Young Heritage Hunters

Researching Your School's History

Teachers' Pack

WITH LOVE AND RESPECT TO A WONDERFUL HEADTEACHER FROM KNOWLES 1998 – 2009

THE GLORIOUS DEAD 1914 - 1918 1939 - 1945

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Contents

Cover images: Students at Knowles School practice for their oral history interviews. Inscriptions giving useful date information.

Introduction

Young Heritage Hunters was a 12-month education project to encourage students to explore their local heritage. The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Throughout the project we worked with several schools and community groups to encourage students, families and the wider community to explore the past heritage of this new city. The project is led by Milton Keynes Heritage Association (MKHA) which was set up in 1994 when a group of local history groups came together with the aim of encouraging and developing co-operation between organisations which have an interest in the heritage of the Milton Keynes area. MKHA has around 60 members with a wide range of historical and heritage involvement. You can explore MKHA's website **here**.

Young Heritage Hunters worked with Knowles Junior School and Thornton College and other local schools to explore their schools' histories. The work carried out on these projects forms the basis of this information pack.

Researching the history of your school can be a valuable way to involve students in their studies and develop a wide range of skills for historic enquiry, reading and research.

The guide is divided into two main parts:

I. **Collecting** – this details where to find historical information about your school and important legal issues you need to be aware of when starting a research project.

II. **Keeping** – this section details what you can do once you have collected information, how to record and organise it so that it is easier for pupils, staff and research to search and use.

There are also **Worksheets** to help with gathering research and compiling records

Local students research changes over time by relating old photographs to current buildings

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Curriculum Links
1. QCA Schemes of Work

History Key Stage 1 & 2	Unit 18: What was it like to live here in the past? Unit 13: How has life in Britain changed?
Geography	Record collection and analysis of maps
Art	Unit 6c: Sense of Place

2. Primary National Curriculum until 2014 – Statutory areas of study

The government is in the process of changing the National Curriculum. The curriculum information below has been taken from the interim School Curriculum shown on the **Department for Education website** published 28 November 2011.

Key Stage 2:

Researching your school is a good way to examine local history over time. Through research, the following key areas of knowledge, skills and understanding can be explored:

- **Chronological Understanding**

- **Knowledge and Understanding of Events, People and Changes in the Past**
Through research students can:
    - explore the characteristics of different time-periods and the experiences of men, women and children;
    - identify and describe, through information about the school, the reasons and results of historical events and situations; and the change in time-periods.

- **Historical Interpretation**
Through researching sources, students can:
    - be taught to recognise that the past can be represented and interpreted in different ways;
    - analyse the reasons for this.

- **Historical Enquiry**
Through research students can:
    - learn how to find out about events and people;
    - learn what changes can be discovered through a range of sources;
    - ask and answer questions;
    - select and record information relevant to the focus of the enquiry.

- **Organisation and Communication**
Researching school history can enable pupils to be taught to:
    - recall, select and organise historical information;
    - use dates and historical vocabulary to describe the periods studied;
    - communicate their knowledge and understanding of history in a variety of ways (for example, drawing, writing, by using ICT).

- **Local History Study**
This is a study investigating how an aspect in the local area has changed over a long time. This could include how the locality was affected by a significant national or local event or development; or by the work of a significant individual.

4

3. The New History Curriculum (draft)

In the New Year the coalition government unveiled its new draft curriculum for history. It has been outlined on the **Historical Association website** February 2013. Researching school history links to the new curriculum as follows:

Key stage 1	Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

I. Collecting the history of your school

There is a wide range of sources you can use to discover your school's history.
Documents can be found at -
− at your school;
− at local studies and local libraries;
− at local archives and museums;
− and at the National Archives.

At the end of this section is some advice about legal requirements.

Your School

• School Diaries and Log Books
Older schools may have access to head-teachers' diaries and logbooks which detail daily activities and events. This was a common practice during the 19th century. They make fascinating reading because the details highlight how school life has changed and what has remained the same.

