

History Policy

Rationale

This policy details the provision we make for the learning and teaching of History at our school and in particular:

- The value the school attaches to the learning and teaching of History and working historically as an entitlement for all our pupils;
- To provide a framework and terms of reference for all staff engaged in facilitating the learning and teaching of History with our pupils and in particular to ensure consistency of standards across the school;
- How the curriculum is organised to ensure breadth, balance, continuity and progression in subject outcomes;
- The preferred learning styles we encourage to engage and motivate pupils in History;
- How the curriculum is organised, monitored and evaluated on a regular and ongoing basis;
- How pupils are routinely assessed through formative methods against objectives which define the outcomes they will achieve in each historical investigation they pursue;
- The performance descriptors used at the end of EYFS and Key Stage 1; Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 which form the basis of reaching summative assessments of achievement at these three key points of transition;
- To clarify that the implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff engaged in the learning and teaching of History.

Purpose

The purposes to this policy are to:

- Highlight the importance and value our school attaches to pupils learning History and to developing as young historians;
- Recognise and establish an entitlement to learning and teaching in History for all our pupils as a statutory educational requirement;
- Make explicit our expectations in terms of subject outcomes and performance for pupils in History as they progress through the school;
- Ensure continuity and progression in terms of subject knowledge, skills application and the development of appropriate attitudes and values;
- Clarify how we will assess, record and communicate the performance of our pupils in History as they progress through the school;
- Outline the approach to learning and teaching History our school has adopted through outcomes focused and key question led enquiries which are relevant, meaningful and rigorous.

The value of History within our curriculum

Engaging children and young people in investigating questions about people and events in the past helps them to better understand their lives today, the contested nature of knowledge and prepares them for the future as more informed citizens.

Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum 2009 Final Report

Engaging pupils with a relevant, exciting and challenging History curriculum which inspires curiosity and is appropriate for preparing them for an adult life in the 21st century is essential since it:

- Helps the learner to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as the challenges of their time;
- Develops skills of critical thinking which means making reasoned judgements that are logical and well thought out and not merely accepting arguments and conclusions as they are presented but having a healthy, discerning and questioning attitude about new information;
- Supports the learner to appreciate that all knowledge is socially constructed and its objectivity and reliability is therefore open to challenge and question through asking perceptive questions, weighing evidence, sifting arguments and developing perspective and judgement;
- Builds a sense of identity and belonging on a personal, cultural, national and global level as learners come to appreciate the diversity of human experience and consequently understand more about themselves and as members of society;
- Enables the learner to understand core concepts and most notably cause and consequence, similarity and difference, continuity and change, change and progress/regression, significance, evidence, chronology, empathy, context, diversity, perspective, interconnectivity and validity which have broad relevance and significance in the modern world;

Organisation and planning

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Within the EYFS History is integral to the Early Learning Goal of *Understanding the World* where pupils are encouraged and supported to "talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members". In addition pupils "learn about similarities and differences" in relation to "objects" and "talk about changes" they observe. Within the EYFS an awareness of the concepts, vocabulary and key terms of History is encouraged through planned purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child initiated activity. For example:

- Recall, retell and sequence stories – *chronology, cause and consequence, evidence*;
- Read and discuss stories with different interpretations or explanations of the same events – reflect on the behaviour, motivation and intent of different characters – *perspective; significance, similarity and difference*;
- Distinguish between the past, present and future and recall moments from the past using language relating to time e.g. past tense - *chronology, similarity and difference, historical narrative*;

- Identifying and comparing features of artefacts from the past and present – *continuity and change/change and progress, evidence, significance*;
- Sequence familiar objects and events in their own lives/family – *chronology, significance*.

Years 1 – 6

In Key Stage 1 and 2 each year group undertakes six half termly enquiries in History and these are outlined in the **Long Term History Plan Years 1-6**. Each of these enquiries is informed by a detailed **Medium Term Plan or Scheme of Work** which details the objectives, vocabulary, learning and teaching activities and methods of assessment and recording adopted each half term. This medium term plan informs teacher planning on a session by session basis throughout each half term. The History co-ordinator maintains a portfolio for each enquiry which includes evidence of pupil's achievement in each investigation and is used for moderation purposes and to monitor and evaluate that anticipated pupil progress in History is occurring as planned.

