



History Knowledge and Skills Progression: Reception–Year 6

Teaching, learning and assessment

Across the curriculum, children develop chronological understanding, secure historical knowledge and accurate vocabulary. They explore change and continuity, cause and consequence, similarity and difference and historical significance. They learn how sources help us understand the past and how the past is represented in different ways.

The progression tables describe end-of-year expectations. The unit summaries identify essential knowledge, vocabulary, enquiry questions and assessment end points. Historical skills are taught through the people, events and societies being studied.

Assessment in history

Teachers assess children's historical knowledge and understanding throughout the year: assessment informs teaching, identifies misconceptions and helps teachers decide what needs to be revisited.

- Before each unit, questions and activities identify relevant prior learning.
- During lessons, discussion, historical source work and short retrieval activities check understanding.
- At the end of each unit, children respond to the main enquiry question, demonstrating the knowledge and historical thinking they have developed.
- Key learning is revisited later to check retention and strengthen connections.

Children can demonstrate understanding orally, through sequencing, practical activities and annotated sources, as well as written responses. Assessment focuses on historical understanding and allows children to show what they know in appropriate ways.

At the end of the academic year, teachers use the school's 1–4 assessment grid to record attainment against the history curriculum expectations for each year group, drawing on evidence gathered throughout the year.

In Reception, ongoing observations and interactions inform assessment within the EYFS framework. The end-of-Reception assessment includes Understanding the World and the Past and Present early learning goal.

Reception foundations

Children talk about people's lives and roles, recognise similarities and differences between past and present, and explore the past through stories, characters and settings. These experiences form part of a broad Understanding the World curriculum.

Connecting local British and world history

Local history includes change in Winsford Market, significant local individuals, the Great Fire of Nantwich and evidence of Roman Chester. British studies trace developments from the Stone Age to the Iron Age, Roman rule, Anglo-Saxon and Scots settlement, the Viking struggle for England and a turning point beyond 1066 through World War Two.

World history includes an overview of the earliest civilisations, a depth study of Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and its legacy, and Maya civilisation around AD 900 compared with Anglo-Saxon Britain.

Historical skills progression

Reception and Key Stage 1

Area	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Chronology	Order familiar experiences; use before, now and long ago.	Sequence familiar changes and studied people using before and after.	Order studied events and people; connect living and beyond living memory.
Historical enquiry	Ask questions about old objects, photographs and stories.	Ask simple questions and find answers in supplied sources.	Ask and answer questions using relevant information.
Sources and evidence	Notice what old photographs and objects show.	Identify what an object or photograph tells us about past life.	Use more than one source to describe an event or person.
Change and continuity	Notice things that are the same or different from the past.	Describe changes in familiar food, shopping or roles.	Explain simple changes and identify things that stayed the same.
Cause and consequence	Discuss simple reasons for familiar events.	Give a simple reason for a studied change or achievement.	Describe causes and consequences of a studied event.
Similarity and difference	Compare familiar past and present objects and experiences.	Describe similarities and differences between past and present life.	Compare life in different periods and experiences of studied people.
Significance	Talk about people and events important to them.	Give a reason why a local person or place matters.	Explain why studied individuals and events are remembered.
Historical interpretations	Explore the past through stories and pictures.	Notice different ways the past is shown.	Recognise differences between stories, pictures and accounts.

Area	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Historical vocabulary	Use past, present, before, after, old and new.	Use past, present, change, local and achievement.	Use living memory, event, source, invention and comparison.