• School Admission Registers and Reports
You could ask past teachers and pupils if they have any reports that they wouldn't mind you borrowing or keeping. Ask if you can scan the images from these reports.

• School Punishment Books
In the 19th century, it was common for schools to keep a record of how and why students were punished, in particular by means of corporal punishment.

• School Administration Records
Old administration records may be held at the local Record Office showing how the school was funded and set up.

• School Buildings
The school buildings themselves are a great resource of clues to what life was like in the school.
Looking at details of the building and how it has changed can give you lots of information. For example there might be dates and initials in the stonework or boot-scrapers by the entrance. If you have a newer school or new buildings you might have architects' plans to which you can refer.

• Oral Histories of School Personnel
A good way of collecting information is to carry out Oral History interviews with staff, parents, governors and past students. A good interview needs preparation and practice:

1. Write and practise questions
2. Think about Listening Skills – make sure that the interviewer is polite, interested and doesn't make any noise.
3. Decide how the interviews will be recorded:
   − You can use a video camera. If so, it is best to put the camera on a tripod so that the picture does not move.
   − You can also use voice recorder. It is best to use good quality voice recorders that will save it in a non-proprietary format such as .mp3 or .avi. If you are thinking of interviewing a lot of people, it might be worth buying quality recording devices such as the solid state recorder from Marantz.

A sample interview sheet can be found on Worksheet 1: Oral History Questions

5

Local Studies and Local Libraries

- **Local History Books**

Local libraries may have books written by local authors that refer to your school or the area around the school. Most libraries have online catalogues so you can search before visiting. You should find the following:

- A range of books covering a variety of subjects and places in the local area.
- Folders of pamphlets, sale catalogues and other material of local history interest, arranged by place and by subject.

- **Maps**

Note: the Milton Keynes area used to be in the County of Buckinghamshire. It is now the Metropolitan County of Milton Keynes and extends from Olney in the north to Bletchley in the south; and from Hanslope in the west to North Crawley in the east.

Old maps are available at the Milton Keynes Central Library Local Studies section. Maps will show you how the area around the school has changed over the years and also how place-names have changed. You can research the following:

- Ordnance Survey maps from 1899, 1925 and 1960 and a digital map from 2000 show the physical change of a chosen place over the last 100 years.
- Goad Maps of the larger towns in the county show the layout and shops of the town centre.
- Geological maps cover Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.

- **Photographs**

Local record offices and libraries have collections of photographs. It may be possible to check this online. There may be photograph collections created by schools, teachers or people linked to the school. You may create a photographic collection and get students to take pictures around the school showing students, classrooms and lessons as well as special events and activities. See -

- Online databases of historical photographs of Buckinghamshire.
- Photographic history books of many old Buckinghamshire towns and of the early development of Milton Keynes.

- **Newspapers**

Micro-film newspapers are available at the Milton Keynes Central Library. All the main newspapers published in the area are there. This is a tremendous amount of material to plough through as there are thousands of editions. It might be worth selecting key dates and focussing on those in your search.

Local Archives and Museums

- **Archives at the Local Record Office**

The Local Record Office for the Milton Keynes area is The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies based in Aylesbury. There are some records at Northamptonshire County Record Office. You can search for records online using the catalogues and there are some resources such as the photography catalogue which can be used online. The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies also offers school visits or a Virtual Classroom session where you can link to the archive using the internet and an interactive white board.

For more information contact: archives@buckscc.gov.uk where you can access population information:

- Population graphs every ten years from 1801 to 2001;
- Access to the censuses from 1841 to 1901, which give names and occupations of people in old Buckinghamshire towns and villages;
- Kelly's Post Office Directories which give names and occupations of Buckinghamshire people from the late 18th century until 1939.

