

St. Thomas the Martyr Primary School
History Policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and a strategy for the teaching of history in combined unit plans at St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School.

Purpose of Study

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenge of their time.

Aims

The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of humans.
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses,
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.

Our objectives in the teaching of history are:

- to develop the child's sense of identity through learning about the development of Britain, Europe and the World.
- to introduce the children to what is involved in understanding and interpreting the past through an enquiry led approach
- to develop a variety of other skills, including those of enquiry, problem solving, computing, investigation and that of presenting their conclusions in the most appropriate way.

Principles for Teaching History

History gives us all a sense of our own identity, a sense of our own social, political, economic and cultural position. History is about the changes real people have effected and how real people have responded to these changes. The study of history helps to identify causes and to consider effects, to identify what has changed and what has remained the same. The study of history develops the ability to make sense of the past and often with incomplete evidence. As new historical evidence is continually being discovered so should our ideas and opinions of the past be modified.

History in the National Curriculum

History is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. The staff at St. Thomas the Martyr have worked as Key stages to combine subjects into topics. These are known as combined unit plans or C.U.P.S. The emphasis is for the children to experience a creative approach to the curriculum.

The Foundation Stage

We teach history in the Foundation Stage unit as part of the Understanding the World specific area of learning and development. As this class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the historical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpins the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to the development of each child's understanding of the world.

At Key stage one pupils should develop an awareness of the past, using common word and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods. They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show they know and understand key features of events. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

At Key stage two pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

The Contribution of History to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

Literacy

History makes a significant contribution to the teaching of literacy in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. At Key stage two, reports, letters, diaries and recording information all develop the children's writing ability.

PSHE

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education. Children study how to modify their ideas and opinions based on new evidence coming to light. The nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to understand their own identity and a sense of their own social, political, economic and cultural position.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine fundamental questions in life through the medium of history and understand the reasons behind why people in the past acted as they did. History contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions during the programme of study. What if? Questioning enables children to explore their spirituality and the Christian ethos that underpins the school in subjects other than R.E.

History and Computing

Computing enhances our teaching of history, wherever appropriate, in each Key stage. Interactive smart boards are installed in all classrooms and a selection of historical images and other

resources are available in the Smart Notebook software. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in presenting their written work. They can research information via the internet, Purple Mash and CD Roms. Classes have access to the suite during the week.

In The Classroom

Children are taught in their normal class group for their C.U.P.s. All teachers are responsible for the planning of the topics each half term. Children are encouraged to work as individuals, in pairs, in groups and as a whole class when appropriate. A creative approach to the subject enhances the learning experience.

Inclusion

At our school, we teach history to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. History implements the school curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching, we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for children in their I.P.P.s. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, those with disabilities, those with gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language (EAL).

Assessment for Learning

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways. Teachers set learning intentions linked to the curriculum and appropriate success criteria. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher or child marks the work and makes an assessment of it. Written or verbal feedback may also be given to the child to help guide his or her progress e.g. next-step marking. Learning outcomes within each C.U.P suggest ways that children can demonstrate their understanding in History. These act as a benchmark for staff to assess a child's achievement. Termly progress is monitored by the class teacher using the Lancashire Key Learning assessment materials. At the end of each academic year, this ongoing assessment will conclude with comments on the annual report to parents.

The History Subject Leader keeps samples of children's work in the History Portfolio which provides evidence of the progression of achievement throughout the school. Evidence of displays in the classrooms and shared areas in the form of photographs is also kept in the subject portfolio.

Resources

General resources are stored in the infant resource area in the history cupboard. Age specific resources are kept in classrooms. Children are given instructions in the safe and considerate use of resources. The History Subject Leader is responsible for the upkeep and purchasing of equipment.

Curriculum Visits and Health and Safety

When taking children out of school to undertake visits, the school's educational visits policy must be adhered to. All children participating in local trips must have a signed local visits consent form. Teachers are responsible for carrying out a risk assessment prior to the fieldwork and distributing this to all accompanying adults. Appropriate adult/pupil ratios are explained in the educational visits policy. The school's usual charging policy applies to all out of school trips, including visits to enrich the history curriculum.

When engaging in fieldwork, pupils are required to display the same standards of behaviour as those expected in school. They should behave in a considerate, responsible manner, showing respect for other citizens and the environment.

This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with statutory requirements.

Mrs. A. Davies.

History Subject Leader

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