Inclusion, equality of opportunity and differentiation

History forms an integral and statutory element of a pupil's entitlement to learning and at our school we ensure that all pupils can engage with historical learning and develop as young historians irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender, sexual identity, religion, creed, level of intellectual ability or physical and emotional circumstances. Mutual respect and the fostering of empathy and community understanding at local, regional, national and global scales lies at the heart of the study of History and at our school we model this in terms of the inclusive nature of the learning and teaching we provide.

Ensuring differentiation is a fundamental and core element of inclusion. As such we plan and resource our learning, in line with our whole school policies, to enable all pupils to make good and sustained progress in History including those with special educational needs, those with disabilities and those identified as Able Gifted and Talented for one reason or another; and those with English as an additional language. In our differentiation planning we take due regard of factors such as classroom organisation, learning materials and the learning environment.

Expectations of outcomes – Progression Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Year 6

At our school an important objective is for all pupils to develop as young historians and we achieve this by recognising and planning for what becoming better at History entails – progression - and consequently challenging and supporting our pupils to work historically in a more rigorous manner as they progress through the school. To enable this to happen we have established an outcomes driven curriculum which recognises the crucial importance of identifying not just what we want our pupils to know and do in History but also the intellectual outcomes we intend them to achieve through their learning. As pupils progress as historians this involves developing historical perspective through:

- Wider, more detailed and chronically secure knowledge;
- More focused and precise methods of enquiry and communication of understanding;
- A deeper understanding of more complex historical issues and concepts;

- Pursuing historical valid questions to achieve the following subject outcomes:

Recognise
 Identify
 Describe
 Observe
 Select
 Categorise
 Classify
 Sequence
 Connect and make links
 Compare and Contrast
 Recall
 Reason/Speculate
 Summarise
 Synthesise
 Construct informed responses
 Interpret and explain
 Demonstrate understanding
 Empathise
 Reach Informed Conclusions
 Make reasoned Judgements
 Reflect
 Justify
 Apply
 Evaluate
 Critique

Hypothesise – devise historically valid enquiry questions

EYFS and Key Stage 1

Whilst we recognise that our expectations of pupil outcomes must never be confined by their stage of learning we nevertheless ensure that in the EYFS and at Key Stage 1 our expectations enable pupils to establish and begin to apply the principles of working as an historian and in particular to:

- Use everyday language related to time;
- Order and sequence events;
- Describe main story settings, events and principal characters;
- Talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members;
- Develop an awareness of the past;
- Use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time;
- Fit the people and events they have studied into a simple chronological timeline;
- Use basic subject vocabulary in their oral and written narratives;

- Ask and answer questions and understand some of the ways in which historians find out about the past;
- Use simple sources of evidence to identify and describe relevant historical information and know that information can be retrieved from written sources such as books and also from visual sources like paintings and photographs as well as computers;
- Record their growing knowledge of the subject and communicate this in appropriate ways;
- Question why things happen and offer reasons;
- Be aware of similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions;
- Recognise and describe special times or events for family and friends;
- Identify similarities and differences between ways of life at different times;
- Identify, describe and offer basic reasons for why people did things in the past and what happened as a result;
- Make simple observations about different types of people, events and beliefs in the past;
- Construct simple historical accounts relating to people and events they have studied.
- Achieve the following subject outcomes in History which are reflected in the relevant **performance descriptors** for pupils at our school for the end of **Key Stage 1**:

Recognise
 Identify
 Describe
 Observe
 Select
 Categorise
 Classify
 Sequence
 Connect and make links
 Compare and Contrast
 Recall
 Reason/Speculate

Key Stage 2

In Years 3 through 6 our expectations of pupil outcomes build on what has already been achieved at EYFS and Key Stage 1 and in particular we support pupils to:

- Continue to develop a sense of chronology and a secure knowledge of history;
- Identify connections, contrasts and historical trends over time in relation to the people and events that they investigate;
- Use an increasingly sophisticated and specialised subject vocabulary and use of historical terms;
- Begin to suggest and devise their own lines of historical investigation in addition to pursuing lines of enquiry which have been planned for them;

