



# History (Years 1-6)

## Intent

### How we have planned our history curriculum

The study of history involves engaging pupils in investigating questions about people and events in the past in order to enable them to better understand their lives today and for a future as more informed and enlightened citizens. Through the study of history, pupils also develop a wide range of critical thinking skills, which enable them to understand the contested nature of knowledge and to distinguish between 'fact' and subjectivity when it comes to reaching conclusions and making judgements about the past. With this in mind we have established a school curriculum plan for history as an entitlement for all pupils that is:

- **Aspirational** in terms of instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success through providing them with the opportunities to excel in terms of their acquisition of long lasting knowledge and understanding and mastery of core historical skills. Such high aspirations are clearly identifiable in the progressive and increasingly challenging objectives of the scheme of work of each enquiry, which define clearly what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do;
- **Logical, and broad and balanced** in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance and the demands of the National Curriculum. For example we have ensured that content includes representative investigations of British history spanning the period from the Stone Age to the Norman invasion of 1066 as well as enquiries focusing on the achievements of ancient civilizations such as the Maya, the Shang Dynasty and Ancient Greece;
- **Chronologically sequenced** as pupils progress through the school which allows them opportunities to evaluate both change and progress from one historical period to another and to build on previous knowledge and understanding as they tackle more complex and demanding enquiries;
- **Relevant** in terms of the careful consideration that has been given to the selection of historical enquiries that extend the knowledge and understanding of pupils beyond 1066 e.g. evaluating the significance of the Battle of Britain and the impact of the British Empire;
- **Progressively more challenging** Years 1 through 6 both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and also the critical thinking skills we support them to utilise to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge. These anticipated outcomes in knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition are detailed in the objectives of the detailed scheme of work for each enquiry.
- **Built upon and has continuity** with the provision for history established in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in particular that which addresses the knowledge and skills expectations of the Past and Present Early Learning Goal;
- **Inclusive** in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities and differentiating where necessary through, for

example, in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.

## Implementation

### How we teach our history curriculum

We adopt an enquiry focused approach to learning and teaching in history which develops our pupils as young historians. Through enquiry our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, the use of specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. We structure learning in history through big question led enquiries about relevant historical topics, places and themes. Our curriculum is therefore 'knowledge rich' rather than content heavy as we recognise that if we attempt to teach historical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we restrict opportunities for pupils to master and apply critical thinking skills and achieve more challenging subject outcomes. We adopt a policy of immersive learning in history that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and understand the significance of what they have learned. Our learning and teaching in history is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Wherever possible we provide our pupils with contemporaneous historical evidence including narratives, paintings, photographs, artefacts, and data in the form of censuses and films to analyse and from which to reach conclusions and make judgements. Similarly we provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of PowerPoint, concept mapping, annotated diagrams, improvised drama and the application of a wide range of writing genres. Only in this way will knowledge become embedded and 'sticky' and ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next. The schemes of work for each historical enquiry highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation. Our learning and teaching in history also recognises the importance of the local area with a number of our investigations involving observation, recording, presentation, interpretation and the evaluation of historical information outside of the classroom e.g. significant people, places and events locally.

## Impact

### How we assess the progress our pupils make in history

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in history sets clear objectives and outcomes for the pupil in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. The schemes of work also suggest a range of ways in which the teacher can assess whether a pupil has

achieved these outcomes. We ensure that when assessing pupils, evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the 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 in different genres. 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. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work but rather use such outcomes to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil against the subject learning goals for history in that year. At this point, teachers decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. These decisions are based on the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms, which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Achievement against the learning goals for history at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.