# **HUMANITIES POLICY**

# St Mary’s CofE (Aided) Primary School

# **Our Vision**

St Mary's CE (Aided) Primary School is a 'Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum' where wisdom and love guide and influence learning and teaching for our whole community. We treasure each child and enable them to flourish, using their God-given potential and establishing a secure foundation for them to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

**Our Intent**

At St Mary’s, we believe that the humanities encourage pupils to think critically and creatively about being human and to ask questions about the world. Through exploring different histories, cultures and places, pupils understand others, themselves and where they came from.

As the humanities create informed and critical citizens, they are a vital part of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children (SMSC) - teaching pupils the skills and knowledge they need to *flourish* and *thrive in a rapidly changing world.* This is closely aligned with our vision, as at its centre is the consideration of the child as a whole.

As our long term aim is to provide children with the means to resolve the problems of the future, practice is guided by the National Curriculum’s purpose of study for History and Geography. As seen below, this emphasises the need to contextualise knowledge in real world examples and teach meaningful skills.

**Geography**

*A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth’s key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes*

*and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth’s features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time [[1]](#footnote-1).*

**History Intent**

*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 complexity of people’s lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time [[2]](#footnote-2).*

**Humanities and SMSC**

In regards to SMSC development, we intend to provide a broad and rich curriculum where children learn about both British and world cultures, as well as what it means to be human. History and Geography will provide opportunities to:

* *Understand concepts relating to human nature, such as time, space and belief.*
* *Explore their own identities, values and beliefs as well as those of others.*
* *Learn to empathise with people who are different and to become compassionate individuals.[[3]](#footnote-3)*

The humanities also play a vital role in equipping children with the knowledge and skills they need for the future. The Humanities 2020 Project states that *'the challenges of globalisation and the need for sustainability and social justice in the 21st century raise important, often controversial, issues about identity, diversity and how to care for other people and the planet.’[[4]](#footnote-4)* It is thus vital that children *develop skills and habits associated with critical thinking and interpreting information* in order to understand and confront these challenges.

**Implementation**

**National Curriculum**

Curriculum objectives can be broken up into the following strands:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Geography | History |
| - Locational Knowledge  - Place Knowledge  - Human and Physical Geography  - Geographical Skills and Fieldwork | - Chronology  - An understanding of the past and how the  world has changed and developed.  - Analysing sources and artefacts. |

**Topic Based Approach**

We teach through a range of engaging and inspiring topics which change termly, with each group covering three per year. By learning through a historical or geographical lens children’s imaginations are sparked. This also benefits the children’s education by providing a meaningful context in which to learn English and Maths.

Research shows that a topic based approach impacts pupils most when:

* *Teaching design/model and learning experiences interest children, (context).*
* *Facilitation builds and sustains a learning community (commonalities and collaboration).*
* *Make connections to students’ lives*
* *Align experiences and outcomes[[5]](#footnote-5).*

Making connections to student’s lives is especially relevant to the humanities, as Pulborough is situated in an area with a rich history and diverse geographical landscape. Close by sites of historical significance include the Roman Road running through the village, Roman villas, a Norman Motte and Bailey and other sites of archaeological interest. For Geography, there is also the South Downs, RSPB Wetlands, River Arun and the nearby coast.

Whilst some children may visit and learn about these sites with their families, we cannot assume that all are having these opportunities outside of school. It is our responsibility as educators to ensure that our pupils have access to enriching experiences in order to help contextualise knowledge and make it more meaningful.

**Long Term Planning**

To ensure coverage, long term plans are used to map out learning objectives (Appendix 1). These are taught cyclically with children revisiting and deepening their knowledge as they progress through the school. The curriculum has also been structured so that the children have the opportunity to take deeper dives into certain aspects of the curriculum, such as the study of different civilisations throughout time.

**Medium Term Planning**

Teachers produce a medium term plan half termly for a unit of work which either has a History or Geography focus. These detail the knowledge, skill key vocabulary taught in a sequence of lessons which are progressive and provide practical opportunities for children to apply what they have learnt.

As children move through Key Stage 2, they will revisit curriculum objectives so planning takes into account what pupils already know, deepens their knowledge and provides a further level of challenge. Mind maps at the beginning of each topic are used to assess prior learning and make meaningful connections to previous experiences and concepts taught which helps to embed learning in their long term memory.

**Cross Curricular Opportunities**

Alongside weekly History or Geography lessons, our topic approach increases opportunities to access learning about the humanities through cross-curricular lessons.

For example, the humanitiescontribute significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The texts used in English are linked to the termly topic and children are given opportunities to develop their skills through composing/reading reports, letters, explanatory texts and partaking in debates of a historical and geographical nature.

**Progression**

To ensure progression, as well as deep conceptual understanding of objectives, we use both knowledge and skills progression documents to support the planning and delivery of challenging lessons (Appendix 2 - 5). These break up the large NC umbrella objectives into the key information and vocabulary that children should know at each stage of their education as well as the skills they need to practise to deepen children’s understanding.

This also enables teachers to have an overview of what children have learnt previously allowing them to teach at the appropriate level, taking into account starting points and ensuring challenge.

**Teaching Approaches**

A range of activities will be used to deliver the Humanities curriculum and gain the children’s interest and enthusiasm including: presentations, storytelling, field work, visitors, role-play and drama, discussions and debates, quizzes and interactive displays.

It is recognised that children learn effectively through direct experience which gives them practical opportunities to develop skills. We therefore offer opportunities for children to observe, investigate and record their environment. We believe that both in school activities, including use of our Forest School site, and external education trips provide a rich learning context and promote understanding.

Children should have opportunities to work collaboratively so that they learn how to participate as part of a team and build respectful relationships with others in order to achieve a common goal.

Through explicitly developing the skills of dialogue, children also learn how to cooperate with others productively. Discussion is facilitated by the teacher planning varied key questions based on Blooms Taxonomy to encourage higher level thinking and opportunities for talk (Appendix 6). Children also be exposed to vocabulary specific to history and geography and be encouraged to use these words both in discussion and work produced.

**Resources**

Children should be provided with engaging, first hand experiences of the humanities in order to enrich their understanding. To do so they need access to rich resources which help to explore the world and the past – for examplephotos, maps, letters, diagrams, publications, exhibitions, excavations, artefacts and primary evidence.

History and Geography curriculum resources can be found in Brazil, in the Resource Room and in the cupboards in Key Stage 2. Careful consideration must be taken when planning for the use of such resources, especially if found online, so children use them accurately and their choice and application of resources supports their learning appropriately.

**Impact**

Children will know more, remember more and understand more about History.

Children will understand and use the key skills of chronological understanding,

Knowledge and understanding of events in the past, Historical interpretation, Historical enquiry and organisation and communication.

The large majority of children will achieve age related expectations in History.

As historians children will learn lessons from history to influence the decisions they make in their lives in the future.

**Appendices**

[Appendix 1 – Whole School Curriculum Overview](#_Toc36663720)

[Appendix 2 –](#_Toc36663721) History Progression Document

Appendix 3 – Geography Progression Document

[Appendix 4 – Geography Skill](#_Toc36663722)s Progression Document

Appendix 5 – History Skills progression Document

1. National Curriculum in England - History programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Curriculum in England - Geography programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Role of the Humanities in a Balanced and Broadly Based Primary Curriculum - Tony Eaude and Simon Catling. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Humanities 20:20 Manifesto. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Research for Teachers: effective teaching and learning in humanities. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)