



# St Michael's Catholic Primary School

## Humanities Curriculum

Humanities is a foundation subject of the National Curriculum and invaluable in pupil development, both academically and socially. Through Humanities, children learn about the world they live in, their place in it and the issues we face, both socially and environmentally. Our school community is diverse and our Humanities curriculum reflects this. It is essential that the children in our school are offered the opportunity to have a wide range of experiences and access to a wide range and inclusive range of knowledge, in order for them to develop into well-rounded and diverse learners.

### **Intention**

It is our intention that our children will develop a lifelong passion for the world around them and its history. Children are taught History and Geography as separate subjects, under the heading of Humanities, so that children understand the separate skills needed to be successful in both, while understanding the clear link between the two. Our ambition for our Humanities curriculum at St Michael's is that all pupils gain the key skills and knowledge outlined by the National Curriculum in Geography and History.

History fires pupils' curiosity about the past and the wider world. Children will consider how the past can influence the present as well as the future. It develops chronological framework for children's knowledge of significant events and people. They see the diversity of human experience and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. Teachers are responsible for the implementation of History effectively and to assist pupils to: Develop chronological understanding of periods of time; increase knowledge and understanding of key events; know about famous people who have influenced the course of History; recognise that the past is represented and interpreted in different ways; be able to use a range of sources to select and record relevant information and develop a range of skills necessary to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human world, using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps, and a range of investigative and problem-solving skills both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, Geography helps shape thinking about the future. Teachers are responsible for the implementation of Geography effectively and to assist pupils to: develop skills which enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding of places; undertake geographical enquiry both inside and outside the classroom; develop an understanding of the patterns and physical and human processes which enable us to make a sense of place; develop knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development and develop a sense of their own identity and place in their local environment as well as in the world.

## **Implementation**

Our History and Geography curriculums are broken down into three topics which each last for half a term. These topics will be taught in turn, beginning with a Geography topic, then moving onto a History topic. This is done so that each academic term, the children will have completed a Geography and History topic.

Our History curriculum covers the skills outlined in the National Curriculum through broad, challenging and inspiring topics. At St Michael's, we teach a curriculum which runs in themes, each of which is then organised in a chronological order. These topics follow a theme strand. In KS1, the pupils are taught about: changes within living memory, significant event beyond living memory and the lives of significant individuals. In KS2, the pupils are taught about: the achievements of the earliest civilizations, invasion and conquest of Britain and significant leadership post 1066. We have a large timeline displayed in the children's workbooks so that children can follow the line and gain a better understanding of chronology, which significant civilizations follow which and which civilizations were around at a similar time in history. We also use timelines within periods to enable children to gain an understanding of significant events of each topic taught.

At St Michael's our History curriculum has a focus on Historical enquiry throughout each topic. Children are able to use artefacts and sources to deepen their understanding of points in history. Children are encouraged to ask questions about sources and analyse them to see if they can figure what an object is and what it may have been used for by looking for clues that the artefact gives about a time period.

Children are also encouraged to make comparisons between the past and the present and talk about how artefacts and events have helped lead to our current world today. They are also given the opportunity to make comparisons between people and technology that was around at the same time. For example, the different between rich and poor Romans, or between men and women during the Anglo-Saxon times. Opportunities for extended writing linked to each topic go alongside the medium term plans and units of work in order to deepen children's understanding of a topic as well as develop their ability in writing. Pupils are encouraged to think and speak like a historian and develop their skills including historical enquiry.

Children are given a wide range of experiences both in the classroom and out. We encourage school visits and visitors into school to enable our children to gain first hand experiences to support their learning.

The History units taught have been developed to help children appreciate their own identity and the challenges in their time. It will help them understand the process of change over time and significant developments, as well as learning about cultures around the world through the 'World at a Glance' lessons, which link their current period of study to events in another part of the world.

As with History, our Geography topics are in theme strands. Each year group begins with a Human Geography topic, which are focused on developing Geographical knowledge and understanding through focused map work activities, understanding of what human and physical Geography are and children's understanding of locational knowledge.

In Key Stage 1, children begin by learning about their immediate surroundings. They develop their knowledge about their own locality in Elswick, the United Kingdom and the World. They can understand subject specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use

geographical skills, including first hand observation and map work to enhance their locational awareness.

In Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to a global setting. Our pupils develop their use of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to enrich their locational and place knowledge. Children begin to focus on countries of the UK and how these differ from other countries in the world in relation to their location and their human and physical features, including the idea of different types of settlements, jobs and trade and resources.

At St Michael's our second Geography strand is physical Geography. In Key Stage 1, children begin by securing their understanding of their place in the world and then expanding their knowledge, thinking and understanding to learn about the weather. In Key Stage 2, children build on learning through water, global ecosystems, natural landforms and weather events.

The final strand of our Humanities curriculum focuses on Geographical issues such as energy sources and coastal erosion and links in to our school's environmental awareness ideals.

### Country Study and World at a Glance

In Key Stage Two children will complete either a Country Study lesson or a World at a Glance lesson at the end of each unit of work which will either explore a country or ancient civilization separate to the ones covered in their Geography and History lessons.

At the end of each Geography topic, the KS2 children will study a country, learning about the physical and human features of the country in relation to the topic that they have just completed. These country studies allow the pupils to develop a broader understanding of the geographical similarities and differences between the place that they live and the countries that they are studying whilst also developing their abilities to identify the location and features of a country in relation to latitude and longitude.

After completing their History topics, KS2 pupils will complete a World at a Glance lesson where they explore another ancient civilization. This lesson allows the pupils to explore and learn about a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history

### Impact

At St Michael's, children are continuously revisiting, recalling and developing their knowledge and skills of History and Geography.

At the end of each unit of work, teachers use summative assessment methods to inform and tailor their recap lessons. The recap lessons are taught each half term, allowing children the opportunity to revisit and revise previous learning so that they feel confident in their learning. The recap lessons have enabled our children to deepen and recap their learning of topics to ensure that History and Geography skills are still being used and applied during each unit of work.

By the time children leave St Michael's they will be will equipped with a strong knowledge of Geography, as well as a range of key geographical skills. They will have developed a curiosity and understanding of the world around them and be confident in asking crucial questions, of themselves and others, and about how humans will continue to impact on the world.

Children will leave St Michael's with a strong knowledge of History, as well as a range of key skills to approach and question what they understand about the past. They will be confident in their own abilities to assess the reliability of sources of evidence, think critically about questions they are posed and arrive at judgements about key events in history.