



The Meadow Community Primary School and Pre-School

Curriculum position statements – September 2021

History

Historical

I have been History lead for approximately 10 years, this has been broken up slightly by my maternity leave in May 2011 until March 2012 and in December 2016 until October 2017. During this time, the role was undertaken by Danni Steed. History forms part of the schools connected, themed curriculum. Half of each term is devoted to History and the children learn a mixture of skills and knowledge that is in line with the National Curriculum. Up until 2017-2018 the school used themes that were derived from the National Curriculum Programmes of study. However in 2017 the decision was made to buy in a scheme of work to support the further development of the curriculum and we now use PlanBee as an aid to planning. This decision was made to help to reinvigorate the topics and curriculum while also helping teachers with resourcing and planning. Assessment on the children's learning is made using the SLF statements and teachers are asked to submit their teacher assessments every term. This data is analysed, along with data from book scrutinies, which then inform an action plan. There is a subject leader folder which contains evidence of children working at, below and above expected levels, however this needs updating with recent work to ensure that teacher assessments are accurate. Staff have been surveyed to ensure that any training, planning or delivery needs are met. Pupils have also been surveyed, which showed that they enjoy the history lessons and like the themes that are covered. In the recent OFSTED report it was noted that "Leaders have made sure that an interesting and varied curriculum is available for pupils, studied through themes such as Tudors and Vikings. Pupils said they enjoy the associated trips and workshops provided to enrich the curriculum". Data has historically shown that levels are broadly in line with English and Maths.

Current

The school is in its fourth year of using the PlanBee scheme of work, the first year has shown that the scheme is well resourced, is easy to follow and covers the objectives of the National Curriculum. Some classes use the scheme more as a guide, cherry picking the best resources and lessons, combining these with other resources and ideas. Other year groups tend to stick more prescriptively to the planning. As the first year of usage came to an end, each year group was asked to provide feedback regarding the themes they taught and some changes were made. At the end of the Summer term 2019, I undertook some work to ensure that progression was clear and evident across the school. This involved using the SLF statements as a guidance to produce a set of progression statements that essentially track an objective across the school ensuring that it is taught with increasing depth of understanding and application. When this was completed, I then undertook a whole school book scrutiny to look for coverage of these progression statements and opportunity for the children to work at greater depth. Finally, I looked at each unit taught across the school and mapped the progression statements. Where I discovered opportunities for greater depth work, I matched these with the examples of GDS work from the SLF exemplars. Due to the Lockdowns and online teaching over the past couple of years, teachers need more time to fully embed this into their planning. Overall, the teaching of history within the school is strong. There are areas for improvement, however considering we have transitioned from one scheme of work to another in addition to Covid, these are to be expected. The books show that the children learn in a variety of ways, practical lessons are evident as are more knowledge acquisition lessons. It is hard to generalise areas of improvement, however ensuring that all progression statements are met throughout the year is key, as is ensuring that lessons are engaging, topical, relevant and extend children. Vocabulary had also been identified as an area for improvement which is now also a whole school focus. Whole school data shows that 75 % of children across the school are at or above the expected level.

Future aspiration



The focus and direction of the next year is to ensure that the delivery of new vocabulary is explicit, that progression is embedded across the school and that the progression statements are covered. This might involve a small change to medium term planning to keep it in the forefront of teacher's minds as they plan their lessons. Other things to consider would be the further development and evolution of the themes. After a full uninterrupted year of using the scheme, teachers will feel more confident in what they have to teach. This should allow teachers to move away from following the scheme prescriptively, as I believe that lessons are more effective when planning is adapted to suit the needs of the children as well as the style of the teacher. Bringing in more "experiences" to the curriculum would also continue to improve our provision. The children have shown that this is an area of the subject that they enjoy, it increases engagement in the theme. Alongside this is the development of history teaching that is relevant to our children. Leicester and Wigston have their own unique history which we could make more use of, to again increase enjoyment and engagement and make it more personal and relevant to the children. Ultimately, an exciting, progressive, engaging, relevant history curriculum is the aim.