



# History Curriculum Statement

## How is History a Sacred Subject?

*History encourages all learners to discover the truth of the past and to have a deep understanding of the present, which in turn will enable them to make informed and wise decisions for creating a better future. History helps students find their place in the story of humankind. Students are helped to develop critical thinking skills as they delve into the rich variety of available sources. Learning to analyse and critique information and data encourages the ability to discern facts and reach conclusions, matching evidence with truth. Learning from the past helps to facilitate a better future for the common good of all God's people.*

### Intent

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we promote the use of a knowledge-rich curriculum to serve key principles of cognitive science. Scientific research has shown that knowledge is essential to the development of reading comprehension and critical thinking. Research has also shown that those who are rich in knowledge gain new knowledge quicker and more effectively. We therefore place the acquisition of knowledge at the heart of the learning process. The History curriculum will operate at two time levels: the then and the now so that the children are actively experiencing the history while also developing skills that are relevant to their future lives.

Pupils will secure a significant historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts and understand connections between local, regional, national and international history. Our History curriculum is sequenced coherently so useful knowledge builds through two distinct strands: Ancient and World History and British History. As a result of the accumulation of essential knowledge, pupils' cultural capital and historical disciplines will be substantial and will provide a secure foundation that will enable them to succeed in the next stage of their education.

At St. Mary's, we consistently promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helping them to have a greater understanding of their place in the world and their responsibilities to the environment. Newcastle-under-Lyme has its own rich history and the children need to understand it in the context of Britain's past and the wider context of the global community of which they are present. When done well, cross-curricular learning offers great potential for children to reach across subjects, connecting learning within and across domains of knowledge. We plan for coherence through planned progression – mapping out the way propositional and procedural knowledge will develop.

### Implementation

Our History curriculum aims to ensure that all children:

- Gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world, which helps to stimulate children's curiosity to know more about the past
- Learn how to ask perceptive questions, think critically, consider evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement
- Begin to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time
- Know the difference between disciplinary and substantive knowledge

- Can think like a historian.

Within this subject we introduce, build upon and review the disciplinary skills which require the children to think like a historian as outlined on the wheel below:



### EYFS

The teaching of History is practical, playful and inclusive with support and challenge from adults in class sessions, small groups and working with individuals. There is a combination of adult-led, teacher taught sessions as well as a wealth of stimulating continuous provision opportunities when adults scaffold learning through skillful interactions and questioning.

### Career Professional Development

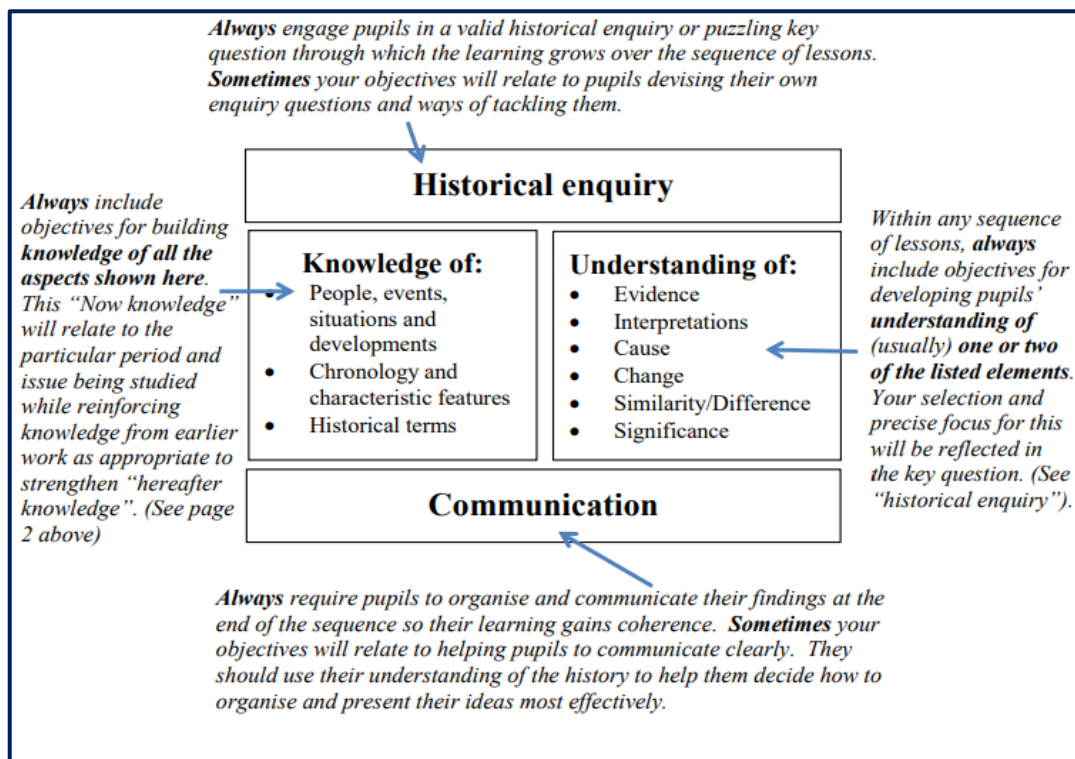
We develop strong subject knowledge amongst all staff which is achieved through: comprehensive middle leadership development, a focus on developing all teachers' subject knowledge, historical pedagogy and the provision of high-quality planning and resources. Links are made with Christ the King Catholic Collegiate to share resources and knowledge. CPD is delivered in conjunction with the History department at Saint John Fisher.