- Understand how knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and that such sources may not be entirely objective or trustworthy;
- Select and organise information from historical sources;
- Understand that different versions of the past may exist and provide explanations for why this may be the case;
- Describe and make links between events within and across different historical periods;
- Explain why some people and events in the past may be considered more historically significant than others.
- In Years 3 and 4 we focus on pupils being able to master the skill of distinguishing between providing basic reasons for historical events and changes they have studied and demonstrating understanding through reaching explanations by synthesising evidence from an increasingly wide range of historical sources. At the same time we expect greater alacrity in language from our pupils and we plan accordingly for the use of more specialised subject vocabulary and terms. In particular we aim to achieve the following subject outcomes in History which are reflected in the relevant **Performance Descriptors** for pupils at our school for the end of **Lower Key Stage 2**:

Summarise

Synthesise

Construct informed responses

Interpret and explain

Demonstrate understanding

- At Upper Key Stage 2 our expectations in History are that pupils will more regularly and consistently apply information that they have learned from one context to another, make links and identify patterns in their historical learning and to recognise and understand the contested nature of historical evidence. We challenge them to reach conclusions and make judgements about historical events and changes and to evaluate and critique evidence and to generate questions of their own. In particular our aim is to achieve the following outcomes in Years 5 and 6 which are reflected in the relevant **Performance Descriptors** for pupils at our school for the end of **Upper Key Stage 2**:

Empathise

Reach Informed Conclusions

Make reasoned Judgements

Reflect

Justify

Apply

Evaluate

Critique

Hypothesise – devise historically valid enquiry questions

Learning and teaching through enquiry

In History learning is facilitated through pupils pursuing a key question led enquiry approach, which encourages them to take increasing responsibility for their learning, think independently and achieve challenging subject outcomes. At our school therefore we seek to encourage pupils to learn their History through big question led enquiries about significant events, people and changes which allows them sufficient scope and time to really engage in high order subject skills such as developing explanations (even though there are very often no 'right' answers to questions in History), reaching conclusions, making judgements, evaluating, applying information learned in one context to another and generating their own ideas and questions to investigate through hypothesising. Whilst knowing more subject information as the pupils progress through the school is important we are careful in our planning to ensure that there is always a balance between new content and the development of important subject skills and the ability of children to think critically about what they are learning and why. This approach is reflected in all of our planning. We are very careful to be selective about the subject content we use to ensure that a balance is achieved between knowing more content and the development of key subject skills and outcomes.

Rather than attempting to teach historical periods, societies, events or significant individuals in the past in their entirety, we ask insightful questions about them, which in turn supports pupils to delve deeply into aspects of historical topics. Our historical enquiries are carefully planned to enable pupils to construct knowledge, master subject concepts and generate questions of their own through the application of a range of critical thinking skills. This approach is summarised in the following flow diagram:

Applying skills and processes to finding, organising, selecting, analysing, critiquing and interpreting primary and secondary sources of evidence



Pursuing a line of enquiry to answer a relevant and engaging question



Constructing and communicating new knowledge and understanding



Mastering key concepts, generalisations and abstract ideas



Achieving progressively more challenging subject outcomes



Generating further questions to investigate

In line with the school's learning and teaching policy, in History teachers:

- Design enquiries to pursue which are relevant, engaging and appropriately challenging in terms of anticipated outcomes which help pupils answer significant questions about events, changes and the lives of significant individuals.
- Share with pupils what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to learn it;
- Ensure that objectives for lessons always define the outcomes to be achieved and are presented in the form of “key questions” that need to be answered; sometimes these are raised by the teacher, sometimes with pupils and sometimes independently;
- Key question led enquiries are structured to include a number of ancillary questions, the completion of which enable the pupils to progress gradually towards arriving at an answer to the overall big question;
- Provide a variety of learning activities that are used regularly, including observation, enquiry, investigation, games, mysteries, puzzles and problem-solving;
- Encourage pupils to evaluate critically information, ideas and different viewpoints;
- Provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and in groups;
- Encourage discussion and insightful questioning so that pupils clarify their thinking;
- Set high expectations and use our performance descriptors at EYFS and Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 to aid this so that learning objectives and activities are always sufficiently challenging;
- Provide pupils with regular feedback about their work and about what they need to do next in order to improve;
- Use assessment, including the use of focused questions, to determine the pupils’ levels of knowledge and understanding, before, during and after units of work;
- Expect pupils to record their work in a variety of ways, including diagrams, illustrations, pictures, letters, posters, annotated drawings and maps, reports, PowerPoints and oral accounts and presentations of their work.

