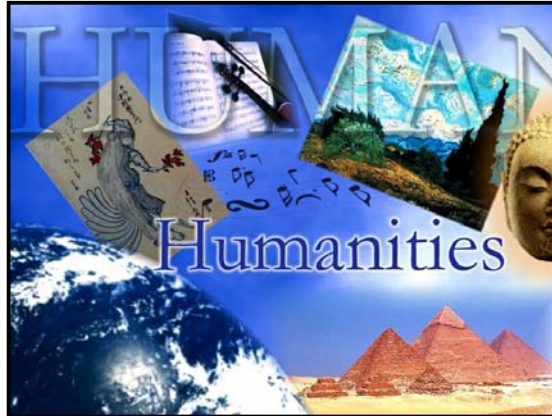


St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Humanities Policy



It is through learning about the fascinating stories and ideas in the world around us that we continue to live out our mission statement here at St. Joseph's School;

“We live, love and learn by the example of Jesus”

We also, in our teaching of the Humanities curriculum, prepare our children in the five outcomes of the “Every Child Matters” document.

Geography

Aims and objectives

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in other cultures. St Josephs have undertaken an initiative where by each

class gets the opportunity to sponsor a child from different cultures. In this, the children get the chance to learn about the sponsored child's culture as well as their way of life. With this exciting initiative, St Joseph's have embraced it's Global Community and are keen to teach tolerance and understanding of differences to our children. Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognize the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

The aims of geography are:

- to enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world;
- to stimulate pupil curiosity, interest and enjoyment in Geography;
- to increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country;
- to allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps;
- to enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level;
- to encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means;
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way;
- to increase awareness of how to achieve community cohesion in our school, local, national and global community.

History

Aims and objectives

The aim of history teaching here at St. Joseph's School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. Thus they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain

and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school, history makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

The aims of history in our school are:

- to foster in children an interest in the past and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- to cultivate a sense of the past and a knowledge of events, their causes, effects and the people involved in and affected by them.
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- to understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture and to study some aspects of European history;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.
- to develop a sense of chronology;
- to develop an appreciation of how we gain knowledge about the past.
- to understand and confidently use the terminology specific to the subject.
- to encourage open, enquiring minds that are aware of the fact that individual views will be biased.
- to encourage the development of informed opinions and to support such opinions with reasoned arguments, communicating ideas and opinions effectively.
- to enable pupils to be able to work both independently and co-operatively.
- to enable pupils to perceive History in the context of a wider body of knowledge, vocabulary and skills
- to encourage pupils to recall and apply their knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations.
- to refer to learning from previous years.

Humanities

1. Teaching and Learning Styles

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Humanities lessons. We are aware that children have preferred styles of learning, and incorporate visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles into our teaching. 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 questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, aerial photographs, historical artefacts, primary sources and we enable them to use ICT where this serves to enhance their learning. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of places and events that have taken place in the past. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real' geographical and historical activities where we encourage children to question the validity of their sources and information.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Our differentiation can be either by task or by outcome. We achieve this by:

setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group;
providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
creating opportunities to express information in varying ways employing a variety of media (computers, video, audio CD, extended writing, illustrations, diagrams, graphs, questionnaires, role play);

presenting lessons using a variety of learning styles (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic);

using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

2. Humanities Curriculum Planning

We use the LCP scheme of work for both Humanity subjects as the basis for our curriculum planning, but we have adapted this to the local context by building on the successful units of work already in place. 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.

We carry out curriculum planning in Humanities in two phases (long-term, medium-term). The long-term plan maps the topics studied in each term during each key stage; the Humanities subject leader works this out in conjunction with teaching colleagues in each year group and the children study the topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

As the basis for our medium-term plans, we use the LCP scheme of work which gives details of each unit of work for each term. The Humanities subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. These plans list the specific learning objectives of each lesson. We annotate the plans as we teach them and cross out lessons that are not relevant. The concepts and skills we are focusing on are highlighted. The class teacher keeps these plans, although s/he and the Humanities subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis. The plans are also stored on the shared drive in the computer suite, so they can be easily accessed by both the subject leader and any staff wishing to view them (e.g. if a teacher is new to the year group).

3. The Contributions of Humanities to teaching in other Curriculum Areas

English

Humanities contributes 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 the Literacy Hour 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 teaching contributes 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.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT in Humanities teaching where appropriate and we meet the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their work in Humanities at Key Stage 2. Children use ICT in humanities to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet and Encarta. Children have the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images and they communicate with other children in other schools and countries by using e-mail.

We are currently introducing a Learning Platform. This will enable the children to access Humanities learning materials before and after school, submit work electronically and access stimulating learning resources. Parents and guardians will consequently be able to support children by accessing homework and resources online and access home-school discussion groups. This development will enable the school to have online access to assessment data.

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

Humanities contributes 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 we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation 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 Key Stage 1's history unit of work, 'What are we remembering on Remembrance Day?' 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. Humanities programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multicultural British society of today.

4. Teaching Humanities to Children with Special Needs

At St. Joseph's School we teach humanities to all children, whatever their ability. Humanities forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Humanities teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

5. Assessment and Recording

We assess the children's work in Humanities by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. We record the attainment grades on a class grid. We use these to plan future work with that pupil, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. This also allows the teacher or subject-leader to track progression for a class or for individual children.

The geography subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio which shows what the expected level of achievement is in geography in each year of the school.

6. Resources

We have sufficient resources in our school to be able to teach all the Humanities units in the QCA Scheme of Work. Our main resource is the LCP planning file, which provides medium and short-term lesson plans and necessary resources to deliver the QCA units of study. We keep these resources in a central store with our other Humanities resources for particular topics. In the library we have a good supply of Humanities topic books and a range of educational software to support the children's individual research.

7. Field Work

Fieldwork is integral to good Humanities teaching and we include opportunities where appropriate to involve children in practical Humanities research and enquiry. For example, when studying Humanities topics children will have the opportunity to carry out field-sketches, traffic surveys, sketch maps, questionnaires, visit historical sites and museums, use the digital camera to take photos. We also offer

year 6 children the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to the Isle of Wight where the children get the benefits of carrying out historical and geographical enquiries.

8. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in Humanities is the responsibility of the subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of Humanities, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the headteacher a SDP report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. The subject leader has specially-allocated time in which to fulfil this role by reviewing samples of children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

Signed:

Date: June 2009