

Case Study: Gladstone Road Primary School, Scarborough, North Yorkshire

Background

The school located within the government's North Yorkshire Coast opportunity area is a large Primary with 820 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll. Their latest Ofsted inspection (July 2017) rated the school as 'requires improvement' which prompted a reassessment of teaching in the school.

This was the first year the school has been involved in a Heritage Schools project. Rather than doing a small scale project comprising a single class they decided to undertake a whole school approach to using local heritage which involved every class across every Year Group.

This large scale approach achieved a lot in a short period of time, resulting in the school becoming the first of the 12 schools in Scarborough who are working with Historic England to be awarded the Heritage School award.

The school wanted to expand on the local history they already did and had sourced online the 'Planning Outstanding Local History and Heritage Projects at Key Stage 1, 2 & 3' booklet produced by Historic England; this inspired them to attend some CPD training organised by Historic England's Local Heritage Education Manager (LHEM).

"I was inspired by that [HE booklet], we went on the training, it mushroomed from there and we have all tried to go full out to make it high quality, interesting work for the children"

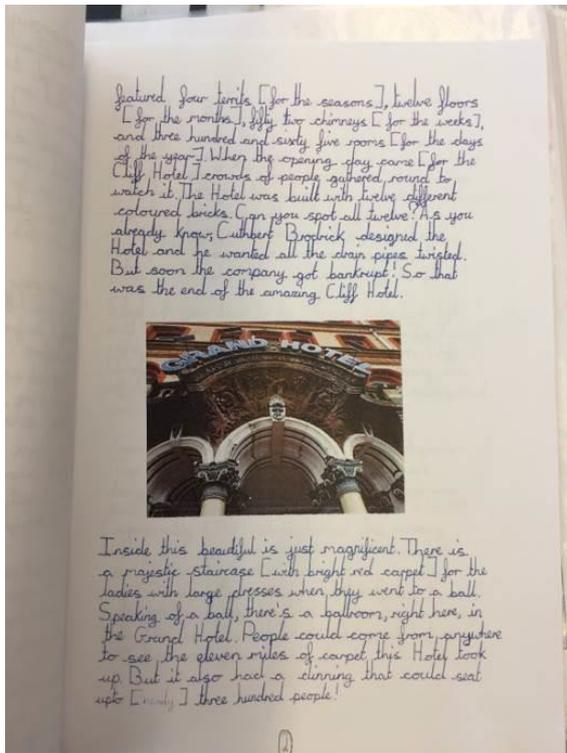
Before setting up schemes of work for each Year Group the History co-ordinator in the school went on a twilight CPD session. They brought back the ideas and skills they acquired at this session and ran the same training exercises back at school with their staff to introduce ideas on how to teach local history. The training also helped the school to make connections with local heritage services which they went on to utilise during their projects by visiting the local archives held in library and working with staff from local museums.

Every Year Group has subsequently undertaken a local heritage study, covering a different element of local history. The projects, each lasting 6-7 weeks were set-up to be cross-curricular incorporating English, Geography, Art, as well as History.

The case study below focusses on the work undertaken by two of these Year groups.

Year 5 heritage project

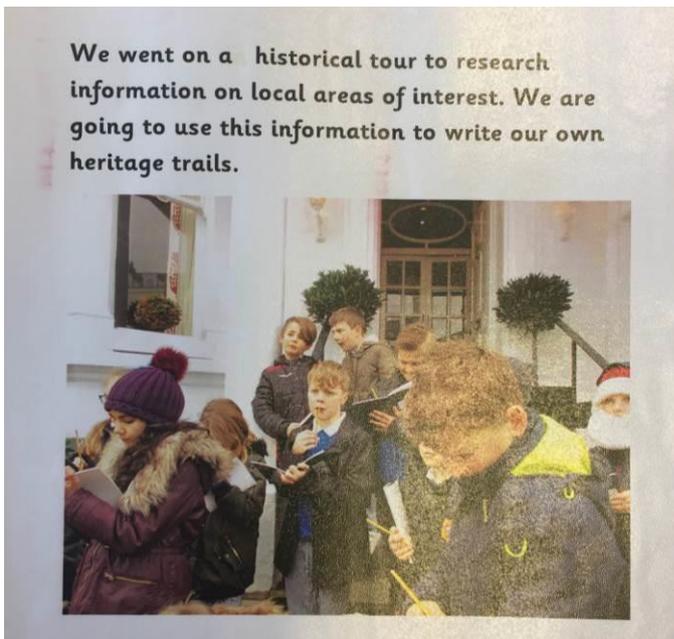
The project was set-up to be cross-curricular, giving pupils the opportunity to learn more about their local area (building a sense of identity and pride), whilst developing their historical skills and at the same time providing opportunities for writing with a purpose.



