

Wester Overton



Primary School

Social Studies Position Statement



Rationale

'Through social studies, children and young people develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances; they also develop their understanding of their environment and of how it has been shaped. As they mature, children and young people's experiences will be broadened using Scottish, British, European and wider contexts for learning, while maintaining a focus on the historical, social, geographic, economic and political changes that have shaped Scotland. Children and young people learn about human achievements and about how to make sense of changes in society, of conflicts and of environmental issues. With greater understanding comes the opportunity and ability to influence events by exercising informed and responsible citizenship.'

Social Studies Principles and Practice

Aims

In Wester Overton Primary, through our approach to the learning and teaching of social studies we aim to:

- develop understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of local and national heritage within the world
- broaden understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present
- develop understanding of individual values, beliefs and cultures and those of others
- develop understanding of the principles of democracy and citizenship through experience of critical and independent thinking
- explore and evaluate different types of sources and evidence
- learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place
- learn how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield
- engage in activities which encourage enterprising attitudes
- develop an understanding of concepts that stimulate enterprise and influence

business

- establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers.

Planning

Our planning should reflect our commitment to build on local contexts, previous experiences, learning, interests and abilities and we use this opportunity to involve our pupils in taking more responsibility for their own learning.

We aspire to provide a curriculum which involves our pupils not only in the history of their community, but in the local activities and events such as *Gala Week* and *Balloon Festival* that take place throughout the year to make Strathaven a thriving place to live and work today. In Wester Overton Primary, we use these contexts, and both national and international contexts, along with the outcomes for Social Studies to ensure that balance is achieved within each of the three organisers detailed in CfE:

- People, past events and societies (e.g. *The Weavers*, *The Scottish Wars of Independence*)
- People, place and environment (e.g. *Bicycle to Boeing*, *Brazil*)
- People in society, economy and business (e.g. *Spectacular Strathaven*, *The Scottish Parliament*)

It is important that all staff teaching social studies look for opportunities to develop and reinforce social studies knowledge and skills within their teaching activities and plan interdisciplinary studies including a coherent approach to the development of children's rights, literacy, numeracy, citizenship, creativity, enterprise and sustainability.

Learning and Teaching

In social studies, effective learning and teaching will draw upon a variety of approaches including:

- planned active learning with opportunities to observe, explore, experiment and play
- use of relevant contexts, familiar to children and young people's experiences
- appropriate and effective use of technology
- building on the principles of Assessment is for Learning

- collaborative and independent learning
- discussion and debate
- interdisciplinary learning experiences
- learning outdoors, field trips, visits and external contributors.

Active citizenship is a central feature of learning in social studies for children and young people, developing skills and knowledge to enable and encourage participation. Social studies offer opportunities for children and young people to become involved in our local community of Strathaven and the wider world and are therefore important in considering and developing their role as active and informed citizens.

The development of skills is an essential aspect of active learning in social studies and the experiences and outcomes should provide frequent opportunities for the development of these skills. Terms such as 'investigating', 'exploring', 'discussing' and 'presenting' are used throughout the experiences and outcomes. Pupils will develop these skills progressively by applying them in new and more complex contexts.

Social studies skills development includes:

- observing, describing and recording
- comparing and contrasting to draw valid conclusions
- exploring and evaluating different types of sources and evidence
- development of curiosity and problem solving skills and capacity to take initiatives
- interacting with others and developing an awareness of self and others
- planning and reviewing investigation strategies
- developing the capacity for critical thinking through accessing, analysing and using information from a wide variety of sources
- discussion and informed debate
- developing reasoned and justified points of view
- developing and using maps in a variety of contexts
- developing and applying skills in interpreting and displaying graphical representation of information
- developing an awareness of sequence and chronology
- presentation skills - oral, written, multimedia

Self-Evaluation

In Wester Overton Primary School, we recognise and value the benefits of rigorous self-evaluation in informing continued improvement. As such, staff at Wester Overton employ a progressive overview of Social Studies planners focusing on the benchmarks at each stage. This will ensure breadth of learning across the Social Studies organisers.

Career Long Professional Learning

Wester Overton Primary School's Senior Leadership Team will provide opportunities for staff to extend their skill in teaching of Social Studies, through provision of quality CLPL experiences. Wester Overton Primary SLT acknowledges the quality CLPL to be found in providing time for staff to observe others' teaching practice, to engage in quality dialogue with other practitioners and to learn from each other and visitors to our establishment at in school in-service meetings. In keeping with this, the SLT are committed to providing a variety of quality Social Studies CLPL experiences for staff.

Parents/Carers

Working in partnership, we aim to:

- encourage parents to use their knowledge and skills to enrich pupils' learning
- develop positive home/school links through home learning, school events, sharing the learning events, workshops, the school website, parent consultations, written reports and parental involvement in class.

Parents and carers are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning. We provide parents with access to information about what children will learn next through our termly class newsletters, and provide information on their child's progress and through sharing the learning events, parent consultations and written reports.





