



St. Thomas's
CE Primary School

History Policy

2023

Introduction

History is about real people who lived, and real events which happened in the past. History is concerned with sequence, time and chronology and is the study of evidence about the past; it gives us a sense of identity, set within our social, political, cultural and economic relationships. History fires the children's curiosity about the past in Britain and the wider world and plays an essential part in preparing us for living and working in the contemporary world. Pupils consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, how these societies organised their politics, and what beliefs and cultures influenced people's actions. As they do this, children develop a chronological framework for their knowledge of significant events and people. They see the diversity of human experience, and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. What they learn can influence their decisions about personal choices, attitudes and values. In history, children find evidence, weigh it up and reach their own conclusions. To do this they need to be able to research, sift through evidence, and argue for their point of view – skills that are prized in adult life.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of history are:

Aims

The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of Britain as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements of mankind.
- gain understanding and use terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament'.
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, ask historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives.
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

Teaching and Learning

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our history lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research learning opportunities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer historical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of sources, such as non-fiction texts, artefacts, pictures

and photographs. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving learning.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different historical abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child, taking into account their relative starting points. We achieve this by:

- Setting common learning opportunities which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks.
- Expectations of learning outcomes through historical skills, depth of conclusions and analysis.
- Providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child.
- Using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children

Curriculum Planning

A year group curriculum map has been provided in order to provide a framework for the History taught within our school. The National Curriculum provides further guidance by outlining the knowledge, skills and understanding which should be highlighted within each Key Stage. The National Curriculum website provides guidance as to Attainment expectations at each stage. The History taught in EYFS is governed by the Early Years Foundation Stage document. The whole school plan aims to ensure progression and continuity in the knowledge and skills of History. Making links between aspects of History studied is encouraged, enabling children to build upon previous skills and experience.

EYFS

Understanding the World in EYFS is an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. History makes a significant contribution to the objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as talking about the past and present in their own lives and visiting places of historical importance in their local area.

Key Stage 1

Pupils should develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods. They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Pupils should be taught about:

- changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life.

- events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally [for example, the Great Fire of London, the first aeroplane flight or events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries].
- the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods [for example, Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, Florence Nightingale].
- significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

Key stage 2:

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Pupils should be taught about:

- changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.
- the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain.
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots.
- the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor.
- a local history study.
- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- the achievements of the earliest civilizations – for example Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – for example the Mayan civilisation

Planning a Mastery Curriculum

Our planning takes account of the core concepts of the subject area which pupils must master for success at the highest levels of achievement. Planning will identify what pupils need and what is essential that they embed and deepen. Long term planning is identified from the National Curriculum Documentation. This is undertaken in the context of the school's overall curriculum plan. It reflects the needs of all children. All teaching staff agree which parts of the programme of study are drawn together to make coherent, manageable teaching units which match the age and levels of attainment of the children. Long term plans show how the teaching units are distributed across Key Stages 1 and 2 in a sequence which promotes both curriculum continuity and progress in children's learning.

Medium term and short term planning is created to meet the identified skills suited to each theme. Termly plans identify learning objectives and outcomes for each History unit and

suggest activities and resources which will enable these to be achieved. The units of work are in line with the National Curriculum.

Assessment and Recording

During the planning stage, clear learning objectives are set and opportunities for assessment are identified. Assessments are recorded in line with school policy. Opportunities are embedded within planning for both formative and summative assessments to take place within History.

Cross-Curricular Links

English

History makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We organise debates on historical issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use history as a way of developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports, letters and recounts.

Mathematics

History in St Thomas's contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to order times, events, days, and dates into chronological order.

Computing

We make provision for the children to use technology in history lessons, where appropriate. Children use ICT in history to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research historical information through the Internet.

Inclusion

At St Thomas's, we teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children, regardless of their starting points.

Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress across a lesson and over time. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. We strive to ensure our teaching is matched to the individual child's needs.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning history. Where children are to participate in learning opportunities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils and their learning needs.

Monitoring and review

The history subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in history. The history subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.