

Paxcroft Curriculum Thematic Links – ‘Golden Threads’



**Why a thematic approach?** As children continue to encounter topics within and across year groups, they begin to build up "schema" – working mental models which help them retain information (Willingham, 2017). We have deliberately invoked this by planning to softly encounter themes repeatedly during a child's time at Paxcroft. A topic's focus on a theme may be brief, and more than one theme may come up, but the intention is that every encounter should give another point of reference for the child who is developing their own internal framework for their understanding of, for example, the local area around them, or the geography of the UK, or how British history has developed (Rosenshine, 2012).

Theme Explored	Rationale	Colour Code
Locality	At Paxcroft, we believe that it is incredibly important that children have a good understanding of the local area around them, geographically and historically. Where possible within the bounds of the National Curriculum, we have made links between areas of historical study and the local area, tapping into the history of Bristol and the West Country as a whole.	Red
Geographical knowledge of the UK	It is of fundamental importance that children have an understanding of the country that they live in, including key cities, rivers and, as they get older, an understanding of how the country is divided into counties and governed.	Orange
Geographical knowledge of the World	It is important that children have a good working understanding of the wider world, including key countries around the world, locations and other geographical features such as oceans and seas. As children get older, it is also important that they begin to understand about wider organisational bodies around the world, such as the United Nations.	Yellow
The Environment (including climate and sustainability)	At Paxcroft, we want to focus on issues that are important and relevant to the children – one of these is absolutely the environment and the impact of climate change. It is essential that children have opportunity to study and ask questions about areas connected to this theme.	Green
Inspirational figures	Our curriculum aims for the pupils include developing their aspirations and ability to self-motivate. One of the ways that we achieve this is by looking at inspirational figures at least once in each phase, and discussing role models and achievements.	Dark Blue
Courageous Advocacy	We wish for the pupils at Paxcroft to develop their own voice as citizens of the UK and the world and so have deliberately crafted units that give pupils the opportunity to delve into contentious topics and learn ways to express their opinions.	Pink
Ancient civilisation comparison	The National Curriculum outlines various ancient cultures requiring study at primary; as we look at these civilisations, we ask questions about what they have left behind and make comparisons between them.	Purple
Historical framework for British History	Looking within and beyond the National Curriculum, we have identified key areas of British history to explore with the children, with the intention of developing within them a robust historical framework for British History. We have tried to focus on culturally significant events, as well as those that tie in with our focuses on locality.	Grey

