



WOODPARK

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Social Studies Policy

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Position statement

At Woodpark Primary School, we intend to make children aware of their surroundings by the use of geographical, historical and current contextual learning experiences. We are training them in the skills needed to collect and interpret that knowledge and aid developments of the concepts common to these separate disciplines. We want our pupils to have knowledge of their local area and Scotland as a nation, as well as knowing their place in the wider world.

Introduction

Experiences in Social Studies should be continuous, coherent and progressive. Our programme of study tries to provide for the progressive development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live and to develop a wide range of skills in order to investigate and comprehend the environment acquiring practical abilities for day-to-day living. The development of informed attitudes should permeate all that we do.

Social Studies offer opportunities for children and young people to become involved in their local community and the wider world and are therefore an important vehicle for opportunities to consider and develop their role as active and informed citizens. 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 literacy, numeracy, citizenship, creativity, enterprise and sustainability.

Rationale

At Woodpark Primary, through our Social Studies learning, we ensure:

- There is a clear understanding of the development of Social Studies within our school as required by A Curriculum for Excellence
- There is coherence, consistency and continuity in our Social Studies programme
- We take account of the provision of resources and the management of these resources including staff development.
- We ensure that activities are appropriate to the educational needs of all pupils

Active experiential learning is the best way for children to understand concepts and retain knowledge. The environment provides a context for learning. Pupils are given opportunities to both learn about the world around them and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to interpret it.

Vision

Woodpark Primary School aims to support all children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors through a structured programme of study, which capitalises on everyday opportunities to plan responsibility across the curriculum.

It is our aim that children and young people participating in experiences and outcomes in Social Studies will:

- develop their understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of their local and national heritage within the world
- broaden their understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present
- develop their understanding of their own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others
- develop an 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 encourage enterprise and influence business
- establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers.

Principles of teaching

The Social Studies CfE experiences and outcomes have been structured into three areas:

- people, past events and societies
- people, place and environment
- people in society, economy and business.

Social Studies experiences and outcomes are designed to encourage links with other areas of the curriculum to provide learners with a deeper, more enjoyable and active experience. 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.

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

Pupils will have opportunities to:

- be effective and successful learners.
- make and sustain friendships.

- deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly.
- solve problems with others for themselves.
- manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety.
- be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals.
- recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties.
- work and play cooperatively.
- compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors.
- recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others.
- understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.
- develop a further understanding of their own physical body and how it changes
- develop a further understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through diet and exercise
- identify their own changing skillset as they grow and link this to further skills for life.

Parents will have opportunities to:

- assist with the delivery of Social Studies. We value the expertise and talents of the members of our wider school community and seek opportunities for this to be shared with our pupils.
- experience and support their children’s learning at various events throughout the year, eg, showcase, class assembly, etc

Planning and progression

Specific planning for Social Studies using the school’s progression planners is undertaken in the form of termly AifL plans and weekly plans.

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 from Early to Fourth Level. Pupils will develop these skills progressively by applying them in new and more complex contexts. As a school we have worked together, to identify which skills seem appropriate in previous or suggested contexts. Teachers should consider this when planning in the medium and short term .

Social studies skills, progression and 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.

Teachers will support children and young people as they progressively develop these skills by applying them in new and more complex contexts. Skills are to be regarded as a continuum and should not be capped at any particular level. The professional judgment of teachers is essential in ensuring that individual learners are faced with the appropriate level of challenge in developing skills. Across Curriculum for Excellence levels, challenge and progression appropriate to individual abilities will be at the heart of learning and teaching to ensure that each child achieves his or her potential.

Assessment

Assessment is an important part of ensuring that quality learning is taking place across the school, within classes and for individual pupils. Teachers should be clear as to the purpose of assessing children's progress and this purpose should be linked to the learning outcomes planned for as well as the skills development under focus in termly AIFL's. It should be used as a tool to assess understanding as learning is progressing in order that activities can be adapted as required to meet learner's needs.

Assessment may take the form of specific assessment tasks. Pupil progress, however, will also be able to be monitored by observing how they are developing and applying their knowledge and understanding of skills within school life. Assessment will also be linked to other areas of the curriculum, within and beyond the classroom where pupils apply their knowledge and skills in more complex, demanding or unfamiliar learning or social contexts.