



Faith, Family and Fascination

Theme Policy

Boutcher C.E. Primary School

Reviewed by: Megan Whitton

Last reviewed during: Spring 2024

Next review due by: Spring 2026

**"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
*John 13:34***

THEME POLICY

Mission Statement

The Theme Policy will support the delivery of the Mission Statement. Theme takes place within the context of the Christian aims and ethos of Boutcher School as reflected by our Mission Statement.

“The aims and practice of Boutcher School seek to reflect the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as told in the Gospels. Jesus taught us, through His example of unconditional love and compassion, that we are all of equal value to God. Everyone is entitled to be regarded with dignity, fairness and respect. We strive to ensure that our school enshrines the values which Jesus taught us.”

The children at Boutcher discussed our Mission Statement and created their own interpretation of it.

“In our school everyone has the right to learn, the right to feel safe and the right to respect. They have the right to learn the good news of the Gospels and to know that God loves us all equally (whether we are rich or poor, young or old.)

We strive to live in the way that Jesus would want us to. We tell others Jesus's stories so that they can learn from them too and we try to set an example for other people in the way that we act. In all that we do we help each other and love others as Jesus would want us to.

Boutcher CE Primary School tries its best to remember that Jesus loves us, even when we make mistakes.”

SMSC Statement

Through the teaching of Theme children’s SMSC is promoted and supported. We aim to prepare our children to maximise opportunities, develop their responsibility and enhance their experiences now and in the future.

Through lessons we promote our Boutcher values of Faith, Family and Fascination. We enable every child to develop and flourish in a loving and open environment in lessons. We actively promote the fundamental British Values as stated by the Government and design opportunities in the curriculum to do this. We want Theme to be an enjoyable subject where children are fascinated by the learning of themselves, others and the world around them. At the heart of our school, is a rich and diverse culture and community that we enjoy and celebrate. We seek opportunities to work with the local community, explore our local area, welcome visitors to the school, go on trips and take part in community events and projects.

For further information, see the SMSC Policy.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

In Theme we are committed to promoting and providing all children with high expectations and an equal entitlement and opportunities regardless of race, gender, culture, class, SEN or disability. We aim to meet the needs of all our children by personalising our modern languages curriculum, promoting inclusivity to fully engage and motivate all children. This involves providing opportunities for SEND children to receive support and/or scaffolding as well as challenging all children to take an active part in their learning and to achieve their potential.

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Aims and Objectives

National Curriculum Aims:

The national curriculum for **geography** aims to ensure that all children:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

The national curriculum for **history** aims to ensure that all children:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

Boutcher Aims:

At Boutcher we aim to provide a high-quality history and geography education that inspires curiosity and creates fascination about the world so that our children have an enthusiastic interest to know more about the past and to become invested in the future of our world. We do this through teaching thematically where children have the opportunity to explore and achieve the history and geography objectives through a single topic that provides opportunities for both. We believe that teaching through a theme, enables children to make stronger connections across both history and geography and deepens their understanding, knowledge and skills.

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We aim to ensure that children:

- are taught topics that not only meet the national curriculum objectives but are relevant and meaningful to our community
- are equipped in developing key skills such as being able to ask perceptive questions, weigh up evidence, sift arguments, develop perspective and think critically
- to develop an understanding of the complexity of people's lives, the processes of change, the diversities of different societies and relationships between different groups
- will develop knowledge about different places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of physical and human processes
- to reflect on their own identity and the challenges they face now and, in the future
- develop a deepened understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments, including how they are interconnected and change over time

Organisation, Planning and Delivery

In the EYFS, Theme is delivered through the 'Understanding the World' strand of the EYFS curriculum. This learning will guide children to make sense of the world around them, through opportunities to explore, observe, find out about people, places, technology and their local environment.

In Key Stage One and Two, Theme lessons are taught weekly with each topic having History and Geography objectives. Some topics are weighted towards one subject more than the other, but the subject weighting is balanced across the year. This is outlined in the curriculum overview map and through the skills progression documents for history and geography.

Themes are mostly assigned for a whole term and often link to other curriculum areas being studied. This enables children to develop a deeper knowledge of the theme. Teachers are expected to create a medium-term plan, to ensure appropriate coverage. Teachers new to the school or to a new year group are supported by the Theme coordinator. The MTP details prior learning ensuring that new learning builds upon it, encouraging a long term understanding of knowledge and skills.

Each topic has an enquiry question, which is displayed on the Theme display in their classroom and on a cover page in their Theme exercise book. The enquiry question is shared with their children in their first lesson and their initial knowledge is recorded on a mind map. Key vocabulary that the children will be expected to use will also be recorded on the cover page with definitions: children are encouraged to use this throughout the topic.

Once the topic begins the teacher plans one immersion day per term which is an entire day of cross-curricular teaching.

Individual lessons also generally follow an enquiry question which ultimately supports the children in developing answers and perspectives to the overarching topic question.

Teachers use a variety of planning resources and are encouraged to create their own lessons. Skills progression maps and the learning objectives mapped and saved on the shared drive should form the basis of planning, with teachers using skills and knowledge used in previous groups to build on prior learning. Teachers are provided with login details for: Twinkl and Hamilton Trust. They are also encouraged to use resources such as Oak Academy.

