

WINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



HUMANITIES POLICY

CONTENTS

1. Our School
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Entitlement
5. Where Does Humanities Happen?
6. Teaching and Learning Styles
7. Progression
8. Differentiation/Special Needs
9. Information and Communication Technology
10. Resources
11. Assessment, Recording and Record Keeping
12. Monitoring and Evaluation
13. Review and Revision

Humanities Policy

1. OUR SCHOOL

Winton Primary School, a purpose built Primary School, was formed from the amalgamation of what were previously two schools – Winton Junior School and Winton First School. Opened in 1993, it shared the site with the long established Winton Boys School until 1995 when they moved to a new school. Buildings previously belonging to the Boys School were pulled down.

Our School is situated in the North Bournemouth suburb of Moordown. It is an urban school with a wide variety of housing nearby, including buildings from the last century when Moordown was a village. The school itself is built on what were previously allotment and a land filled quarry. Interestingly, the rubble from the department store, Beales, bombed in World War II, lies under the school sports field.

Within easy reach of school is the whole of the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch conurbation, the Purbecks, the New Forest and many rural communities.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As teachers, we met and discussed why we wanted to teach Humanities and why we felt it to be so important a part of a child's education. The following was accepted as a fair reflection of our thoughts [1994].

Extending and Nurturing a Child's Innate Curiosity

Children's lives will be enriched if their curiosity is encouraged by talking and exploring and thinking about the variety of physical and human conditions in the past, present and future. For children are part of the society that surrounds them and they have an impulse to be curious about what they see and about the people among whom they live. Children need to understand progressively the interdependence of lands, of peoples, of cultures and of generations within a global ecosystem. Without an historical and geographical perspective, children may build themselves a distorted picture of the world. The aim seeks to foster a desire for learning which will continue for the rest of the children's lives. It may also result in children developing leisure activities, e.g. local history, using museums, rock collecting, etc.

Enquiry and Communication

We believe that studying history and geography are investigative processes which require an enquiry approach. Children must have the opportunity to ask questions, analyse information and communicate knowledge and understanding. By developing children's questioning, we aim to ensure that history and geography help children to explore causes, impacts and consequences leading to sound knowledge, understanding and skill development.

Enjoyment and a Sense of Purpose

These are seen as vital elements. We aim to foster a sense of enjoyment and recognise the importance of spontaneity and excitement in learning. Children must also see a purpose in what they are doing and why they are doing it.

The Link Between Home and School

This should be encouraged. Participation from parents and family is vitally important as the child's viewpoint of the world is moving from an egocentric to a more sociocentric stance.

Teachers have a responsibility to build on children's prior experience of the world – directly and indirectly – and build on it to interpret new experiences.

Spiritual, Moral and Aesthetic Awareness

We aim to encourage an awareness that other people have different personalities, cultures, habits and practices. We also aim to develop empathy, the capacity to begin to understand the viewpoints of others without necessarily agreeing with them. Much of the subject matter of history and geography rouses implicit or explicit moral questions. As children's ability to understand interpretations of history develops, they will be able to explore conflicting viewpoints which will help them to identify and thus challenge racial or other forms of prejudice and stereotyping. In geography, we aim to help pupils build an informed and balanced view of the world and their place in it. We also aim to encourage aesthetic awareness and a sense of wonder in the appreciation of the beauty in natural and man-made phenomena.

Good Citizenship, International Understanding and Environmental Awareness

We aim to foster the idea of good citizenship and community responsibility and to stimulate children's interests and value judgements in issues at local, national, European and global levels. It involves developing an informed concern for the world in which we live, for its people and for the natural environment. And also, where possible, to realise that concern in practical action. This should help to develop in children a positive self-image, leading to confidence and a sense of their own power and an ability to influence their own and other people's future. In a world of change, it is important to prepare children for changes and encouraging autonomy implies that a child will be able to exercise choice.

Fieldwork

We believe that fieldwork is an important way of stimulating children in both history and geography and should be a purposeful and integral part of our planning. We aim to create a minimum entitlement of fieldwork for every child. We also aim to make as full as possible use of the school site.

Cross-Curricular Links

There are important relationships between history and geography and the rest of the curriculum. All subjects have an historical dimension and history allows children to develop skills including communication, numeracy, problem solving, information handling and study skills. Geography has links, too, with the development of mathematical skills, scientific investigation and I.C.T. for example.

