

History Policy



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History at Whale Hill Primary School

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of History at Whale Hill Primary School.

Purpose of study

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgment. History helps pupils 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.

Aims of study

Our aims at Whale Hill are based on the 2014 National Curriculum and are intended to ensure that all pupils:

- Know and understand the history of these islands 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 and follies of mankind.
- Gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses.
- Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously 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.

How do we teach History?

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. In each key stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance and, where possible, the opportunities to examine historical artefacts and both primary and secondary sources. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, for example, 'How do we know?', 'What can I find out about...?', 'Where can I find out about...?', about information they are given. Teachers are also encouraged to make curriculum links to other subjects in their teaching of History, in order to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

EYFS

In this phase, children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

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.

In this stage, pupils will 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 which are significant nationally or globally.
- 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.
- 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.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Pupils will 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 civilisations.
- A study of ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world.

In both Key Stages 1 and 2, we plan using historical enquiry questions, which help to focus planning, learning and assessment.

We recognise that there are children of a wide range of academic ability within every class and we aim to provide suitable and beneficial learning opportunities by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this in a number of ways:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty. Not all children complete every task.
- Grouping children by ability within the classroom and setting different tasks for each ability group - provision should be in place to both support the children with special educational needs and of a lower ability and stretch the higher attainers.

- Providing resources of different complexity depending upon the ability of the child.
- Using classroom assistants, when available, to support groups.

History Curriculum Planning

We carry out curriculum planning for History in two phases. The long term plan maps the topics studied by each year group during every term over the academic year. The medium term planning details what is to be studied during a half term, in relation to a focused topic.

As the basis for medium term planning, we use the Whale Hill History and Geography Scheme of Work, which was designed based on the 2014 National Curriculum, in collaboration with the Geography coordinator. History is studied every term throughout the academic year. The scheme of work has been written with a strong emphasis on the development of historical skills and a separate document shows how these skills progress across key stages one and two.

The History subject leader reviews planning, teaching, pupil work and assessment regularly to ensure the coverage of objectives and skills is consistent across the school and speaks with staff and pupils relating to the learning.

Cross-curricular links to History are made, when relevant, and highlighted on year group medium term planning.

Assessment

We assess pupils as we observe them during lessons and mark their work following this, annotating with appropriate comments if necessary.

History skills can be enhanced through effective verbal and written questions.

Each year group has assessment grids in place where each child is assessed according to subject specific criteria. Children are assessed relating to if they have achieved in the subject at a 'basic level', 'expected level' or 'deeper level'.

The History subject leader monitors samples of children's work across the school and conducts regular work scrutinies and lesson observations and holds conversations with children about the topics they have been learning about.

Resources

There are sufficient teaching resources for most History teaching units in school, which are replaced and renewed as needed. Resources are kept by the appropriate year groups, relating to their topics. The resources within year groups also include appropriate textbooks.

The school is a member of The Historical Association.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of work and the quality of teaching in History is the responsibility of the subject leader. The work of the subject leader also includes supporting colleagues in the teaching of History, updating staff on current developments in the subject and providing lead and direction for the subject in the school. Observations of teaching, planning and work scrutiny take place over the course of the year in order to maintain and continue to raise standards.