

## **St. Leonard's Primary School History Policy**

### **1 Aims and objectives**

**1.1** The aim of history teaching here at St.Leonard's Primary School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. Thus they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school history makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

**1.2** We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

**1.3** The aims of history in our school are:

- to foster in children an interest in the past and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- to develop a sense of chronology;
- to know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education;
- to understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture and to study some aspects of European history;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

### **2 Teaching and learning style**

**2.1** History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and

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primary sources. In each key stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites that are of historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognize and value the importance of stories in history teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', about information they are given.

**2.2** We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of widely-different abilities in history and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty. Not all children complete all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.
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### **3.1 A thematic approach**

There is evidence that teaching subject knowledge and skills as part of a wider topic-based curriculum allows pupils to make useful links between areas of learning, and consolidate skills. Children are also likely to be more engaged in their learning if it has a context and theme that runs through it.

St Leonard's Primary School has therefore developed a new thematic curriculum to deliver the National Curriculum 2014 and other aspects of the school curriculum, including History.

At St Leonard's School we have used a topic-based approach to the curriculum for many years. This involves linking some subject areas through a common topic or project designed to ensure the children are interested in purposeful learning.

**3.2** We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage. Some topics have a particular historical focus and in Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

**3.3** As the basis for our medium-term plans, we use the National Curriculum to select appropriate objectives that relate to the history topic.

**3.4** The class teacher writes topic plans half termly (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives of subject. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, hands them into the Curriculum lead teacher and shares them on the school's website for parents.

## **4 The contribution of history to other subjects**

### **4.1 Literacy**

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the English may be historical in nature. Children develop oracy through discussing historical questions or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports and letters and through using writing frames.

### **4.2 Mathematics**

History teaching contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through doing activities such as time-lines. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

### **4.3 Computing**

We use Computing in history teaching where appropriate and children are able to use Computing as part of their learning. Children use Computing in history to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet. Children have the opportunity to record and use video and photographic images to enhance their learning in this subject.

### **4.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognize and challenge stereotypes and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

### **4.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

When teaching history, we contribute to the children's spiritual development where possible. We also provide children with the

opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong. Children find out how British society has changed over time and the history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

## **5 Teaching history to children with special needs**

**5.1** We teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of all children.

## **6 Assessment and recording**

**6.1** We assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe them during each history lesson. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary, as part of the marking policy. We use Blooms questions and key skills from Trevor Davis to assess individual children's progress and we pass this information on to the History Subject Leader at the end of each term. We also pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

**6.2** The history subject leader keeps samples of children's work. These demonstrate what the expected level of achievement is in history for each age group in the school.

## **7 Resources**

**7.1** There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We keep these resources in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. The library contains a good supply of topic books to support children's individual research.

## **8 Monitoring and review**

**8.1** Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is the responsibility of the history subject leader. The history subject leader monitors children's work, wall displays, and planning. The work of the history subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, and being informed about current developments in the subject.

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