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Educational Visits

Educational visits are vital to the teaching of Theme at Boutcher. These visits enable our children to have hands on experiences that will not only bring the learning to life, but will inspire and enthuse them in their learning now and in their future. Educational visits provide children with cultural capital; allowing children to deepen their understanding about people, places and resources. The Theme coordinator will ensure that every class attends at least one educational visit each school year, however, teachers have the discretion to book trips that they feel will support the delivery of the aims for history and geography.

Resources

We have artefacts and non-fiction texts available for many of the topics. The school library also contains non-fiction books and fiction books that relate to many of the topics covered. Children are able to access these during their allocated class library slot and during lunch time. The Chromebooks and iPads can be used for Theme lessons. Teachers have access to planning and resources from previous years which can be accessed from the shared drive. Teachers should speak to the Theme coordinator if they would like the school to purchase resources to support the teaching of Theme.

Marking and Feedback

Marking is key to producing independent learners in Theme and helps to raise attainment by celebrating the successful aspects of a child's work and also reminding them of the next step in their learning. Feedback and marking in Theme aims to challenge the children, make them question and to give them the skills needed to refine or correct their work. Vocabulary and misconceptions are addressed in both written and verbal feedback with the child or whole class. Children are encouraged to use vocabulary given to spell topic specific words correctly in their independent work. If a child needs to be questioned or supported further in order to identify if they have met the learning objective, teachers may make additional comments or ask questions on the child's work to support them in their understanding and thinking. Children will be given support or some scaffolding where needed.

For further details on marking and feedback in Theme lessons, please see our Marking and Feedback Policy.

Progress and Assessment

Teachers use formative assessment throughout lessons, addressing misconceptions and gaps in knowledge and skills as they occur. Teachers may also address misconceptions at the start of each lesson, normally with a slide to identify any areas of learning that needs revisiting or explaining further based on the previous week's work. Children are encouraged to look at the objectives set out on the topic sheets and children are praised when topic specific vocabulary is used well. Teachers may send a child for a Head Teacher's award to praise fantastic work or give a 'Proud As Punch' certificate to praise an area of work.

Summative assessment occurs through teachers using quizzes or assessments at the end of a topic to help inform their judgement of a child being emerging, developing or secure in an area of learning. Assessment data is to be completed and saved on the shared drive, identifying children working towards, working at the expected year group expectation and exceeding at the end of each topic.

Progress and achievement in Theme are reported to parents through end of year reports.

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The Theme coordinator will collect in a sample of books for a ‘book look’, identifying areas going well and any areas that could be developed. INSET training and meetings will occur when necessary to develop CPD opportunities for the team.

Monitoring by the Governors



The governors take part in learning walks with a Theme focus on a rotational basis. They visit each class and observe learning across the school. The coordinator will meet with the governing body to discuss these observations and go through the standard and teaching of History and Geography across the school.

Cross-Curricular Skills and Links

Theme is associated with every aspect of our lives and relates to all areas of the curriculum. Cross-curricular links are encouraged and where possible, children will have the opportunity to explore their local environment and use all other curriculum areas alongside Theme as much as possible.

We will ensure that children realise the positive contribution of both men and women to our world and the contribution from those across the globe as well as in our local area. We will ensure children are taught and exposed to the positive effects of movement and collaboration on our world and how problems and challenges are faced locally, nationally and internationally.

We particularly like to use meaningful and strong texts in reading and writing sessions to support the learning in other subject areas in a meaningful way and context. Some examples of the way we do this are:

	Year Two	Year Three
Theme	Great Fire of London	Stone Age to Iron Age
English		
Science	Uses of Everyday Materials	Rocks
RE	What responsibility has God given people for taking care of creation?	
Art	Artist Study: Ron Embleton	Artist Studies: Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, and David Gores

Role and Responsibility of Coordinator

The Theme coordinator is actively involved in planning and monitoring the subject. They run planning meetings, staff INSET where required and distribute new ideas and resources among the teaching staff. The coordinator monitors the standard of Theme work across the school through observations and data.

Opportunities are provided for teachers to observe the coordinator teaching the subject.

The coordinator is responsible for assessing staff development needs and organising training, they are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate resources to support teachers and specialist teachers in the delivery of lessons.

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The Theme coordinator is responsible for arranging at least one educational visit each academic year for each class. Where there are further opportunities for other visits, the coordinator or the class teacher may book these.

From time to time, the Theme coordinator may be asked to fulfil other duties as part of the role.

Plan for Unforeseen School Closure

Should there be an entire school closure we will continue to teach children in accordance with the Theme curriculum overview. We will continue to plan a variety of activities and provide children with opportunities to continue with their learning at home with lessons being tailored and adapted to suit home learning.

We will use online platforms to teach and deliver homework. Please see the Remote Learning Policy.

Promoting Diversity in Theme Lessons

At Boutcher, we have always been committed to providing all children with an equal entitlement to activities and opportunities regardless of race, gender, culture or class.

We want all children to feel they are positively represented and have opportunities to find out and explore the lives of significant individuals that have made an impact in the world we live in. For BAME children, this may be learning about prominent figures and their influence from people from a range of countries and places. We want children to see themselves as the future and be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge from the wider world. If children have self-belief and determination, they will achieve greatness.

In Theme lessons, children are regularly reminded that we respect all people, beliefs and cultures and that disrespect and derogatory views are not tolerated. If children share views that cause concern, these should be written on the appropriate forms and handed to the Headteacher. If teacher's feel uncomfortable in discussions or when planning lessons, they should speak to the Theme coordinator for support.

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