- **Archives of Local History Societies**

There are around 60 local history societies in the local area. They cover a range of interests but many carry out research into their local area and may have material that could help with your research. To find out more about local history societies working in your part of Milton Keynes, see **http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/.**

- **City Archives and Museums – the Milton Keynes Collection**

The five main heritage organisations of Milton Keynes – Bletchley Park, Cowper & Newton, Living Archive, MK City Discovery Centre and MK Museum – may well have details about your school. See **http://www.mkcollection.co.uk/** for more information.

6

The National Archives

The Department for Education documents include school inspections for all schools in England. There is also a section on school buildings and architecture. These records can be searched online:
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/search/

Legal Requirements

When you collect information for your projects, there are a few legal requirements of which you need to be aware. For the most part, following school practices should be enough. However, if you plan publically to display or publish your work, it is worth checking the legal requirements.

• **Data protection**

All the information collected is subject to rules of data protection. If you follow your school rules with handling information, it should be covered. For more information you can check with The Information Commission: **http://www.ico.gov.uk/**

• **Privacy and Safeguarding**

Schools are used to checking a child's status before taking or using pictures of them. The same rules apply to videos and sound recordings. Sometimes in Oral History interviews, people may express their personal opinion and may appear to be derogatory or include details that another person might not want you to know, such as a personal address or family details. These details should be handled with discretion to avoid ill will which may jeopardise future projects.

• **Copyright**

If you plan to use the information in the public domain for exhibitions or on the internet, it is a good idea to ensure that you have permission. Copyright belongs to the person who originally created the photograph, video or writing. Attached is a release form for oral history interviews. This copyright applies for 70 years after the owner's death:
http://www.copyrightservice.co.uk/copyright/p01_uk_copyright_law

II. Keeping the history of your school

Now that you have lots of information, you need to keep it safe for future generations.

Storing

The best way to keep documents safe is to store them in acid-free papers, folders and boxes. This will protect them from dust and be a barrier against light, pests, pollutants and liquids. Ordinary papers and cards have acid in them which turn brown and brittle over time. The acid also leaches out and attacks paper near to it, fading the inks and turning the paper brown. You can find suppliers online.

If papers are kept together with steel or aluminium staples, you should remove them and use brass paper clips. This is because over time the staples and clips rust leaving brown marks on the paper, whereas brass clips do not.

If you have digital information such as computer scans, files, photographs, videos and sound files, make sure that they are in non-proprietary formats. This is because file formats can change over time. Also if you save it in a file format and you no longer own the programme, then the information is lost. For more information on how to look after your collection, see the Community Archives website in their **'Collections care'** pages.

Cataloguing

Part of keeping your information safe is knowing where it is for the future. As part of the exercise you can get the students to create a catalogue of the material that they have collected. As cataloguing is a very time-consuming activity, you may not have time in the school day to work on it. You may prefer it as an extra-curricular activity.

Your collection needs a name and each item needs a reference number. Collections can be divided into categories and given a number to help with referencing. For example:

Catalogue Name	Argos	'Ourtown' School Archive
Category	Electrical	Photographs
Item name	Toaster	School playground photograph
Unique number	25/1432	OSA1/1

8

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

The following information needs to be recorded for each collection:

Information	Example
Name	*'Ourtown'* School Archive
Description	This archive is a collection of the research carried out by Miss Smith's class in 2012. It includes photographs, log-books, leaflets and newsletters, newspapers, book and oral histories.
Categories	Photographs School records Newspapers and books Oral History Interviews
Number and type of documents in the collection	232

Number and type of documents in each category	Photographs 200
	School records: Logbooks 5
	                           Leaflet 4
	                           Newsletter 1
	                           Admission register 4
	Newspapers and books 6
	Newspaper cuttings 3
	Books 3
	Oral History Interviews 7

If you would like to record information more details lists of what can be recorded can be found on the **'Cataloguing'** pages: **http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/category_id__60_path__.aspx**

Knowles Junior School Community Garden

9

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

The following information can be recorded for each item. This will make it easier to find in the future. It is best to make a hard copy of the catalogue and keep it somewhere secure; and also have a copy on a hard drive, preferably in a couple of different places in case of data loss. Each item must be numbered sequentially.