Historical skills progression

Lower Key Stage 2

Area	Year 3	Year 4
Chronology	Place prehistoric periods and Egypt on timelines; begin to use BC and AD.	Locate Greece and Rome in time; recognise overlap between civilisations.
Historical enquiry	Investigate a question and select information relevant to it.	Explain findings using historical knowledge and evidence.
Sources and evidence	Draw simple inferences; identify what a source cannot show.	Compare evidence and distinguish surviving sources from reconstructions.
Change and continuity	Describe change and continuity in settlements and daily life.	Explain changes under Roman rule and aspects of Greek legacy.
Cause and consequence	Identify several causes or consequences of historical developments.	Explain causes and consequences using evidence and examples.
Similarity and difference	Compare ways of life within and between studied societies.	Compare groups and places within Greek or Roman society.
Significance	Explain the importance of developments such as farming and writing.	Explain the importance and lasting effects of Roman and Greek achievements.
Historical interpretations	Identify differences between representations and distinguish stories from evidence.	Compare accounts and consider how reconstructions use evidence.
Historical vocabulary	Use civilisation, settlement, artefact, BC, AD and chronology.	Use empire, conquest, resistance, legacy and city-state accurately.

Historical skills progression

Upper Key Stage 2

Area	Year 5	Year 6
Chronology	Sequence Roman withdrawal, settlements and the Viking struggle to 1066.	Place British and world studies on timelines; explain overlap and connections.
Historical enquiry	Develop questions and organise evidence into supported explanations.	Frame focused questions and construct reasoned responses.
Sources and evidence	Consider who created a source, when and for what purpose.	Evaluate sources in context; compare evidence and explain limitations.
Change and continuity	Explain change and continuity in settlement, power and religion.	Explain patterns across societies and periods using specific examples.
Cause and consequence	Explain how causes connect and distinguish causes from consequences.	Consider the relative importance of causes and immediate and longer-term consequences.
Similarity and difference	Compare societies and experiences using relevant evidence.	Explain similarities and differences between Maya and Anglo-Saxon society and wartime experiences.
Significance	Explain why selected rulers, settlements and religious changes mattered.	Make supported judgements about significance; recognise that importance can differ between groups.
Historical interpretations	Suggest why accounts may differ, considering purpose and perspective.	Explain possible reasons for differing interpretations using evidence and context.
Historical vocabulary	Use migration, kingdom, conversion, raid, cause and consequence.	Use significance, interpretation, continuity and evidence accurately in explanations.

Reception

Prior learning: Personal experiences, family stories and familiar people.

People Who Help Us

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How have the people who help us changed over time?
Essential knowledge	People have different roles in our community. Children and adults have personal histories. Photographs and stories help us compare familiar roles, clothing and equipment in the past and present.
Key vocabulary	Past, present, before, now, old, new, same, different.
Historical focus and sources	Past and present comparisons using family photographs, objects and stories about familiar roles.
Assessment end point	Talk about a person's role and identify a similarity or difference between then and now.

Castles and Dinosaurs

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	What can stories, objects and pictures tell us about long ago?
Essential knowledge	Castles were homes and places of defence for people long ago. People's homes and ways of life have changed. Stories and pictures show past settings. Dinosaurs lived long before people; dinosaur learning is distinguished from evidence about human lives.
Key vocabulary	Long ago, castle, home, before, after, story, photograph.
Historical focus and sources	Sequence familiar experiences; compare past and present homes using pictures, objects and story settings.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Assessment end point	Describe a feature of a past setting and compare it with a familiar setting today.

Future links: Year 1 comparisons of everyday life and local achievements.

Year 1

Prior learning: Reception comparisons of past and present and people's roles.

Food and Winsford Market

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How have food and Winsford Market changed over time?
Essential knowledge	Food preparation, storage and shopping have changed within living memory. Markets are places where people buy and sell goods. Old and recent photographs reveal changes in Winsford Market. Some purposes of markets have stayed the same.
Key vocabulary	Market, local, past, present, change, memory, photograph.
Historical focus and sources	Change and continuity; use old and recent photographs, objects and recollections to compare everyday life.
Assessment end point	Describe changes in food or shopping and support a comparison of Winsford Market with evidence.