### Teaching Style

Excellent teaching within St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is based upon two key principles: research on the classroom practices of master teachers and research on cognitive supports to help pupils learn complex tasks. The child is encouraged to engage head, heart and hand. The 3 domains to learning are the emotional, the social and the cognitive. In addition to this, staff use an enquiry based approach with the use of a 'hook'

to draw children into the lesson. We consider these enquiries/questions and allow the children to discuss them in depth. This allows them to challenge their own ideology and build greater recognition. Through such discussions, St. Mary's enhances the children's thinking and communication skills, boosts their self-esteem, and improves their academic attainment; focusing on the enquiries with lenses of critical, caring, collaborative and creative thinking. The children are comfortable with epistemic uncertainty because they understand that the dilemma is more important than being right.

Lessons are designed so that they start with a recap on previous learning. During the lesson the children also have an opportunity to retrieve information for the input that will deepen their metacognition.



*Progression in Primary History, James Byrom*

### Threads

At St. Mary's, we have found that high-quality history education helps pupils to gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, making and understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history. The six key threads which run throughout the curriculum are:

- Movement of people
- Conflict
- Arts & Culture
- Dwellings/Lifestyle
- Technological Development
- Religion.



### Movement of people

In EYFS children think about where they live and where they have come from. In KS1 children learn about how people move using different forms of transport with a focus on the local history of hot air balloons and a wider focus on humanity's first journey into space. In LKS2 children are introduced to nomadic tribes who migrate to form civilizations. They look at how some of these groups expanded borders through invasion. In UKS2 children explore the impact of immigration through study of Windrush. Children look at how civilizations leave legacies when they move and leave an area. They explore the movement of people due to war including evacuation, refugees, prisoners and slaves.



### Conflict

In EYFS children are introduced to remembrance. In KS1 children learn about Mary Seacole's work during the Crimean war. In LKS2 children are introduced to conflict shaping the formation of Great Britain through invasion and battles between Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Scots and Vikings. In UKS2 children look at different forms of governance including democracy. They see how the Battle of Britain proved a turning point in WWII as well as considering the wider impact the war had (including on children and for the Windrush generation). Children also explore the Ancient Greek battles between Athens & Sparta, and at Marathon.



### Arts & Culture

In EYFS children explore art created in their lifetime and from before. In KS1 children look at portraits and pictures of monarchs and are introduced to the idea that events in history can be reflected in art and culture of the time. Children investigate the architecture of Christopher Wren. In LKS2 children explore how cave paintings are used by historians. This is contrasted by Egyptian art and hieroglyphics. The architecture of the Roman era and Roman theatres is studied. The exploration of myths and legends having historical validity is introduced and continues to be explored through UKS2. In UKS2 children examine cultural contributions of the Greeks and Windrush generation. Through enquiry, children look at the value of artefacts for historians in the Kingdom of Benin.



### Dwellings/Lifestyle

In EYFS children explore where they live, the types of places they live in and lifestyles. In KS1 children consider how these dwellings have changed looking back at living memory, relatives and the Victorians. They see how an event, the great fire of London, impacted how houses and neighborhoods were built. In LKS2 children see how houses changed as a nomadic people started to settle and invading peoples brought advancements. In UKS2 children explore what life was like for the Windrush arrivals. They explore Ancient Greek architecture and the legacy it has. Children discover how WWII impacted house building and changed lifestyles. Children contrast this with life in the Benin Kingdom.



### Technological development

In EYFS children look at toys, transport and technology. In KS1 children build on this looking at how toys have changed and what they can tell us about history. They explore technological changes in healthcare, travel and firefighting. In LKS2 children explore how tools, weapons and methods of transporting people and goods have changed over time. They see the emergence of writing, contrasting with hieroglyphics and runes. In UKS2 children explore the impact of aerial warfare and radar on the outcomes of the Battle of Britain and WWII.



