formative Assessment:

Teachers make assessments of children's progress throughout a unit, against the age appropriate knowledge planned.

Book Study/Pupil Discussion:

Teachers use regular and robust triangulated **monitoring**, to gauge the impact of our curriculum. Leaders at all levels review learning, talking with our children, **analysing** outcomes in books and on displays, and then **evaluating** this, to provide feedback, to move both children's progress and curriculum design forward.

Authentic Final Outcome:

The final outcome is celebrated and reviewed against the intended knowledge to be taught.

Strands of Outcomes:

Outcomes-Academic Attainment:

We aim for our children's attainment and progress to be in line with, or exceeding their potential, based on their starting point, and plan additional input if this not the case. We measure attainment using national data, NFER test data and formative assessment. We use regular inter-school monitoring to ensure assessments are consistent, and identify areas where we can move practice forward. This moderation is organised across different curriculum areas across EMBARK, through the collaborative teams.

We measure progress across a year by having a clear understanding of children's starting points each year, at three Assessment points, and at the beginning of each topic, depending on the subject being assessed.

Outcomes- Values and Attitudes:

We measure attainment through the development of well-rounded citizens, with a clear understanding of values, such as love, responsibility and friendship etc...

Children will also feel confident to address negative stereotyping, through investigating similarities and differences, as well as promoting acceptance, diversity, citizenship and human rights.

These are monitored through daily observations of the children's interactions with peers, known adults, and in the wider community.

Outcomes- Learning Dispositions:

We measure children's learning dispositions, in terms of levels of resilience, motivation and a growth mindset, when faced with different types of challenge. They should develop attitudes and dispositions to make a positive contribution to the world. Our daily interactions in children's learning provide a regular check on this.

Outcomes- Knowledge of the Global Themes:

We measure children's knowledge of the world, by their ability to make sense of an increasingly globalized, complex and rapidly changing world, and give their views on it. They should be able to make suggestions and decisions for the right reasons and in the best interests of our community. They should become more confident in speaking about current issues, through collaborative learning activities. They should be able to decide what is right and what is wrong, and become resilient to the influence of others. The children should develop an awareness of how their own actions can impact others and the wider community. Our aim is that they will go out into the world and make a difference in their own life and to that of others. Our daily conversations with the children allow us to measure the development of this.