Significant Local Individuals

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	Which local personality has achieved the most?
Essential knowledge	John Bishop or Sandy MacIver provides a focus for local achievements. A person's life can be placed in a sequence. People contribute to communities in different ways. Evidence helps children explain an achievement rather than judge popularity.
Key vocabulary	Achievement, significant, local, community, earlier, later.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Historical focus and sources	Significance and enquiry using photographs, biographical information and records of achievements.
Assessment end point	Sequence key moments in the selected person's life and give a supported reason why an achievement matters.

Future links: Year 2 significant individuals, inventions and events beyond living memory.

Year 2

Prior learning: Year 1 changes over time, local history and achievements.

Transport Through Time

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did the Wright Brothers and Neil Armstrong change what was possible?
Essential knowledge	Transport has changed over time. The Wright Brothers made a successful powered flight in 1903. Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon in 1969. Their achievements happened in different periods with different technologies. Sources help us compare their lives and achievements.
Key vocabulary	Transport, invention, flight, astronaut, living memory, source.
Historical focus and sources	Chronology, significance and comparison using photographs, film and age-appropriate accounts.
Assessment end point	Sequence the achievements, compare aspects of life in the two periods and explain why each is remembered.

Great Fires of London and Nantwich

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	What can we learn by comparing the fires of London and Nantwich?
Essential knowledge	The Great Fire of London occurred in 1666 and the Great Fire of Nantwich in 1583. Conditions in towns helped fires spread. Fires affected people's homes and lives. Evidence and accounts help explain what happened. Rebuilding changed aspects of the towns.
Key vocabulary	Fire, event, cause, consequence, rebuilding, beyond living memory.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Historical focus and sources	Causes, consequences and local history using maps, images, accounts and surviving buildings.
Assessment end point	Place the fires in order, explain causes and consequences, and identify a similarity or difference.

Future links: Year 3 longer timescales, archaeological evidence and civilisations.

Year 3

Prior learning: KS1 sequencing, change over time and using sources.

Stone Age to Iron Age

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did life in Britain change from the Stone Age to the Iron Age?
Essential knowledge	The Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age occurred in that order. Farming changed how people lived. Skara Brae provides evidence of Neolithic life. Bronze and iron changed tools and technologies. Settlements, trade and hillforts developed over time.
Key vocabulary	Prehistory, Neolithic, settlement, artefact, bronze, iron, hillfort.
Historical focus and sources	Change, continuity and evidence using artefacts, archaeological remains, site images and reconstructions.
Assessment end point	Sequence the periods and explain changes in settlement or technology using evidence.

Ancient Egyptians

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How do we know about life and achievements in Ancient Egypt?
Essential knowledge	An overview locates early civilisations in Sumer, the Indus Valley, Egypt and Shang China. The Nile supported Egyptian farming and settlement. Egypt's history includes the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. Writing and beliefs shaped society. The Rosetta Stone and Howard Carter's discoveries help explain how knowledge of Egypt developed.
Key vocabulary	Civilisation, Nile, pharaoh, hieroglyph, kingdom, archaeology, BC, AD.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Historical focus and sources	Chronology, change and evidence using maps, objects, inscriptions and archaeological discoveries.
Assessment end point	Locate early civilisations in time and place, then explain Egyptian life and achievements using sources.

Future links: Year 4 Roman Britain and comparisons between ancient societies.

Year 4

Prior learning: Year 3 settlements, technology and ancient civilisations.

Romans and Roman Chester

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did Roman rule change Britain and what evidence survives in Chester?
Essential knowledge	Roman conquest of Britain began in AD 43. Boudica led resistance to Roman rule. Roman settlement changed towns, roads and daily life. Religion changed during Roman rule. Chester's walls, gardens and amphitheatre provide a focus for studying local evidence. Roman influence continued after their rule ended.
Key vocabulary	Empire, emperor, conquest, resistance, settlement, legacy, amphitheatre.
Historical focus and sources	Cause, consequence and local enquiry using site remains, maps, artefacts and inscriptions; distinguish reconstructions from surviving evidence.
Assessment end point	Explain changes brought by Roman rule and use evidence from Chester to support an account of Roman life.

