



Curriculum Update

March 2022

Our role as educators means that we are the people who offer powerful and shared knowledge to young people. That knowledge comes from centuries of learning and exploration and is powerful because it enables young people to interpret their world: it is shared, because all our students should be exposed to it. But what if our students do not see themselves and their ancestors as included in that world? What if they cannot recognise or relate to the information being shared? If knowledge is powerful when shared, knowledge that is relevant when shared must surely be empowering.

The key theoretical underpinning of an inclusive curriculum is that we all participate in each other's learning, and that includes teachers learning from, and listening to their students. In this update to our Change@CCHS initiative we explore in depth what an inclusive curriculum looks like, and how we have engaged our students in what has been a truly collaborative process.

The references made to the Offensive Language Policies for English and History can be found attached and on our website.

Mrs Ledwidge, Deputy Headteacher and Change Project Leader

The following provides an overview of curriculum updates in English, Geography, History and RS, as of January 2022. To receive feedback on the changes made, as well as to receive ideas for further changes that could be incorporated in the future, this document was shared with all CCHS students and then discussed during Student Voice and Sixth Form Council meetings.

Miss Pocock, School Development Leader and Subject Leader for Geography

ENGLISH

Year 7

- Novel studied: Either *Noughts and Crosses* (directly addressing racism) or *Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (directly addressing anti-Semitism).
- The Year 7 Poetry unit has been rewritten with the majority of poems featured, being written by writers of colour.
- The Shakespeare unit features performances by diverse actors used to demonstrate monologues in action on stage.



Year 8

- Our 'Many Voices' unit has replaced 'Texts from Different Cultures' and has been developed over the last two years: this unit focuses mostly on poetry (although there is some prose), all from writers of colour. It is now prioritised as the first unit studied and explicitly explores 'decolonisation' as a concept. Authors and poets studied include Maya Angelou and John Agard. Texts studied include *Unknown Girl* (by Moniza Alvi) and *Small Island* (by Andrea Levy).
- The Chaucer unit now delves into the background and etymology of the English Language.
- Travel writing unit: this by nature explores representations of place through language.



Year 9

- War poetry unit: now includes a celebration of non-white soldiers (but, despite extensive research, the scope for including non-white authors / poets from this era is quite limited).
- Mr Carter has worked with our Year 10 Diversity Prefects who signed off on a protocol which outlines how and why books featuring offensive language are studied.
- Novels studied: *Of Mice and Men* or *Lord of the Flies* (both mentioned explicitly in the Policy for Offensive Language). The protocol agreed by the Diversity Prefects addresses explicitly how and why these texts will be taught. In addition, there are opportunities through the study of these texts to discuss ideas by leading writers e.g., Reni Eddo-Lodge.

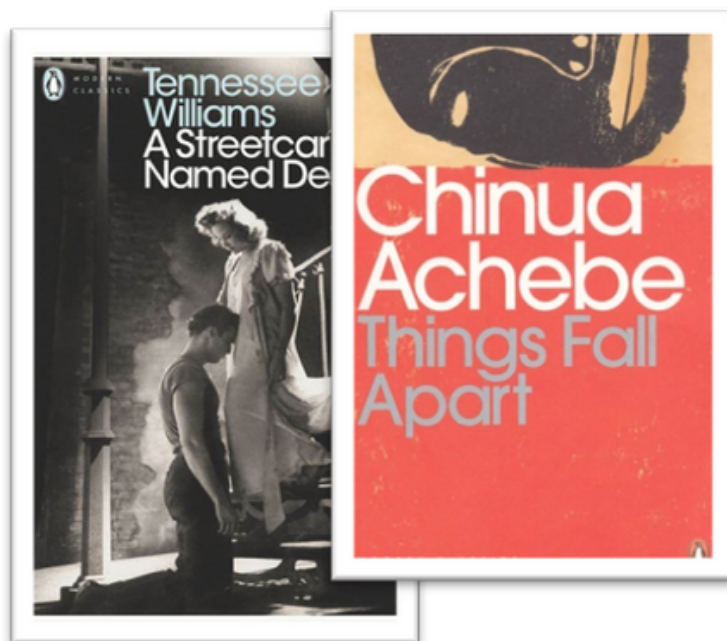


Year 10 and 11 (GCSE)

- English Language course: where possible, extracts from non-white writers are studied (the Department has created their own resources to overcome the limitations put in place by the examination board).
- English Literature: where possible, writers of a diverse ethnic background are studied in the unseen poetry unit.