Our aim is to explore opportunities to complement and enrich other areas of the curriculum wherever such opportunities exist.

Both Geography and History can make significant contributions to cross-curricular themes and we aim to develop these in our planning especially Environmental education, Health education and Education for economic and industrial understanding.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of the teaching staff will have the responsibility for the teaching of geography and history and they will need to ensure that their own knowledge is continually updated.

The school has a Humanities co-ordinator to assist this process and take specific responsibility for history and geography issues in the school.

It is his or her responsibility to:

- support colleagues in teaching the subject content

- monitor current practice
- instigate and organise teaching programmes, planning documents and schemes of work where necessary
- develop a school policy
- resource the curriculum
- facilitate the assessment of children's work
- be a consultant to colleagues in planning the Humanities content of their teaching
- keep people informed of possible visits and courses
- maintain geography and history curriculum files which include medium term plans

4. ENTITLEMENT

Geography and History are two of the foundation subjects established by the National Curriculum and children are required to follow designated programmes of study in order to achieve particular levels of attainment. The time spent on geography and history in Key Stage 1 is 24 hours and at Key Stage 2 is 36 hours per year.

At Key Stage 1 and 2, the programme of study for geography is divided into two areas:

- knowledge, skills and understanding
- breadth of study

At both Key Stages, the former includes the study of places and the knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes, environmental change and sustainable development.

Key Stage 1 states that the former is to be taught through the study of two localities – that of the school and a locality either in the UK or overseas.

At Key Stage 2, the former is to be taught through the study of two localities – a locality in the UK and a locality in a less economically developed country. Three themes are also to be studied:

- Water
- Settlement
- Environmental Change

At Key Stage 1 and 2, the programme of study for history is divided into two areas:

- knowledge, skills and understanding
- breadth of study

At both Key Stages, the former includes chronological understanding, knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past, historical interpretation, historical enquiry and organisation and communication.

At Key Stage 1, the former is to be taught through changes in their own lives and the way of life of their family, the way of life of people in the more distant past who lived in the local areas of elsewhere in Britain, the lives of significant men, women and children in the history of Britain and the wider world, and past events from the history of Britain and the wider world.

At Key Stage 2, the former should be taught through a local history study, three British history studies, a European history study and a world history study.

5. WHERE DOES HUMANITIES HAPPEN?

- As a major focus in a unit

- As a smaller element in a unit
- As a discrete lesson
- As a talk/presentation given by visitors
- Arising out of class discussion
- In story time
- Through display in the classroom and around the school
- In extra-curricular clubs
- As part of assembly

6. TEACHING & LEARNING STYLES

We believe that good teaching in Humanities should reflect the School Policy which requires the use of a variety of teaching and learning strategies. This is so important in sustaining children's interest. We will include the following in our planning:

- Presentation from pupil
- Knowledge given by the teacher
- Story telling
- Fieldwork, visits to museums and historic sites – individual investigation
 - group investigation
 - interviewing
 - questionnaire
 - surveys
 - field sketching/recording
- Questions and answers
- Individual and group work
- Investigations and enquiries - resolving a problem set
- Use of television, radio, tape, video and film
- Creative activities, e.g. model making and painting
- Use of book, booklets, worksheets, leaflets, maps, plans and atlases
- Role-play and drama - simulation of situations
- Discussion and debate – group., pairs, class
- Use of I.C.T.
- Games – playing games relating to learning
 - devising games relating to learning

7. PROGRESSION

Progression is built into our subject units. Concepts and important skills are introduced appropriately and are then revisited in different contexts. Tasks have to be devised which enable the children to explore the content as well as to develop skills and concepts, in other words to ensure a measure of challenge for children of different aptitudes. This spiral curriculum also ensures that skill and conceptual development occurs not in isolation but in appropriate contexts.

8. DIFFERENTIATION

Children are taught in mixed ability classes. Class teachers have the responsibility for meeting the needs of the most and least able children and thus need a range of teaching and learning strategies that can build on the interests, abilities and experiences of **ALL** the children in the class.

Differentiation requires class teachers to link planning, teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation in a cycle to identify and match task to needs.