Ancient Greece

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did Ancient Greek life and achievements influence the wider world?
Essential knowledge	Ancient Greece consisted of city-states. Athens is a case study of Greek society. Myths and the Iliad reveal beliefs and traditions but are not straightforward factual records. Archaeology supplies other evidence. Greek language and architecture influenced later societies.
Key vocabulary	City-state, Athens, democracy, myth, archaeology, architecture, legacy.
Historical focus and sources	Similarity, difference, significance and interpretations using pottery, buildings, texts and later representations.
Assessment end point	Explain features of Greek life, distinguish myth from evidence, and give examples of Greek influence.

Future links: Year 5 Roman withdrawal, settlement, kingdoms and religion.

Year 5

Prior learning: Year 4 Roman Britain and its legacy.

Christianity and Anglo-Saxon Britain

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did settlement and Christianity change Britain after Roman rule?
Essential knowledge	Roman rule in Britain ended in the early fifth century. Anglo-Saxons settled and formed kingdoms. Scots from Ireland settled in parts of northern Britain. Settlement changed communities and place names. Christianity spread through conversion. Mercia became a powerful kingdom.
Key vocabulary	Settlement, migration, kingdom, Scots, Anglo-Saxon, conversion, monastery.
Historical focus and sources	Change, cause and evidence using maps, place names, objects, archaeological remains and written accounts.
Assessment end point	Explain changes after Roman withdrawal, including Anglo-Saxon and Scots settlement and the spread of Christianity.

Vikings and the Struggle for England

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did Viking and Anglo-Saxon conflict shape England?
Essential knowledge	Viking seafaring supported raids, trade and settlement. The Great Heathen Army arrived in 865. Alfred resisted Viking expansion from Wessex. Later rulers faced renewed Viking attacks, including during Æthelred's reign. Control of England changed over time. The story continues to Edward the Confessor and his death in 1066.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Key vocabulary	Raid, trade, invasion, settlement, Wessex, resistance, kingdom, Danegeld.
Historical focus and sources	Cause, consequence and chronology using maps, artefacts and accounts considered in their historical context.
Assessment end point	Sequence major developments through to 1066 and explain how conflict and settlement changed England.

Future links: Year 6 comparisons with Maya society and more complex source evaluation.

Year 6

Prior learning: Earlier British chronology, Anglo-Saxon society and historical source work.

World War Two

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How and why did experiences of World War Two differ?
Essential knowledge	War began in Europe in 1939 and became a global conflict. Women undertook military and civilian roles. Bombing and evacuation affected Liverpool and other places. Nurses cared for people in wartime. Experiences varied by location, age and role. Sources provide different perspectives on wartime life.
Key vocabulary	Global conflict, armed forces, civilian, evacuation, air raid, perspective.
Historical focus and sources	Significance, similarity, difference and evidence using maps, photographs, recollections and contemporary records.
Assessment end point	Explain the outbreak and global nature of war, then compare experiences using contextualised evidence.

Maya Civilisation around AD 900

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Enquiry question	How did Maya civilisation compare with Anglo-Saxon Britain?
Essential knowledge	Maya civilisation developed in Mesoamerica. Cities had distinctive buildings and political organisation. Writing and mathematics were important achievements. Daily life reflected social roles and beliefs. Some cities declined while Maya people and culture continued. Comparison with Anglo-Saxon Britain reveals similarities and differences.
Key vocabulary	Mesoamerica, city, civilisation, glyph, mathematics, decline, continuity.

Curriculum element	Planned learning
Historical focus and sources	Comparison, cause and continuity using maps, buildings, objects, inscriptions and interpretations of archaeological evidence.
Assessment end point	Locate Maya civilisation, explain achievements and changes, and compare its society with Anglo-Saxon Britain.

Future links: Preparation for secondary history through chronological knowledge, enquiry and supported explanations.