



# St. Thomas' CE Primary School

## Humanities Policy

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This policy reflects the school's values in relation to the teaching and learning of History and Geography. It sets out a framework within which staff can operate and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. History and Geography are foundation subjects within the

National Curriculum. Both subjects are taught in a cross curricular way through the Narrative Immersion approach to our school's curriculum. All staff are aware of their role in providing purposeful, stimulating and challenging curriculum coverage of History and Geography through the progression of skills and knowledge from Year 1 through to Year 6. The EYFS classes cover basic Historical and Geographical knowledge and skills through relevant Understanding of the World statements in the 'Development Matters' and includes children's own personal history and natural enquiry of the world.

## **AIMS**

**History** – We aim to provide pupils with opportunities to investigate the past and make sense of why and when important events happened, as well as introducing them to key historical figures. History also contributes to children's knowledge of other people's countries and cultures.

**Geography** – We aim to provide pupils with an opportunity to study the world and the human and physical processes which help to shape it. Pupils have a chance to study their local area and contrast it with other places around the world. Geography enables children to gain a greater understanding of the lives and cultures of people from around the world.

## **TEACHING HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

The teaching of all foundation subjects at St Thomas', including History and Geography, is taught through the Narrative Immersion on a 2 year rolling programme within mini Key Stages.

**History** starts from the child's personal history where children are encouraged to remember and talk about significant events within their own lives. Teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We examine historical artifacts and primary sources. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past which we bring to life through drama (Narrative Immersion). We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that sources can be biased – we encourage the children to ask questions about information they are given. Children use timelines to support their understanding of chronology and are encouraged to make links in their learning by comparing the periods of history that they have studied. Teachers develop the children's knowledge through a range of activities and the children are taught lots of historical vocabulary which they use to form historically based questions.

Children at St Thomas' learn about the different periods of history by exploring the following historical concepts:

- Continuity & Change
- Cause & Consequence
- Similarity, Difference & Significance
- Civilisation
- Settlement
- Invasion
- Trade

**Geography** starts from the child's immediate environment and the child's own effect on that environment. Through visits to the local area, their egocentric world is extended through first hand experiences, building up their geographical knowledge and skills. As they become able to tackle more abstract ideas they move onto studying places around the world, hot and cold countries, thinking about what it is like to live there, how we can look after our environment and looking in more detail about what our environment is like. In Geography, we encourage children to ask as well as answer questions and offer them the opportunity to use a variety of methods to gain information. This includes maps, data, field trips, photos, pictures, geographical equipment. Wherever possible, the children take part in practical activities to experience 'real' geography.

Children at St Thomas' learn about different places in the world by exploring the following geographical concepts:

- **Space** (the way things are distributed over an area)
- **Place** (an area defined by the things in it)
- **Scale** (how closely we look at an area)
- **Environment** (physical features e.g. river/beach/hill and human features e.g. buildings / roads / bridges)
- **Environmental Impact & sustainability** (the changes and consequences between natural and human environments)
- **Interconnections** (the links between places, environment and people)
- **Cultural Awareness & Diversity** (the diversity of people and their shared, common and different connections to the natural world)

## **CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS**

History and Geography topics provide many opportunities for cross-curricular links with other areas of the curriculum. Both subjects have strong links with computing - there are opportunities to use the internet for research and the computers can be used for writing and presentation purposes. There are also many ways to link History and Geography with Literacy, such as writing letters / diary entries / weather reports etc. Children develop oracy through discussing historical questions, or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. Links with Numeracy can be achieved through work on timelines/handling data etc. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through activities such as creating timelines and through sequencing events in their own lives. The Narrative Immersion curriculum allows for unlimited opportunities for links between the humanities and other subjects.

## **PLANNING**

History and geography are foundation subjects in the National Curriculum. We tie in the national programmes of study with the Narrative Immersion curriculum and use this as the basis for our curriculum planning in history and geography. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into these units so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in history and geography in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the themes/topics studied in each term during each mini key stage on a 2 year rolling programme. Some themes/topics have a particular historical or geographical focus. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

Our medium-term plans give details of each unit of work for each term - these plans list the specific skills to be taught.

The class teacher writes individual lesson plans for each history and geography lesson (short-term plans) based on the needs of the children in the class.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The National Curriculum states that: 'By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme (History and Geography) of study.'

A range of different assessment approaches are used together to assess pupils' knowledge. Formative assessments are designed to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge of specific content and concepts. Teachers draw valid inferences from formative assessment and can therefore meaningfully identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge which can be done during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary (see marking policy). We use this information to plan future work.

Class teachers should assess against the progression of **knowledge and skills** on a termly basis. One assessment page is used for the class as a whole. Teachers use the electronic document to highlight where the majority of children are working within the class (the 'average' child). They then add the initials of any children working 'below average' or 'above average' in the appropriate boxes. Progression of **knowledge and skills** assessments are passed on from the previous year group and added to so that teachers can clearly see what **knowledge** and skills the children have previously learnt and know where they are heading so they can plan accordingly.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION**

All children at St Thomas' are entitled to access the History and Geography programmes of study at a level appropriate to their needs, regardless of race, sex, religion, ethnic group, culture, ability or SEND needs. Every effort is made to ensure that activities are equally interesting to boys and girls and reflect our multicultural society. Full integration and

participation is achieved for those children with specific needs by appropriate planning and differentiation by the class teacher.

At St Thomas' we teach History and Geography to all children, whatever their ability and individual need. Through our History and Geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, new arrivals and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. Teachers' planning will set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, so that everyone can take part in lessons fully and effectively. Teachers will take specific action to respond to pupils' diverse needs.

Through the study of localities, cultures and countries, Geography takes an active role in promoting equal opportunities.

## **RESOURCES**

Resources are available for each Key Stage, with any new purchases made when budgets are available. Staff make requests for resources to aid in the effective teaching of topics throughout the year.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

We believe that staff should possess the subject knowledge required by the National Curriculum and should be able to teach their topics with enthusiasm, confidence and enjoyment. We support staff development in this curriculum area through the attendance of specific training, including subject leader courses, staff meetings, sharing of ideas and through shared resources on the school system.

## **ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER FOR HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

The subject leader is responsible for the maintenance and development of Geography and History. The History and Geography subject leader is responsible for ensuring quality and raising standards in the subjects by:

- Playing an active role in the development of History and Geography.
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on resources, fieldwork possibilities, curriculum changes, classroom teaching and learning ideas.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, carrying out 'Pupil voice' to gauge views on the subject, checking displays and ensuring teacher's planning meets the National Curriculum objectives.
- Developing the progression map for Geography and History skills and knowledge.
- Auditing and ordering.