We believe effective learning is most likely to occur when:

- Children have the opportunity to clarify tasks and have a clear purpose
- Children have the opportunity to work collaboratively, contributing their strengths and seeking support where necessary
- Teachers have identified what children already know through brainstorming, topic webs or concept maps so that teachers and children can determine what needs to be done. This would allow for a range of starting points and give children responsibility for their own learning.
- Teachers listen and talk to children questioning, clarifying and extending the children's thinking and planning. Some children will need more teacher intervention and support than others. This intervention may mean identifying alternative resources or tasks, or it might be an extension question to develop the child's thinking or line of enquiry.

Differentiation occurs by complex interaction within the classroom. We believe it should be viewed as part of the teaching/learning process, not always as a separate process which takes place before the event, e.g. three graded tasks – high, medium or low, or even 36 individualised worksheets.

9. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for Geography and History [1999] includes this statement:

“Pupils should be given opportunities* to apply and develop their ICT capability through the use of ICT tools to support their learning in all subjects.....”

We believe there is little doubt that humanities learning can be enhanced through the use of ICT and we also believe that ICT will play an increasingly important role in the development of children's knowledge, skills and understanding.

We have three broad objectives to form a basis for this entitlement:

- To enhance their skills of enquiry with databases, spreadsheets and other software
- To provide a range of information sources to enhance their knowledge by providing access to historical knowledge and a knowledge of the culture and character of places using access to CD-ROM, e.g. encyclopaedia, atlas.
- To contribute to children's awareness of the impact of I.T. on a changing world by creating opportunities to discuss how computers are used today and how they have developed.

** At Key Stage 1, there are no statutory requirements to teach the use of ICT in the programmes of study for non-core foundation subjects.*

10. RESOURCES

Most units lend themselves to the use of a range of resources. These resources are constantly being developed and added to. Most resource materials are kept by the year group responsible for teaching a particular unit but some more general and thematic materials are kept by the Humanities Co-ordinator. The resources used in humanities include:

- artefacts
- books – reference and literature

- newspapers
- music/dance/drama
- local and personal records
- photographs
- posters
- cartoons
- film, video and slides
- places, buildings and sites
- human resources – adult visitors
- taped accounts
- maps
- displays and exhibitions

11. ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND RECORD KEEPING

We view ASSESSMENT as an integral part of teaching and enabling teachers to:

- identify what has been taught and learnt
- monitor children's progress through the National Curriculum Programmes of Study
- establish children's needs as a basis for future planning and teaching

We assess children by:

- observing them – individually and in groups
- questioning, talking and listening to them
- looking at materials produced by them and discussing these materials with them

RECORDING in Humanities must be straightforward, manageable and understandable to those who need to use the information. Records are kept by class teachers in such a way that they are helpful both in planning and as a basis for reporting children's progress.

We believe that the INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN in assessing their own work helps them to understand better their own strengths and needs.

Children's self-esteem can only be enhanced by increased awareness of their own progress.

Children will record their Humanities knowledge, skills and understanding in a number of ways:

- discussion and debate with each other or the teacher
- in writing – including narrative, analysis, explanation and description
- presentations to the class, year group or school
- displays/exhibitions – using models, visual and written work, photographs, graphs, maps, charts, audio-visual
- drama/role play
- evaluations of their work

12. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Humanities curriculum team will meet regularly, at least once each term, to review and evaluate Humanities work within the school.

The Humanities co-ordinator has a responsibility for reporting back and developing the Scheme of Work in partnership with the rest of the staff.

We believe that good Humanities teaching will be present in our school when:

- children see a purpose in what they are doing and know why they are doing it
- children have the opportunity to experience a range of teaching and learning styles

- children have the opportunity to present their work in a variety of ways
- children can access a full, colourful and interesting range of resources
- children have a programme of visits and fieldwork
- children are presented with open and investigative [enquiry] styles of learning
- we achieve, through effective planning, continuity and progression between the years and Key Stages
- we obtain evidence of attainment and diagnose learning difficulties through teacher assessment
- we appreciate the importance of language skills and the need to develop a Humanities vocabulary
- we address cross curricular themes such as Environmental Education and Citizenship
- WE SEEK TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE THE CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES ON AN ONGOING BASIS

13. REVIEW AND REVISION

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Humanities Co-ordinator and is based on the school's understanding of the History and Geography National Curriculum.

The co-ordinator will collect and collate the experiences and ideas of colleagues as they arise.

Revised November 2001