“We had a history overview with an English writing project that ran alongside it which was to write historical trails ... what was most important to me was getting the children out and about researching”

The intended outcome of pupils producing high quality writing was realised with their historic trails (a page from one guide is shown opposite) being put on display at Scarborough Library.

As a starting point pupils reviewed a number of other historic trail leaflets for other places to identify what is needed to make them interesting.



Before pupils went out of school to do a local study they had to develop their own questions of what they wanted to find out during this visit; this aimed to develop their question raising skills and to teach them to go beyond the simple to asking more in-depth enquiry-led questions.

From the guided tour they had and visits to different buildings they took notes in what they called their field study books. This was supplemented back in the classroom with further research to help compile a history trail. This included using the census and local archives which are held in a part of the town's central library that pupils had not been to or ever used before.

It was evident that many children at the beginning of the project knew very little about their local area and hence did not have a strong sense of pride in where they live.

“It was quite surprising how little some of the children knew [about the place they live]”

Designing their own history trail helped practice a number of skills from thinking about good questions to ask, research skills, where to go for information, thinking about reliability of evidence, note taking, compiling evidence and clearly writing instructions (the route writing was tested out on a partner to ensure it was accurate) and easy to follow, extended writing (which incorporated lessons on punctuation and grammar) and editing their work.

“There was lots of English coming in to it”

Their work has been on display at the town's central library so pupils were keen to make it their best helping them to learn and practice the skills of drafting, editing and re-drafting to ensure the final copy was the best it could be. The work produced was of an extremely high quality.



They also used modern and historical maps provided by Historic England to study changes over time. Using three maps of the town, with the earliest being from 1485, pupils had to compare and contrast the details in each to work out themselves how the town has changed over time before writing up their findings. This helped teach a mix of geography and history skills.

The project also span off to include other areas of the curriculum; for example an activity using a collection of historical (old) objects and artefacts was linked to science with pupils having to think about material properties by grouping the objects into which would rust, decay or last longer and therefore either survive as evidence or disappear. Writing involved having to justify their answers.

"They really enjoyed that, they were so enthused, they were fascinated by items they had just not seen before ... it was just looking at the past and touching the past, feeling things that had belonged to someone else, talking about who might have had this, where might it have been, what might it have been used for so that led us onto what evidence is available to tell us about history in each era"

The pupils used their knowledge of local heritage buildings to do art work as part of their Heritage School project inspired by the work of Tess Willoughby who is a local artist. Pupils recreated one of the buildings they have studied and drew / painted it in her style. Through doing this they learnt various art techniques such as using tone and warm / cold colours.

An unexpected result was the artist asking to display the pupils work in her café / gallery.

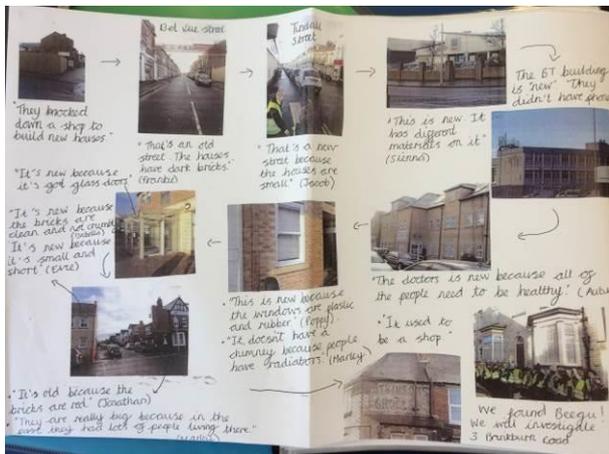


The first image is an original by the artist, the next a pupil drawing inspired by the style and the photo shows the art exhibition of the pupils' work put on at the artist's gallery in Scarborough. The blackboard sign in the background reads 'Children's Art Exhibition - Gladstone Road School Yr 5 (Aren't they talented)'.