Photographs	OSA/1	
Reference	OSA/1/1	Each item needs a unique number so that it can be found. The number is made up of the category number plus the item number.
Title	Mrs Jones Head teacher 2012	What is the object called? If it doesn't have a name you can give it one.
File Name	IMG_001.JPG	This is the name of the file. It will help with cross- referencing. If you want to make things simpler, you can rename the file so that it is the same as the reference number. For example: osa_1_1.jpg
Description	Digital photograph of Mrs Jones, the head teacher of Ourtown School, sitting in her office behind her desk.	The description explains precisely what can be seen. This helps to tell the difference when you might have two subjects that are similar.
Size	134kb	Making a note of the size will help you to tell the difference between similar files and also to know how much data you are storing.
Date covered	31.3.2012	This is the date that the item covers. It is not always the same as the date recorded below. For example, you may have a weekly newspaper. You may not know exactly when but it is important to put what you know i.e. the year or decade
Date created	2012	It is not always possible to know the date exactly but it is important to have some date, so put what you know i.e. the year or decade.
Creator	Ismail Khan	This is the person who took the picture, wrote the article or was interviewed.
Date recorded	7.4.2012	This is the date that the item is recorded on the catalogue
Recorder	Simon Bloggs	This is the name of the person who added the record to the catalogue. If there are any mistakes, it makes it easier to check.

It is important that you write the dates in the same way, so that when you search, the information can be found. Refer to whole years rather than months and days. If you are not sure of the year but can narrow it down, you can add a range of years such as 1971-1974; or decades – 1970s.

You will need to put the name on the object as well if you have a paper copy. It is best to do this with a pencil. That way you will not damage the object.

Once you have a record, this can be stored somewhere safe and used by other teachers and students.

10

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Work sheet 1- Oral History Questions

What is your name? Please spell it *(It is important to get names right)*
What is your date of birth?

When were you a pupil at the school? **OR** When did you work here?
What name did the school have when you were there?
Was there a school logo when you were there?

How many teachers were there?
Who were your teachers?
What did you think about them?
How strict were the teachers in your time?
Who was the head teacher when you went there? What was he or she like?
Is there a teacher you remember in particular? Why?

How many children were in the school?
How many children were in the class?
What age-groups were taught while you were there?
What lessons did you have?
How was English taught to people who didn't speak it?
How were you organised for maths – by ability or by age?
What languages did you learn?
What sort of homework did you get?
What was PE like?
What sports did you do?
How have things changed?

What were school dinners like?
What did you have for lunch?

Can you describe the playground?
What games did you play?

How has the school building changed?

What did you wear to school?
What was your school uniform?
What did you think about it?

What school clubs were there?
What activities did you do?

Did you enjoy your time at the school?

11

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Worksheet 2 - Collection Information

Fill out one of these for each collection

Name:

Description:

Categories:

Number and type of documents in the collection:

Number and type of documents in each category:

12

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Worksheet 3 - Item Information

Fill out one of these for each item in your collection

Reference		
Title		
File Name		
Description		
Size		
Date covered		
Date created		
Creator		
Date recorded		
Recorder		

13

www.mkheritage.co.uk/yhh

Further References

More information on Collections care, Community Archives and Heritage Group
http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/category_id__59_path__.aspxx

School Histories Project, Institutes of Education
http://www.ioe.ac.uk/services/documents/Services_Library/Key_Factsheet_1.pdf

An American guide to school research -
http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/get_involved/discover.html

Heritage Family History – School Records Project
**http://www.heritagefamilyhistory.co.uk/PDFS/InfoHow%20to%20
Research%20your%20School.pdf**

Create your own mini museum: **http://www.mylearning.org/museums-in-a-box--create-your-own-
mini-museum/p-3269/**

14