



Buckton Vale  
Primary School

# Humanities Policy

## **Main purposes of this policy**

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Humanities curriculum taught at Primary School. The policy reflects the work of the teaching staff and has been compiled by the Humanities co-ordinators. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Humanities co-ordinator and all class teachers.

## **The policy aims:**

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school
- To state the school's approach to this subject in order to promote public and particularly parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.

## **The importance of Humanities in the curriculum**

We have developed a creative broad and balanced curriculum which will offer children the opportunity to study their topics through more cross curricular planning and activities throughout our planned themes as stated in our long term overview plans. We believe in offering a curriculum incorporating key life skills that could transfer into life long learning skills. By improving the use of the local area and increasing out of classroom learning experiences children's motivation levels are improved and this impacts cross-curricula as children learn to transfer the skills taught.

## **The importance of the different aspects of the Humanities curriculum**

### **History**

History fires pupils' curiosity about the past in Britain and the wider world. Pupils consider how the past influences the present; what past societies were like; how these societies organised their politics, and what beliefs and cultures influenced people's actions. As they do this, pupils develop a chronological framework for their knowledge of significant events and people. They see the diversity of human experience and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. What they learn can influence their decisions about personal choices, attitudes and values. In History pupils find evidence, weigh it up and reach their own conclusions. To do this they need to be able to research, sift through evidence and argue their point of view – skills that are prized in adult life.

History, National Curriculum for England 1999

### **History encourages pupils to:**

- Have a lasting interest in, and enjoyment of learning about the past.
- Develop a sense of time (chronology), recognising how time is measured and that some things change and some things stay the same
- Investigate how and why events happen and how they may be linked
- Consider what it was like to live in different periods and what motivated the people who lived then – and that we cannot think in the way they thought
- Recognise that there are some things we can never know about the past and that History has to be constructed from the bits of the past that have survived
- Understand that people interpret the past differently and use different ways to present their ideas
- Make thoughtful use of a variety of sources to find out about the past;
- Communicate their ideas in a variety of ways and with clarity and independence
- To help pupils develop a sense of identity by learning about the development of the U.K. , Europe and the rest of the world

- To emphasize the importance of equality of opportunity particularly by contributing to the pupils' knowledge and understanding of people in other societies, religions, cultures and countries as well as their own.

## **Geography**

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human world, using different scales of enquiry to help pupils to do this. It also helps the children to view people, places and environments from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, understanding of maps and a range of investigative and problem solving skills, both inside and outside the classroom. As such, it prepares pupils for adult life and employment. Geography is a focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development. It is also an important link between the natural and social sciences. As pupils study Geography, they encounter different societies and cultures. This helps them realise how nations rely on each other. It can inspire them to think about their own place in the world, their values and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment.

### **Geography encourages pupils to:**

- Stimulate an interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical conditions on the Earth
- Foster a sense of wonder at the beauty of the world surrounding them
- To develop an informed concern about the quality of the environment and the future of the human habitat
- Enhance their sense of responsibility for the care of the Earth and its people and secure their commitment to promoting and living sustainable lifestyles
- Develop skills of critical enquiry and an ability to handle and interpret information, through asking and answering geographical questions and using ICT to communicate with and explore a variety of people, places and environments across the world
- Explore values and attitudes about complex issues
- Study the above across a range of places, cultures and environments at a variety of scales, from local to global
- Foster a sense of understanding about how we are interconnected and interdependent with other people and ecosystems around the world.

## **Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability, in line with the School Policy for Equal Opportunities.

## **Planning**

We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school. Long term planning is done on whole school basis as part of our two year plan for Key Stage 1 and a four year plan for Key Stage 2 which is determined by the requirements of the 2014 Curriculum and the EYFS Curriculum. Humanities topics are based on themes given in the 2014 curriculum. Planning is monitored by the Head Teacher and the Humanities Co-ordinators. Lessons are evaluated after each lesson and this is then used to inform future planning.