Assessment

We plan to make and report to parents a **summative judgement** about a pupil’s knowledge and understanding of geography on three occasions during the primary phase:

At the end of Key Stage 1: Summer term of Year 2

At the end of Lower Key Stage 2: Summer term of Year 4

At the end of Key Stage 2: Summer term of Year 6

On these occasions teachers should draw upon the intelligence gained from the formative assessment of pupils, which is integral to each enquiry, to make a summative judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved the expected level of attainment detailed in the performance descriptor, exceeded the expectations or has yet to reach the anticipated level.

Each enquiry which forms the programme of learning and teaching in geography sets clear objectives which define the anticipated outcomes for the pupil. The scheme of work also suggests in the ‘Formative Assessment’ section an extensive range of ways in which the teacher can carry out ongoing assessment to ascertain whether a pupil has achieved these outcomes. Evidence is drawn

from a wide range of sources to inform this process including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities such as model making and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of fieldwork data and writing. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. Summative assessments should not be made of individual pieces of work or for that matter of separate enquiries.

At the end of each of the three learning stages, the teacher will be able to use their knowledge and understanding of the pupils gained through extensive formative assessment over the previous two years to reach an accurate judgment of what they know and can do. At this point they need to take into account the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and reach a 'best fit' summative judgement taking into account the whole of the descriptor rather than specific parts of it. **Most critically this decision is based on the professional knowledge and judgement that the teacher possesses of the pupil, built up over an extended period of time, which is then used to make a rounded and holistic judgement of their attainment in history.**

Key Stage 1 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Key Stage 1 will be able to:

Identify, describe and compare and contrast the similarities and differences between popular toys and games of the 1960s and those of today and suggest reasons for what they observe. They will also be able to recall some significant historic events, people and places of the 1960s both in the United Kingdom and globally and use simple data gathering techniques to collect the recollections of adults who were alive at the time. Through the study of Guido Fawkes and a range of other significant individuals who lived in different periods and places, they are able to both recall their achievements and suggest simple reasons for the impact their lives have had. In relation to their own local area pupils at this level know about how and why some individuals, places and events are important historically and can compare in simple terms the significance of one with another. In relation to their investigation of Sappho at Pompeii pupils will be able to describe in simple terms what the Roman Empire was, the events that occurred at Pompeii in 79 AD and suggest what some artefacts tell archaeologists about the lives of the people who lived there. Through the study of a number of different famous past and present explorers pupils are able to describe their achievements, some of the effects on life they had at the time and suggest things they may have in common. Through an investigation of an aspect of the First World War pupils are able to describe how animals were so important to both sides and suggest in simple terms what this tells us about ways of life in Britain a hundred years ago. During their investigations they will gain and use simple historical vocabulary correctly and use basic historical skills such as interpreting simple original sources.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Demonstrate greater knowledge and understanding through offering more developed and insightful explanations (as opposed to reasons) for the impact of the events and people they are investigating. They will also show a capacity to link their learning in one investigation with others particularly in terms of being able to compare ways of life in different periods. In doing this they draw upon, and

apply, examples of specialised subject vocabulary and use multiple and/or more demanding original sources.

Lower Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Lower Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Demonstrate both knowledge and understanding of history through identifying and explaining some of the ways that significant individuals and events during the period from the beginning of the Stone Age to the end of Anglo Saxon rule have contributed to shaping life in present day Britain. In doing so they use an increasing range of basic and more specialised subject vocabulary accurately and show that they can synthesise information from a broader range of historic sources including artefacts to help formulate their explanations. They will be able to make insightful links between their different enquiries to compare and contrast life in Britain at different times during this period and offer sound historic reasons for the similarities and differences they observe. As they do this they will show an understanding of key historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and effect and significance.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Question the validity of some of the sources of historical evidence they use and exhibit an understanding of why different interpretations of artefacts and the actions of people and events in the past may not be altogether trustworthy. In doing so they use confidently and accurately a wide range of specialist subject vocabulary and demonstrate an awareness of more sophisticated historical concepts such as significance and perspective.

