

Curriculum statement of intent – Humanities

Humanities:

The Humanities department at Shirebrook Academy equip students with an array of critical skills, an analytical frame of mind and develop students as well-rounded citizens of the world.

In Humanities, we have a common approach to assessment, where each assessment point at KS3 cascades skills and knowledge from previous learning, assessing knowledge retrieval and analytical skills pertinent to each subject disposition. Students in Y7 study a Humanities curriculum; a unique four-consecutive lesson model, where deep learning that builds on KS2 foundations takes place, as well as enabling the fostering of effective relationships building on primary transition.

Each subject is taught in two separate half term blocks; in Geography, the core skills of being a Physical, Human and Environmental Geographer, such as map skills, grid references and field work, are taught alongside the knowledge of population and settlement and weather and climate. An in-depth study of the physical and human Geography of Africa brings these skills together at the end of Y7.

In History, students are exposed to the core concepts of chronology, source analysis, change and continuity, evaluating significance and causation through a detailed knowledge of the development of Celtic, Roman, early medieval and later medieval politics, military and society.

In Philosophy and Ethics, philosophical and ethical studies are interleaved through the study of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, alongside the role of religions in families, gender and animal rights.

Geography:

At Shirebrook Academy, as per the KS3 curriculum aims, students receive the first-class geography education that inspires in them a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people, that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

Our Geography curriculum develops responsible informed global citizens who are knowledgeable about people, places, resources, natural and human environments and who have a detailed understanding about the interactions between these concepts. Indeed, as Barack Obama once stated, “the study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together”.

In Y8 and Y9, we take an interleaved approach, studying a range of human and physical geography topics alongside key geographical skills such as ordnance survey maps and grid references. In Y8, students will learn about physical Geography of the UK through a study of rivers, physical world Geography of tectonics, ecosystems and biomes, as well as human Geography that assesses economic change in the UK.

A depth study of our threatened planet, assesses the skills, knowledge and understanding of the whole of Y8 at the year's end. In Y9, students will learn about physical Geography of the UK through a study of coasts, physical world Geography of climate change and tropical rainforests, as well as how humans use resources and globalisation and development. A depth study of China as a global superpower, assesses the skills, knowledge and understanding of the whole of Y9 at the year's end.

At KS4, we follow the AQA specification, studying four main units; Living with the physical environment, Challenges in the human environment, Geographical applications and Geographical skills. Within these units, students will learn about a range of Geographical issues such as natural hazards, tectonic hazards, weather hazards and climate change, landscapes in the UK, urban issues and challenges, the changing economic world and resources.

History:

Fully meeting the demands of the KS3 curriculum, in History, we ensure that all students receive the high-quality education that will help them gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. Our curriculum is designed to inspire students' curiosity to know more about the past, and accrue the aforementioned core historical concepts. Our Y8 and Y9 historians build on the development of concepts in Y7 to further analyse and evaluate historical interpretations. Studying History at Shirebrook Academy helps our students to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups. As George Santayana perhaps most perceptibly put, "Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it".

In Y8 and Y9, we continue with a chronological approach, this being the underpinning concept of history, with depth studies on USA to enable the understanding of the wider world in two snapshots of the 18th and 20th centuries. In Y8, our historians will look at the changing role of Britain from the 16th until the 20th centuries, with the significance of monarchs in the Tudors, Stuarts and Civil War, a depth study on Britain's declining world role and 'loss' of the USA during the wars of independence. Later in Y8, we shift in focus towards economic and societal change during the Industrial era, on a local and national level, with a focus on the changing role of women during their pursuit of suffrage in the later 19th century. The changing position of African people is a keen focus of the empire and slavery unit, which focuses on the black experience before, during and after slavery.

In Y9, we study the 20th century in depth, plotting the course of two world wars and their enormous impact upon the military, politics and society. As is statutory, students will assess the huge impact of the Holocaust on our world. Two depth studies on USA in the 1920s and the Cold War enable our students to apply their historical concept skills and chronological understanding on 20th Century politics, and crucially, society, on a global context.

At KS4, we follow the Edexcel (9-1) specification. This involves the study of Anglo-Saxon and Norman England (1060-87), Crime and Punishment through Time (1000-Present), The American West (1835-1895) and Weimar & Nazi Germany (1918-39). These units offer a combination of breadth and depth studies.

Philosophy and Ethics:

At Shirebrook Academy, we offer a Philosophy and Ethics curriculum that creates opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the diverse way that people behave in the world for our students. As part of this, we have produced an interleaved curriculum of philosophical beliefs and practices, and high-level ethical, moral and spiritual debates. This curriculum complies fully with the agreed Derbyshire and Derby end of key stage outcomes for RE. This provides students with the opportunities to investigate different religious practices, a knowledge of from where religious beliefs originate, and how these beliefs influence people and impact on our world. As philosophers, we are giving students the opportunities to compare different answers to the big questions in life. Philosophy and Ethics is also a critical component of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students, and the subject allows students to nurture personal relationships,

value different opinions, investigate controversial issues, and most importantly of all, respect and tolerate difference; indeed, “tolerance is giving to every other human being every right that you claim for yourself” (Robert Green Ingersoll).

In Y8 and Y9, we take an interleaved approach. In Y8, students will reflect and retrieve upon the study of religions in Y7, considering what it is like to be a religious teenager in the UK today for Christians, Sikhs and Muslims. A depth study of Christianity is interspersed with core ethical debates around whether some lives are worth more than others and the core ethics of life and death. Y8 concludes with a summative unit on whether or not religion helps people to be good. In Y9, we continued an interleaved approach, studying Judaism, Islam and Sikhism in depth, alongside ethical debates on whether or not some people are born evil and if war is ever justified.

At KS4, we follow the AQA specification, studying Christianity and Islam, alongside the themes of Religion and Life, Religion, Peace and Conflict, Religion, Crime and Punishment, and Relationships and Families.