



# **St John's Catholic Primary School**

## **Humanities Policy**

## Mission Statement

l o v e o f l e a r n i n g  
a n d p l a y i n g t o g e t h e r  
o n e c o m m u n i t y  
a i m i n g h i g h  
h e l p i n g e a c h o t h e r  
a n d p r a y i n g t o g e t h e r

O n o u r j o u r n e y w i t h C h r i s t

The aim of this policy is to guide teachers and support staff in providing the best possible learning experiences for our children. We believe that every child is a child of God; we will encourage in all children the knowledge and love of God, and in a concern and care for others; we will value each child for who they are and what they are; and we will ensure that every child has the opportunity to become the person God knows them to be, irrespective of their starting points, background or cultural and religious beliefs.

Our mission sets out our commitment to 'aiming high'. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are brought about through a process, which involves:

- reflection by individual professionals
- acting on planning feedback and guidance
- use of assessment data
- the target setting process
- sharing in-house expertise through
  - joint/team planning
  - discussion with colleagues, subject coordinators and SLT
  - Staff training at school
  - Team teaching lessons
  - Peer observation and lesson studies
- implementation of recommendations arising from classroom observation
- effective response to guidance from advisers and implementation of OfSTED Action Plan
- CPD courses

This policy will be reviewed regularly to enable us to take account of new initiatives, curriculum changes, technological developments and any changes to our pupil cohort profile.

## Aims and Objectives

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 mankind
- 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, difference and significance, 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
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

The national curriculum for **geography** aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
  - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
  - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

- communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

### **Teaching and Learning**

In order to best meet the needs of our pupils, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our humanities lessons. We will provide some whole class teaching alongside opportunities for small group based discussion tasks and independent research. We encourage children to ask, as well as answer, questions about their topics.

In both history and geography, we will provide children with an opportunity to use a range of sources and data, including maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, photographs, information books and the internet. Children will participate in discussions and problem-solving activities and will prepare reports to present back to the class. Technology, such as use of the Green Screen, will be used to enhance the children's experiences.

We recognise that children will have differing abilities and experiences in humanities. We provide suitable learning challenges by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We differentiate by starting point, prior learning, ability and resources and by providing support where necessary.

### **Curriculum Planning – Humanities**

At St John's we use the National Curriculum as the basis for curriculum planning. Our long term plans show which topics are being taught, when and in which year groups. Our Curriculum Coverage documents show at which points of the year certain objectives are being covered in each year group and each class' Medium term plan overviews show which objectives are being taught each half term.

Our Curriculum planning is based on half termly or termly themes. We have adapted the national curriculum to the local circumstances of our school, for example, we look at areas which provide contrasting physical features and human activities to our own area and link historical events to the impact on our local area.

We plan the topics in humanities so that they build on prior learning. While we offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, we also build planned progression in to the units, so that children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

### **EYFS**

Humanities is taught in EYFS as an integral part of their work covered over the year. Our EYFS teachers use the objectives set in the Foundation Stage Profile to plan learning experiences for our pupils. Humanities makes a significant contribution to the development of knowledge and understanding of the world, literacy and maths.

## **Contribution to the Catholic Ethos**

*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

John 10:10

By preparing our pupils fully and appropriately for life in a rapidly changing and technological future, we are ensuring that they are best placed to fulfil their God-given potential and to become active and compassionate members of their local, national and global communities. Through our humanities curriculum, we teach to learn from events which have happened in the past and about how their actions can impact on the world which God has given us.

## **Contribution to the other curriculum areas**

### **English**

Our humanities curriculum makes a positive contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it allows our children to develop and apply their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Wherever possible, our text based units taught in Literacy link to the theme for that term/half term. In topic lessons, children have the opportunity to apply their literacy skills, such as through oral presentations, reports and letters.

### **Maths**

Our humanities curriculum contributes to children's understanding in many ways. We teach children how to represent objects with maps; they study space, scale and distance and learn how to use grid references. We look at timelines and calculate the difference in dates, we sequence events using dates and we analyse charts and graphs for historical information.

### **PSHE and Citizenship**

Humanities contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, humanities lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children look at the effects of deforestation or discuss the treatment of the Jewish people in the Holocaust. Secondly, the nature of the subject allows for children to participate in discussions and debates. Children have the opportunity to organise campaigns and actions on issues that are important to them in our local, national and global communities. Humanities promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

### **Inclusion**

At St John's, all children are involved in humanities lessons, whatever their ability, experiences and individual needs. This is in line with the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through a range of teaching and learning approaches, we enable all children to access the humanities curriculum. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see the SEND policy.

Where learning takes place outside of the classroom, we will carry out risk assessments to ensure that the activities are safe and appropriate for all pupils.

### **Assessment for learning**

At the end of each topic, the class teacher will assess the children against the particular objectives which they have been focusing on. This will be recorded on our online tracking system, and used to make an overall judgement at the end of the year to determine if children are 'working towards', 'at expected standard' or 'at greater depth'. This information is reported to parents on the end of year report and passed on to the next class teacher.

### **Resources**

Resources which are specific to a particular topic, for example, Anglo-Saxons, will be stored by the class teacher. Other resources, which will be required across a range of topics, will be stored centrally. An annual audit of resources will be undertaken by the humanities subject leader.

In the school library, we have a range of non-fiction books for children to access to further their learning, and classes also have access to a class set of iPads.

### **Monitoring and review**

The subject leader will monitor teachers long term plans to ensure that all of the humanities objectives are being covered. Work scrutiny will allow the subject leader to assess the coverage of objectives and the standard of work being produced. Lesson observations will be undertaken to ensure high-quality delivery and to ensure that planning is being implemented in the classroom.

Date of Policy: September 2019

Date of review: September 2020