Upper Key Stage 2 Performance Descriptor

Pupils at the **expected level of attainment** at the end of Upper Key Stage 2 will be able to:

Understand some of the most significant aspects of the lives of people in the ancient civilizations that they have investigated such as the Maya, Shang Dynasty and Ancient Greece, through interpreting and evaluating a range of source material of various kinds including written, visual, cartographic and artefactual evidence. They will also show a capacity to reach conclusions, make judgements and justify their views about the significance of major historic developments and events in Britain such as the rise and decline of the British Empire and the Battle of Britain. In doing this they will also demonstrate a basic understanding of the importance perspective when reaching conclusions in history. Through a detailed local historical study they will be able to explain some of the ways in which national and international events in the past have impacted their own community and evaluate some of their effects. In achieving these things they will use specialised historical vocabulary and skills confidently and regularly and apply more demanding concepts such as empathy insightfully.

Pupils **exceeding the expected level of attainment** will, in addition to the above, be able to:

Make and justify more informed and subtle judgements about the causes and outcomes of the historical events and developments that they have investigated. In doing so they exhibit some

awareness of the questionable validity of much historical evidence, and generate meaningful questions of their own to pursue in order to gather further relevant information.

Connecting History to other areas of the curriculum

In our planning we have made meaningful links between History and other subject areas of the National Curriculum and to Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) where incorporating content and perspectives adds value to and extends the historical understanding of our pupils. Making such links is important because it highlights to pupils the interconnectedness and interdependence of the real world but when making such connections we must maintain subject rigour and appropriate expectations in History for each stage of learning. For example the primary objective of applying key literacy and numeracy conventions to History is to enable our pupils to achieve more and better in History – i.e. to develop as young historians. To this end we must ensure that high standards of literacy and numeracy when applied to History result in equally and appropriately high standards of historical subject attainment. In each of our historical enquiries links made to other subject areas are clearly documented and as a consequence many are able to deliver effectively substantial elements of the content of other disciplines in a cross-curricular manner.

Homework

Homework in History is provided in line with whole school policy and as such is identified where appropriate within the documentation and planning for each historical investigation.

Monitoring and Evaluation and the role of the History subject co-ordinator

All teachers at our school are responsible for monitoring standards in History but the History Co-ordinator, under the direction of the Headteacher, takes a lead in this. Monitoring activities are planned across the year and form part of the History Co-ordinator's leadership schedule. In summary, these are:

- Termly staff meetings to analyse samples of pupils' history work to moderate standards (attainment and progress against outcomes and end of stage performance descriptors) to ensure consistency and that colleagues are informed of subject developments at local and national levels with which the Co-ordinator has been involved;
- The moderation of teachers' weekly planning files once per term to monitor coverage and delivery of planned enquiries;
- Lesson observations to ensure that learning and teaching is appropriately engaging and challenging and that the anticipated subject progress is being made by the pupils;
- The sampling of pupils' work twice per year to ensure that expectations in terms of subject outcomes are being maintained through the curriculum;
- Once per year the subject leader provides feedback to staff about the quality of History being taught and uses the History Portfolio of evidence to lead a discussion on standards being achieved within the subject;
- In collaboration with the Headteacher, Governors and teaching colleagues the co-ordinator drafts and finalises a three year Development Plan for History and a one year History Action Plan which informed by it;

- Create a portfolio of samples of pupil's work for each enquiry of the History curriculum which illustrate how each of the outcomes can be achieved for guidance for colleagues and to ensure consistency of standards.

The History Co-ordinator has the responsibility to take a lead in developing History further across the school within the school's improvement plan; monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and the use of resources. Teachers and educational support staff can expect support from the History Co-ordinator arising from targets identified in the school improvement plan and from the outcomes of performance management and induction programmes.

To develop staff confidence and competence in teaching History the subject co-ordinator will:

- Attend subject professional development opportunities as they arise and in the context of the priorities of the whole School Improvement Plan together with the History Subject Development Plan;
- Identify and source staff training needs arising from the above and through induction programmes and performance management reviews;
- Arrange for relevant advice and information from professional development programmes, including courses, to be disseminated and where appropriate included in subject improvement planning;
- Where necessary lead (or arrange) school-based subject improvement training for colleagues.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme and no later than the following date:

Signed Headteacher

Signed Subject Co-ordinator

Date