Year 1 heritage project

In Year 1 the class teacher used the storybook *Beegu* by Alexis Deacon as a starting point for a local history study. This cross-curricular project was a vehicle to study English, history and geography.

Based on the *Beegu* story which they were studying, pupils went on a walk around the local neighbourhood, seeing what else they could see and find out about the area whilst on their hunt for this friendly alien who has accidentally crash landed on earth (or in Scarborough in this case).



This visit helped to get pupils thinking about their locality in terms of what was old and what was newer which generated many questions.

From their visit they devised questions of what they wanted to find out to try and answer. In the classroom pupils looked at the history of various building they had seen on their local neighbourhood walk using the census and other archive resources.

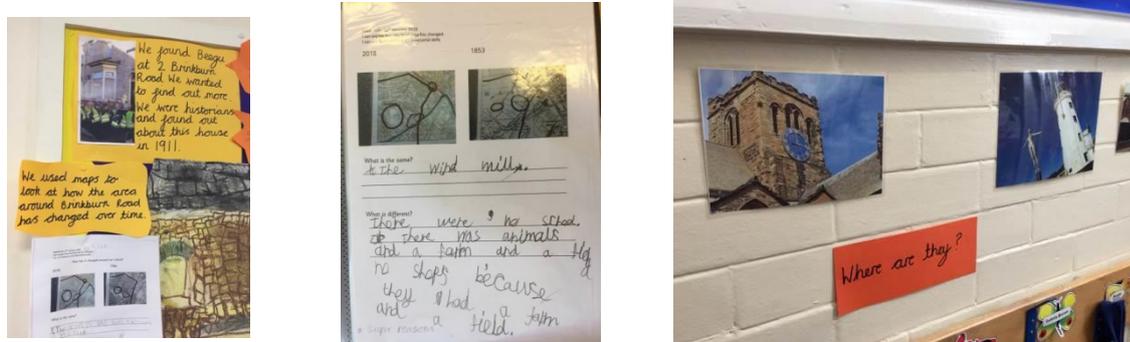
"They found out how many people lived there, their jobs. They loved it, they enjoyed being nosey"

Until doing a local neighbourhood walk pupils had often not thought very much about the area they live in and the history on their doorstep. It provided a lot of stimulus to start off their historical enquiries.

"Going out and looking at buildings raises lots of questions"

The CPD training provided by Historic England had a direct impact on helping give the teacher the skills and ideas of how to use historical documents with pupils.

“I wouldn’t have known where to look for the information on houses, I wouldn’t have been confident to use the census. Because I was confident using it, they were confident to use it”



The photographs above show part of a wall display with findings from their census study, examples of mapping work comparing the local area now and in the past and how the study has continued in their cloakroom

The desire for pupils to know more about their local area has resulted in their cloakroom having images of parts of local buildings so they can look and try to guess where it is.

“This is where the children line up for dinner and they can guess the buildings, there are only parts of it so it is giving them something to talk about when they are in the dinner line”

Impacts of the heritage project

The enthusiasm that doing a Heritage Schools project generated was clear to see from the teachers’ feedback and the pupils’ work; the positive impacts have been multi-faceted.

“There are bits that benefit the children in lots of different ways”

Undertaking a local history project has provided an engaging vehicle to cover a wide range of other curriculum subjects, including literacy, art, science and geography.

The project gave pupils the opportunity to use different writing styles including reporting, persuasive writing and creating information texts (to create a town heritage walk), whilst always writing with a real purpose. The standard of written work produced by the pupils has been very high which the teachers put down to their level of interest and engagement in the topic.