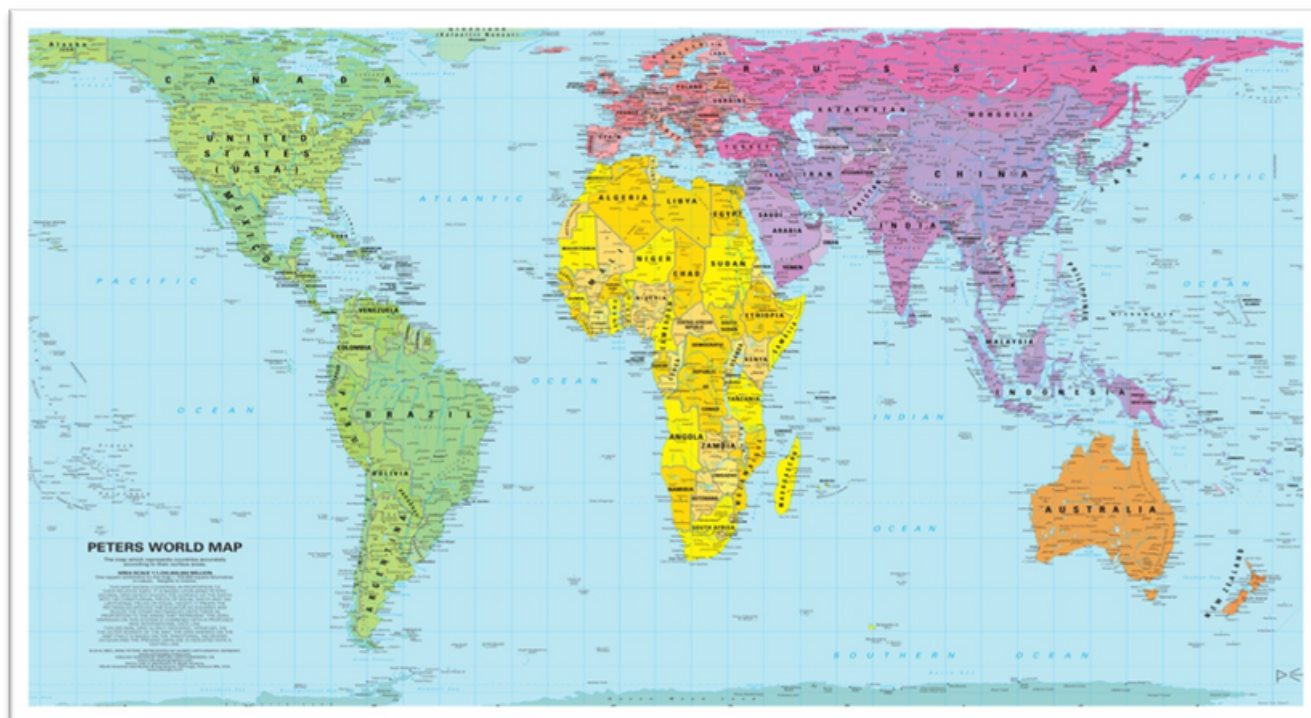
Year 12 and 13 (A level)

- Anthology: this is set by the examining board and focuses primarily on white poets; very limited perspectives explored. Mr Carter has gone beyond the limitations of the specification by adding to the anthology with more diverse and more modern writers – students are made aware that this is beyond the examination requirements / specification. Every poem studied is accompanied by an additional poem by a writer of colour.
- Shakespeare: Othello is studied in Year 12 which opens up the discussion regarding white voices speaking about racism and representations of characters of colour.
- The Cambridge Companion to Race in Shakespeare is now used in Year 12 – this is a very recently published text responding to the play with up-to-date criticism.
- The play A Streetcar Named Desire contains racist language; in teaching this unit Miss Harrison carefully flags up the language ahead of study and its use is discussed. The language is then not vocalised in lessons.
- Extra-curricular opportunities for celebrating diversity are also looked for e.g., a recent English lecture in our lecture series on Chinua Achebe and postcolonial theory delivered live from Spain by Dr Terri Ochiagha of RHUL.



GEOGRAPHY

The use of language in Geography is always carefully considered and discussed with our students e.g., references to indigenous communities and to High-Income Countries (HIC) / Mid-Income Countries (MIC) / Low-Income Countries (LIC) (rather than out-dated terms such as Most Developed Countries (MEDC)/Less Developed Countries (LEDC) or worse Third World / First World). These discussions are held with all students to ensure we are using inclusive language in class and within our written work.

