



## Historical Association Quality Mark Final Report

**Visit to: Sacred Heart RC Primary School**

**Date: 9.11.16**

Sacred Heart RC Primary School is a two-form entry school in Westhoughton, Bolton. The school achieves above average results at KS2 and has below average numbers of pupils registered with SEND and Pupil Premium. The school has recently undergone major building works (2014) and has expanded its pupil and staff numbers. The school improvement plan aims to improve core standards further in line with the New Curriculum and History is a 'driver' subject, which enables children to practise skills in reading and writing, problem solving and reasoning. The historic village of Westhoughton provides a rich heritage and culture for the children to explore through their local history topics, and the community has a wealth of knowledge which they willingly share with the school. The school is rated outstanding by Ofsted in all areas.

### **1.) Teaching and Learning**

The lessons I observed were at least good – to move to outstanding a little more emphasis on *how* we know what happened in the past e.g. through the use of primary sources would improve the quality of understanding.

The key stage 1 lesson introduction gave the children the opportunity to examine objects. They used a variety of clues and vocabulary and made interpretations confidently.

The Key Stage 2 class were considering Guy Fawkes and whether the Catholics then could be considered to be terrorists. There was much lively discussion within the class. The teacher used a plan of the Houses of Parliament and a copy of the original letter sent to warn a relative on the PowerPoint he was using. It would have been good to see this primary source interrogated more fully.

Marking within the subject follows the school guidelines. The school has recently introduced the requirement for marking to reflect historical objectives as well as literacy for example. This was evident in the majority of the children's books I saw, but being near the start of the year there were only a few examples in these books of historical work.

#### **Targets:**

To ensure consistency in marking developmental points for pupils relate to History  
To use more primary sources in teaching

### **2.) Leadership**

History enjoys a good status in the school. Discussions with the Chair of Governors and Deputy supported this. They are very proud of the school's own history and this is developed well.

There is evidence of staff meetings and Inset used to develop history but no evidence

of external CPD. The Coordinator supports the Schools Direct students in their understanding of how to teach history and there is also evidence of a new member of staff being supported well. Pupil and staff questionnaires have been used to highlight areas for development. There is a history policy but this needs further development.

**Target:**

For the Head teacher and SMT to make time and funds available for the subject lead to attend local CPD events.

To develop the history policy further

### **3.) Curriculum**

The time allocation for history is consistent with that for other non-core areas. While there appears to be sufficient time spent learning in history its delivery is very fragmented due to the way in which the curriculum is organised. The school follows the Focus Education curriculum for primary schools which adopts a creative curriculum. Some of this is excellent but there are also some issues, for example Ancient Egypt is a context for a Design and Technology unit but does not seem to be a focus for history work.

The planning needs to be developed further as there is evidence of some year groups using the HA Medium Term Plans but these have not been adapted for the school context.

The curriculum plans reveal that local history is a strong element that is woven into the curriculum across all year groups.

The school's strong Catholic ethos also gives some opportunities for further study e.g. through the children studying the life of a different saint each year.

**Target:**

To critically review the Focus Education planning

To encourage the adapting of planning to suit the school and class context

### **4.) Achievement**

The evidence shows the children achieve well and certainly in line with other schools of this nature, if not beyond.

Assessment in the foundation subjects has recently been introduced and the staff are still getting to grips with this. Whilst knowledge in history is good, more emphasis on historical skills and understanding is still needed.

History is reported to parents in terms of below/working towards/mastery for each school term for 4 general statements e.g. 'talk about changes within living memory'.

There were several history based displays around the school – some of these contained very little actual children's work.

**Target:**

Continue to embed and develop the assessment of history

Further develop the teacher's understanding of teaching skills and understanding in history.

### **5.) Enrichment**

Discussions with the pupils in lessons and within a focus group demonstrate that the enrichment of visits and visitors works very well within the school and is clearly a real strength. Throughout the school children have the opportunity to visit several places further afield for example, battlefields in France, Chester for Roman history and Ford Castle in Northumbria.

There is a history presence on the web site and strong evidence of history being used as a context for film and drama.

There are excellent community links with a local history group making strong contributions to the school's curriculum. Children have the opportunity to interview older members of the community through this.

The school is achieving Gold in this area.

#### **Target:**

Continue to support and develop the excellent work in this area.

#### **Final Comments:**

I would like to extend my thanks to the staff, children and governors for a very enjoyable day. There is much to be celebrated in the school and the Subject Leader has the knowledge and skills to continue to move things forward.

Award made? Yes  
Level: Silver

Date of Award: November  
2016

Renewal Date: 30  
November 2019