

Classical Civilisations Statement of curriculum intent

The fundamental concept is Cultural context. It fosters tolerance and acceptance by securing an understanding of human behaviours based on beliefs arising from faith and cultural inheritances. By examining the origins of western thinking and traditions the subject makes connections with and between modern political, social and economic concepts.

The specification links to the Keystage 3 curricular in citizenship, literature, art, history and religious studies. It builds upon the foundations of each discipline by reinforcing concepts like proportion & representation in classical architecture, societies values, inequalities and worship.

Inequalities in society are explained by discrimination and exploitation through slavery. Civic duties are evaluated for the sense of belonging they bring and identities they create.

Key skills are predominantly comparative analysis, as the course compares and contrasts the relative merits of the Roman & Greek worlds. This emphasises the importance of balance in reaching evaluative conclusions and how these maybe interpreted in different ways based on the available evidence.

The course begins with myth and religion to give a foundation to understanding the ancient world in its design and human interactions, this is principally delivered through the concepts of sacrifice and the Olympic gods. This underpins the rest of the course and makes further content relatable to these core concepts. The myths expose the vulnerabilities of human behaviour and bring to light the consequences of the choices human beings make when presented with given situations. These are as relevant today in the lessons they can give about leading a 'meaningful' life as they were when they were first heard. They provide a guide to how best manage and accept the limitations of being human in dealing with highly charged emotions like temptation, greed and jealousy. The second part of the course is war and warfare, this exposes some of the most extreme emotions to scrutiny and tries to make sense of how compassion can quickly switch to brutality. It examines the reasons for conflict and possible resolutions.

The incorporation of ancient literature such as The Iliad, allows for an appreciation and understanding of literary techniques and how as an artform it is heavily influenced by events and the philosophy of its time. The structures and mechanics of the works have a direct link to the literature of today in the use of protagonists, conflicts and resolutions. Other poetic representations of warfare are analysed for the way they reflect the authors experiences and culture. References are made to other examples of this from across the curriculum, for example direct comparisons are drawn with First World War poetry.

The economics of warfare are examined from the needs to protect maritime trade to the challenges of maintaining large empires.

Classical Civilisations enriches student's cultural capital by enabling them to understand and access modern culture by establishing links to its very origins in western thought. It provides the prior knowledge that will give the wider context for current affairs, different cultures and the arts today. Students of Classical Studies will have the analytical skills to avoid making false assumptions and a narrow outlook by evaluating both sides of the argument and connecting with the beliefs that underpin them.