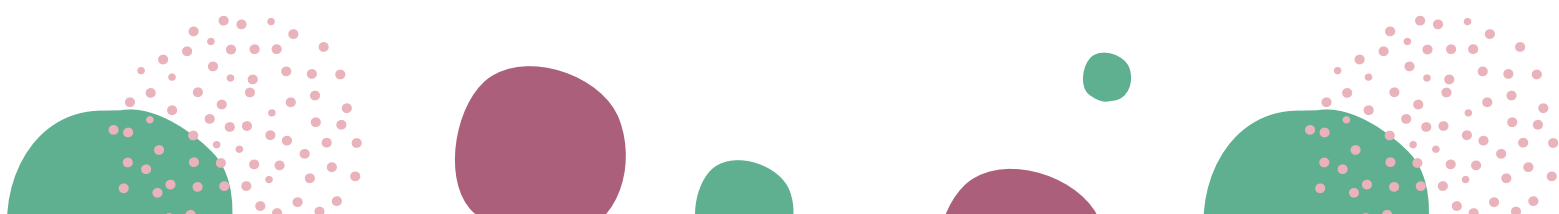


Key Stage 3

- New schemes of work in Year 7 ('Our Place in the World' and 'Getting to Know Our Continent') have been designed to encourage greater critical thinking about how the world is represented (map projections and purpose) and how the world is classified (e.g. the issues with using broad categories such as 'higher income' and 'lower income' to understand different countries). These units also look at key concepts such as 'development', using Haiti as an example to explore the long-term impacts of colonisation.
- We are moving away from continent-focused units of study (e.g., 'Exploring Africa' or 'Exploring Asia') to thematic units of study based on lines of latitude (e.g., 'The Tropics') to encourage more critical thinking about the differences and similarities between places and the factors that influence these, whilst also learning about a wide range of different places and societies.

Key Stage 4 and 5 (GCSE and A Level)

- Where the specification allows, we choose a wide range of case studies to complement our theoretical understanding e.g., at GCSE – Brazil, China, Nepal, and Nigeria, and at A Level – Bangladesh, Cameroon, the Philippines and Uganda.
- Even though the specification usually requires us to focus on the social, economic and environmental factors contributing to different processes and phenomena (e.g. those factors influencing access to healthcare), we go beyond the specification to also consider the political factors (e.g. the role of colonialism in shaping the distribution of healthcare services in Uganda).



HISTORY

Year 7

- New scheme of work: includes 'meanwhile, elsewhere...' / 'meanwhile, she...' homework tasks to enable exploration of histories from other parts of the world / female histories. There are also new units focused on the Silk Road and Medieval African Civilisations (Mali and Benin are the focus for this).
- Within units focusing on Roman Britain and Tudor Britain, Black Romans and Black / gay Tudors are studied (and there is discussion here about why people are unaware that black communities existed during Roman / Tudor times).
- The role of queens within medieval history is now explicitly explored.
- Within these schemes of work, the early modern persecution of minority groups is explicitly called out and discussed.

Year 8

- New for 2021: tweaks made to existing schemes of work to include 18th and 19th century minority British experiences (linking to tolerance); definitions and roles of enslaved people within the Atlantic Slave Trade unit; and the Moghul Empire (as part of the India unit). The so-called 'scramble for Africa' is also explored.
- New for September 2022: plans to further develop the focus on Benin started in Year 7, and to also explore the growth of democracy.

Year 9

- Updated schemes of work: experience of Empire soldiers in WWI and WWII; the Africa unit now includes consideration of the decolonisation process / neo-colonialism in Benin and Nigeria; and there is greater focus on migration and the Commonwealth. The focus on US civil rights has also been expanded to include UK civil rights (both black civil rights and LGBTQ+).
- From September 2023, study of the Russian revolution will be introduced, along with the Cold War and The Troubles.



Key Stage 4 (GCSE)

Off-specification topics are difficult to include owing to time-restrictions and the content-heavy course.

Key Stage 5 (A Level)

British Empire unit now taught – the department are trying to move away from textbook examples to provide different perspectives.



RELIGIOUS STUDIES/PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

It is important to note that at Key Stage 3, the RS curriculum is shaped by the Essex Agreed Syllabus for RE which states that:

- “The teaching must reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain”
- “Pupils must spend time studying each of the principal religions represented in Great Britain (Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) and secular world views, such as Humanism. It is recognised that it will not be possible to cover all religions in equal depth”

The RS Department weave diversity-themes into all schemes of work both explicitly and implicitly.

Year 7

- The six major world faiths are studied (a general approach is taken to give an overview of the key teachings and beliefs of each faith – as such, issues such as faith-based discrimination are not explored at this stage).

Year 8

- The ‘Rights and Responsibilities’ unit enables exploration of diversity issues e.g., discrimination.
- The Islam unit includes a focus on debunking myths and perceptions of Islam / Muslim communities.

Year 9

- New Religious Movements unit – by nature this considers more modern religions / faiths and allows for learning about faiths and cultures not previously studied.
- There is scope for further exploration of modern / current issues relating to equality and to update the Inspirational People unit to include more current (and diverse) examples.



