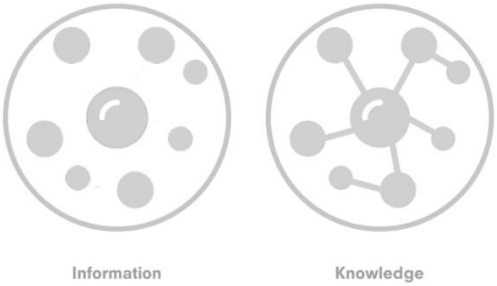
Principles of Curriculum Design at Longman's Hill CP School

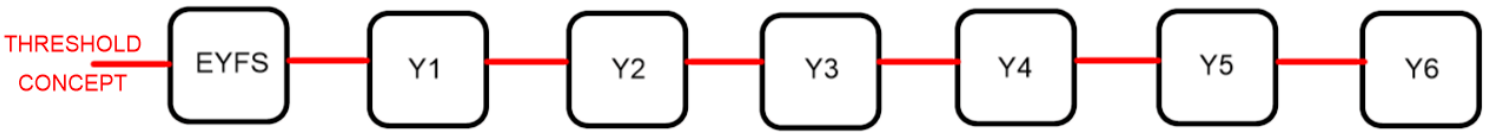
The 3 BASIC PRINCIPLES upon which we have based our curriculum are:

1. In the real world, subjects are not split up separately; that is why we choose to deliver the curriculum in a cross curricular way whenever possible.

2. Knowledge and Information are not the same thing. Learning happens when pieces of separate information are connected in a meaningful way to create knowledge AND this knowledge must be committed to long term memory before we can say something has been learned (as opposed to being taught or experienced). To commit knowledge to long term memory requires time and repetition, with spaces between.



We have identified key concepts in each curriculum area (known as threshold concepts) which are revisited often throughout school, with spacing in between. These run like a learning thread through every year group across school. We also use 'Do Nows' in lessons to revisit concepts and ideas.



3. We propose that learning cannot be seen/ evidenced in the short term- to commit knowledge to long term memory takes time and repetition.

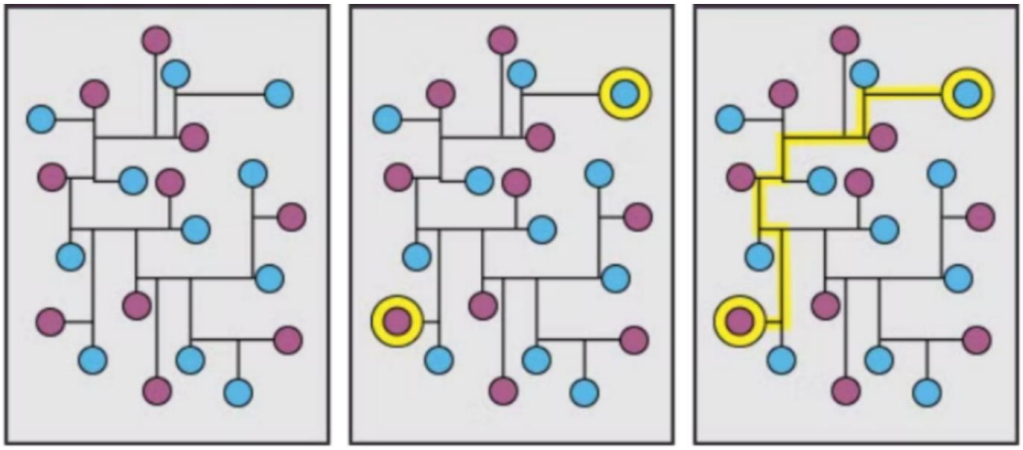
How our curriculum provides challenge and support

At Longman's Hill, we have designed a connected curriculum inspired by Donald Hebb's neurological research around the neuro science of learning; 'what fires together wire together.' Subjects like Geography, History, Art, R.E, DT and Computing are taught in sequences of learning which have been carefully designed to provide meaningful connections between prior learning and new information. Other subjects such as PSHCE, French and Music are taught discretely but connections are made where possible.



We know that neurological connections are fundamental to learning and have built a connected curriculum to provide the elasticity needed to both support and challenge pupils. Retrieval practice in foundation subjects allows children to fire up the knowledge base they have acquired as well as give consistent exposure to the threshold concepts we have identified. This means that children are given plenty of access to lower order thinking, consistently, in order to build a solid foundation on which to make higher order connections.

Our stretch-a-connection challenges means children are encouraged to find more insightful, sophisticated connections within and across their knowledge schemas beyond the connections we have planned for. We believe, that children who have grasped the basis of a concept should always strive to contextualise and connect it to other areas of their knowledge and really consider its dimensions. When pupils have built enough of a solid, well organised knowledge base, we believe children will access higher order thinking and therefore, sophisticated interdisciplinary connections.



Knowledge

Opportunity for a stretched connection

connection stretched