“Gives them different purposes for writing so you are addressing all those things”

The project has been impactful, memorable and enjoyable for pupils.

“Every parent from 5H [Year 5 class] that came to parents’ evening mentioned this history project and how they had loved it, the children had been taking them out, so it is a family thing as well”

“It’s fun, it’s wonderful, engaging for the children. I feel it makes history real for the children because if they get out and see it and learn about it, it is easier than just saying this is something that happened however many years ago; it makes it relevant, especially for the younger ones”

Getting out of school and learning outside the classroom, even for Year 1 pupils, is seen to be hugely beneficial.

“It creates the enthusiasm amongst the children”

The style of teaching by getting pupils to be more questioning, using evidence to help suggest answers and being less didactic has been enjoyable for all involved; one teacher described it as being on a shared adventure.

“Finding out things together”

The work clearly engaged and excited many of the pupils.

“A lot of children did homework; they kept bringing me things in”

Doing an in-depth project studying the local area has had a noticeable impact on the pupils’ sense of pride and belonging, with them caring more about their local area because they now know about the history and local heritage.

“I think they are more proud of the area, I think they realise that Scarborough is a more interesting place after all and there is more to it than donkeys and sand. It opens their eyes; it’s all about widening their horizons and developing interests”

“I think just widening the children’s horizons for the actual local area, I know that even some of the Year 5 children would not have known if I had said let’s go to St. Mary’s Church they wouldn’t have been able to tell me how to get there, what was there or anything about it. It is their pride in the area and looking after where we live and just having that sense of belonging, I belong here, this is my town and I know all this about it and I’m proud of it”

Studying local history facilitated some intergenerational interaction, taking learning outside the classroom and into the home.

“The thing I was proud of afterwards was that some of the children took their parents and grandparents on the historical trails, although one boy did come back and say my granddad knew it all already, they are taking the work out of school, learning more, it is that collaboration between school and home and just getting them enthused and engaged”

The project provided opportunities to engage with parents and the local community. The school invited an outside speaker (John Grant) to come into school and talk to the different Year Groups about the history of the school; he then did an evening talk for parents, ex-pupils and locals which resulted in an amazing turnout.

of staff. He didn't come every day, yet her heart lifted when he did. Time passed quickly

better place in the sun, or take another drink of

timetables.

An entertaining journey through school's history

Words and photos by Dave Barry

GLADSTONE Road School was steeped in nostalgia when ex-deputy head John Grant gave a talk on its history.

Over 100 people, mostly former pupils, enjoyed an entertaining journey through the Victorian school's 131-year past. What could have been a dry and academic

exercise was made enjoyable by Mr Grant's gentle humour.

Of the 1,000 photos displayed, the oldest was for 1903. When it appeared on a screen during Mr Grant's slideshow, he asked if anyone recognised themselves.

Mr Grant, who joined the school in 1981 and left in 2006, is now its archivist and

has amassed a large collection of photos, press cuttings, certificates, magazines and paraphernalia such as an old shell case. Not one that fell on the school during the 1914 bombardment, but pretty similar.

The talk was attended by head teacher Keith Wright, his predecessor David Grimwood and several other current and former staff.



About 100 people attended the talk



Jeff Black and Barrie Knowles spot their younger selves on a 1953 photo



Hazel Brown, who has taught at the school for 17 years, with the admissions register for 1892-1910

Summary

The projects undertaken have led to a number of unexpected learning opportunities which have given the pupils even greater experiences than initially envisaged.

Even though the project is a history study it has enabled the teachers to cover a wide variety of the subjects in a way that has engaged and interested pupils; lessons and learning has been truly cross-curricular.

The reasons for the school winning a Heritage School award featured on local TV

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdOHBfknADY>

However, the learning has gone way beyond subject based knowledge and skills to instilling a strong sense of local pride in their town through increasing pupils' knowledge and awareness of the built heritage on their doorstep.

This Case Study was produced by Qa Research, an independent full-service social and market research agency commissioned by Historic England to evaluate their Heritage Schools Programme.