## **Cross curricular opportunities**

## **English**

Humanities contribute significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy are linked to the Humanities topic being studied in class. Children develop their literacy skills through composing/reading reports, letters, explanatory texts and partaking in debates of a historical and geographical nature.

## **Mathematics**

Humanities contribute to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers and develop analytical skills e.g. analysing population statistics and time lines. Children also have the opportunity to learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

## **Computing (ICT)**

We use computing in Humanities teaching where appropriate and we meet the statutory requirement for children to use computing as part of their work in Humanities at Key Stage 2. Children use computing in Humanities to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet. Children have the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images. The use of Ipads enables children to access and collect data and research in the field, having access to technological enhancements right at their finger tips.

## **Personal, Social, Citizenship, Health and Emotional Education (PSCHE)**

Humanities contribute significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship health and emotional education. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions such as how society should respond to poverty, homelessness, recycling and how environment areas changed for better or for worse. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognize and challenge stereotypes and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others. Thus Humanities in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship and community cohesion with other communities on a local to global scale.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through Humanities. For example, in Geography, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and how we as a school community can contribute to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world, a theme which links to and is covered in our RE work. In each Key Stage's long term planning, events such as Remembrance Day are highlighted as a significant learning event. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong, when studying topics such as child labour in Victorian Britain. In Humanities, we help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society past and present works to resolve difficult issues of economic development.

## **Teaching Humanities to Children with Special Needs**

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At Wild Bank Community School we teach Humanities to all children, whatever their ability. Our teaching of Humanities forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children which provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties. We take into account the targets set for individual children in their Portfolio or EHCP.

### **Teaching and learning**

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources. In each Key Stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories in History teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating an interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions about information they are given, such as 'How do we know?' We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use ICT in Geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue.

### **Foundation Stage**

In the Foundation Stage children must be supported in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. We follow the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (May 2012) which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. "Humanities" directly relates to the area of development "Understanding of the World – People and Communities and The World". We provide activities such as examining photos of themselves at birth and looking for change over time, using stories that introduce a sense of time and people from the past, comparing artefacts from different times e.g. teddies and making the most of opportunities to value children's histories from their own and other cultures. For learning about the world, we encourage children to be curious about their local environment eg commenting on and asking questions about their playground or local park, discussing features they like/dislike. We also encourage the children to feel a sense of belonging to their own community e.g. knowing the people who help us in school and in the neighbourhood, as well as getting to know cultures and beliefs of other communities' e.g. celebrating Chinese New Year.

### **Resources**

Planning includes expectations for pupils to use a variety of resources across the school, including artefacts, posters, textbooks, newspapers, paintings, documents and DVDs, which are kept in topic boxes located in one central store room. Books related to each topic are kept in the Humanities store room and may also be found in the Library. Each class has a timeline with dates relevant to the topics of that year group. We have a range of educational software in the computer suite and on the I pads to support the children's individual research.

### **Assessment**

We assess children's work in Humanities by making informal judgements as we observe them during each Humanities lesson. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary. At the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of

each pupil if they have met or exceeded the unit objectives, this is then recorded through SPTO. This will be monitored every term by the humanities co-ordinators.

### **Field Work**

Field work is integral to good humanities teaching, and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

At Key Stage 1, we let all the children carry out an investigation into the local environment, and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site.

Key Stage 2, the children do a study of the local area. We also offer them the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Robin Wood.

For health and safety issues regarding field work, our school follows the guidance contained in its policies on off-site visits and on health and safety.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The coordination of the humanities curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leaders, who also:

- Support colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in humanities, by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- Informs the school improvement plan and indicates area of further development;
- Uses specially allocated co-ordinator time to review evidence of the children's work, observe humanity lessons and audit and stock humanity resources.

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme.

Signed .....  
(Chair of Governors)

Date .....

Signed .....

Date ..... (Headteacher)