

# **HUMANITIES POLICY**

**Approved by: Board of Directors on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

**Effective From: December 2015**

**Review Date: December 2017**

**Next Review Date : December 2019**

## **What is our philosophy?**



*Article 29: Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*

At the Heathland Whitefriars Federation, our belief is that Humanities learning should promote a curiosity about our world; ensuring children develop an appreciation and understanding of cultures and diversity which incorporates both Britain and the wider world. Within this, they will develop a sense of time and place within the world and recognise their contribution to it. This will help them to prepare for life beyond school, in which they will become global citizens who will contribute to and develop our society.

## **Planning**

Geography and History is taught through a creative and innovative topic-based curriculum. Half-termly planning sessions ensure that the coverage is strong across the Federation, with both schools working together to develop excellent, thought-provoking content in their topic planning alongside a developmental, skills based curriculum. The Humanities Faculty leaders support this planning and aim to ensure that skills progression is developed across the curriculum and throughout both schools.

## **What are our aims?**

The Humanities Faculty want to encourage curiosity, first and foremost, through questioning – how did we get here? Why does our planet look like this? Children will be able to use evidence and scrutinise its value which will allow them to develop opinions and perspectives on the both the past and on current historical and geographical debates and issues. This will take into account the influence of people on the environment and events, allow them to develop a vocabulary to carry out such scrutiny and be skill based and transferable, for example, through asking children to compare and contrast, analyse trends and work with data. Children will be able to develop perspective and explore processes relevant to the history and geography of our planet.

## **National curriculum**

The 2014 National Curriculum requires children to develop their geographical knowledge about the world, the UK and their locality. This requires them to consider concepts such as location and place and think of geography in different ways: a human perspective, such as why people settle in a locality and economic activity in and between areas; and physical perspective, such as recognising and understanding features of the landscape processes like the water cycle. Children are

also required to have the opportunity to develop their skills in fieldwork, involving observation, measurement, recording in environments. In Key Stage 2, these skills develop and encompass knowledge extending beyond the local area – the wider UK, Europe and North and South America). In History, an awareness of the past and language relating to time passing is key. Children are to explore changes within living memory as well as significant events and individuals. Specific time periods are recommended, with a British focus: the development of the Stone Age to the Iron Age, the Roman Empire, Anglo-Saxons and Scottish settlement, the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle, a local history study and a significant aspect of British History. The curriculum provides a useful framework to guide on our topic selection and embed important vocabulary in our topics, which helps to show progression in children’s understanding of the world and its history.

### **What does our curriculum offer?**

The Heathland Whitefriars Federation ensures that a broad exploration of local, British and world history and geography is carried out. Children in the EYFS begin to develop their understanding the world by making sense of ‘their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment’ (EYFS Statutory Framework 2014). Examples of how the Federation put this into practice includes: chances for the children to talk about their family, significant events of their own experience and their cultural background. They also begin to develop chronological understanding about the events in their own lives and through storytelling, for example through the topic ‘How will the story end?’ Progression into KS1 then focuses on more specific geographical and historical study, such as: a comparison between local towns and the weather in Year 1; the significant Great Fire of London followed by a study of London and Kingston, Jamaica in Year 2; the Roman Empire and Africa in Year 3; the Vikings and the development of Britain in Year 4; the Victorians and their contribution to Britain in Year 5 and the two World Wars in Year 6.

Within these topics, we strive to develop a developmental approach to the skills learnt by the children as they move through the schools. A historian and geographer in the EYFS would not look the same as one in Year 6. Throughout their engagement in the Humanities, we strive to develop their ability to: question; thinking critically in relation to current issues; evaluate evidence; show an understanding of change; engage with the world; give their own perspective; make connections; describe processes and analyse data.

### **How do we assess pupils?**

Humanities learning is teacher assessed and takes into account children’s engagement and understanding of their topic. Regular and consistent AFL within the classroom during topic learning allows class teachers to track development and skills

progression by pupils. Pupils are provided with 'Next steps' and learning is scaffolded to provide them with the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills in Humanities. Teachers are able to use specific critical thinking questions designed to assess the progress of historical and geographical thinking which is built into questioning within class and are reflected in the outcomes of topic work. The school system of assessment, Incerts, records progression on a summative basis.

### **Resources**

The Federation has an up to date supply of atlases, maps, navigation tools and specific topic related resources, such as African and Victorian artefacts. Exposure to historical wonders and geographical location is encouraged within the classroom. One of our most important resources is engaging with local visitors and organising a wide range of educational visits, for example: local war veterans and fire fighters visiting, and trips out to locations such as the Harrow Heritage Museum, the Imperial War Museum and a residential trip to France in Year 6. Staff are supported to deliver engaging Humanities focused learning through informal drop-ins, consultation with Faculty leaders and support with topic planning.

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(PE Faculty Leader)

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Executive Head Teacher)

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair of Directors)