

## Goonhavern Primary School



**Nurture the seed and together we will grow**

### History Policy

#### Aims and objectives

At Goonhavern Primary School our aim 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.

Through our topic based projects 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 throughout the key stages;
- 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 (both globally and locally) and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

## **Teaching and learning style**

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources, both in school and during trips. 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.

We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of widely-different abilities and interests in history and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children.

## **History curriculum planning**

We use the national scheme of work for history as the basis for our curriculum planning in history, but we have adapted this to the local context by building on the successful units of work already in place. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in this subject and we build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

We aim to provide a broad knowledge base for each key stage and therefore topic based work can be delivered over a half or whole term. This allows both the teacher and the pupils to direct the learning based on discussion and questioning. Pupils are encouraged to do their own research around a topic area and contribute to the planning of subsequent lessons. In this way the pupils remain engaged and empowered in their learning.

## **Foundation Stage**

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the history side of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, looking at pictures of famous people in history or discovering the meaning of new and old in relation to their own lives.

## **Assessment and recording**

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 all contributions and recorded work are taken into account. At the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil if they have yet to obtain, met or exceeded the unit objectives. We use this as a basis for assessing the progress of the child at the end of the year.

The history subject leader monitors topic work and learning journals at regular intervals to assess the coverage, knowledge and presentation of history work throughout the school.

## **Resources**

There are resources for history teaching units in the curriculum cupboard in school. The library contains a good supply of topic books to support children's individual research and topic boxes are ordered from the library service to support classroom work and extended reading or research.

## **Monitoring and review**

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 work of the history subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The history subject leader gives the headteacher an annual action plan in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

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