### Religion

In EYFS children are introduced to religion through classmates and stories. This continues in KS1 including the understanding that the current British Monarch is the head of the Church of England. In LKS2 children look at how the impact religion has on history and [viceversa](#). The introduction of Christianity to [Britain](#) is explored as is its impact. Children explore ancient religions in different cultures with a focus on Ancient Egyptian Gods and burial practices. This continues in UKS2 exploring Greek Gods and [Hellenisation](#) as well as the myths and legends of the Benin Kingdom. In UKS2 children explore the religious persecution of Jewish people during WWII and the Holocaust, marking Holocaust Memorial Day.

## Quizzing

The benefit of retrieval practice is one of the most robust findings in cognitive psychology (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006; Storm, Bjork & Storm, 2010). Low-stakes multiple choice quizzes are efficient, effective and motivating for pupils, whilst providing teachers with vital information about what pupils have misunderstood and/or what they are struggling to remember. These questions can be easily recycled, utilising the spacing effect to ensure content is retained for the long term instead of being forgotten soon after the lesson or unit has ended. We believe that regular low stakes testing/quizzing helps and it is better if that testing is spaced or looped. We know

that interleaving information - interrupting it with unrelated information but then coming back to its original focus of study – seems to be effective. It is more effective when it is interleaved with material that is in some way conceptually or thematically connected.

## Lesson Plans

Each unit consists of six or seven, carefully sequenced 'knowledge lessons', which can be contrasted with popular but ultimately less effective 'discovery-based' lessons described by Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2006) as 'minimally guided instruction'. The lessons are based on the Plan Bee scheme of work and have been tailored to the needs of our children. In line with findings from cognitive load theory (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974; Baddeley 1986; Rosenshine 2012; Sweller, 1988) lessons are chunked into small sessions of explicit teaching followed by regular opportunities for all children to think, apply and practice key skills and knowledge. Planning to situate children within stories in which they work through dilemma can be an extremely effective way of interleaving information. We can use the narrative to interrupt and reinforce the learning as well as deploy questions both in and out of role to practice retrieval. Opportunities for movement, like narrative, is also a way of children



retaining information; most powerful when it is usefully combined with knowledge to aid conceptual understanding.

### **Flipcharts**

Each lesson includes a slide show to support the teacher in delivering the content of the lessons clearly and precisely. The slides aid pupil memory by making effect of 'dual coding' (Paivio 1986; Mayer & Moreno, 2003). Dual coding can improve the absorption of new knowledge without increasing pupils' cognitive load, with the benefits of receiving explanations through both visual and auditory channels being well established in research literature.

### **Source Assessment**

At the end of each unit, pupils have a chance to show their substantive and disciplinary knowledge in a source assessment in which they are required to draw upon knowledge learned throughout the unit. This ensures that pupils are able to synthesise and elaborate on the knowledge that they have acquired throughout the unit, whilst also setting them up for success in secondary school. The ability to reason, argue, persuade and consider multiple perspectives are crucial but ultimately domain specific and so each question allows these skills to be contextualised within the knowledge taught during the unit. Answering these questions strengthen the storage strength of the material learnt, whilst helping knowledge to move from inflexible status to being more flexible.

### **Cross Curricular**

Wherever possible, the History curriculum is enhanced by interweaving content through other subjects. To understand Britain today, pupils will have a secure understanding of how historical events have created the world and societies that we know today. Children will also participate in a variety of 'theme days' which will

deepen their knowledge such as Black History Month and Local History Week.

### **Oracy within History**

In our History curriculum we ensure that all children:

- Draw their own conclusions and justify them while considering different perspectives
- Discuss and debate important questions
- Can ask questions in History
- Use key vocabulary to express themselves as historians
  
- Formulate and refine questions and lines of enquiry
- Can make critical reflections
- Can compare and contrast events, lives and societal structures of the past and present.



## Impact

By the end of the curriculum, all pupils will have a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. Children will have acquired the skills of being able to ask perceptive questions, think critically, consider evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement.

This will be assessed through a multi-faceted approach including: half termly quizzes pre and post units of study, skillful questioning lesson by lesson, weekly retrieval practices, and summative disciplinary tasks such as answering the source assessment at the end of each unit. These will be moderated across year groups within the school as a form of summative assessment and means of ensuring progression throughout the curriculum. Leaders will monitor the quality and impact of the curriculum through regular pupil voice and assess the extent to which pupils know more and remember more.