

Humanities at Hempshill Hall

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to clarify the whole school approach to Humanities teaching. It is to ensure stability in humanities teaching, irrespective of any staff changes, and provides a framework for curriculum planning.

Why Teach Humanities?

As a staff we believe that the role of Humanities is to develop the children's awareness and understanding of the world in which they live, and where and how they fit into it, both in relation to time (History) and place (Geography.) It also involves developing the children's understanding of how others fit into the world (Culture,) thus developing an empathy towards the situation of others (race, gender and social class.)

How Do We Do It?

The way in which Humanities is taught in this school to some extent varies according to phase group. However, what remains consistent, is the school's belief in the importance of a child's first hand experience in the learning process. This is done through as much practical work as possible, including visits. Where first hand experience is not possible, photographs, artefacts, film, the Internet and other resources should be made use of.

Also as a school, we prefer to think of History and Geography as being combined within the Humanities framework, and not as separate subjects. One subject cannot really be taught without reference to the other, particularly at the primary level, and a cross-curricular

approach to learning and teaching is implemented throughout the school.

Furthermore, we see Humanities as enabling children to develop the skills and understanding needed to acquire knowledge for themselves. The 2104 National Curriculum outlines the subject content of both history and geography, but also states that teaching in history should "equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement." As well as in geography: "inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people."

As a staff, we plan together in year groups. This is in order to ensure uniformity of coverage. Each year group covers areas of study prescribed by the school curriculum and medium term plans (see following pages for Key Stage 1 and 2 Curriculum plans.)

Teaching and Learning Styles.

As a school, we believe that children can only develop the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding, through the use of a variety of teaching and learning styles.

Some of the main teaching and learning strategies that we value are...

- Problem solving and decision making.
- Collaborative work in pairs and small groups.
- Investigative activities.
- Drama, role-play and simulation.
- Fieldwork.
- The use of I.C.T.

This list is by no means exhaustive.

As a school, we also plan for a half-termly piece of extended writing within humanities. We believe that this gives children the opportunity to write in a

different genre and further enhances their skills in literacy.

Curriculum Plans.

The 2014 programmes of study for history and geography have been reviewed as a staff and the following plans were agreed for each year group. These are to be incorporated into a cross-curricular topic approach wherever possible. For example, a Year 6 topic on "Mysteries" will incorporate a study of the ancient Mayans, as well as involving writing mystery stories in literacy.