

Rockcliffe CE School Overview for History

Intent

At Rockcliffe C of E Primary School, our History curriculum is designed to inspire pupils to think like historians. We aim to nurture a genuine passion for the past alongside a secure understanding of how we learn about what has happened and how it connects to the world we live in today. Through carefully planned, well-sequenced learning, pupils develop a strong sense of chronology, enabling them to understand when events occurred and how they relate to one another across time.

Our intention is to grow wise, reflective children whose understanding is built upon strong foundations of knowledge. We believe that wisdom is rooted in secure knowledge, thoughtfully applied. Therefore, key events, significant figures, dates and time periods in local, British and world history are taught progressively and coherently. Knowledge is carefully scaffolded so that new learning builds upon prior understanding, enabling pupils to make connections, deepen their thinking and develop increasingly sophisticated interpretations of the past.

Central to our curriculum is historical enquiry. We teach pupils how historians and archaeologists investigate the past—how they ask questions, examine sources, weigh evidence and reach conclusions. Through modelling and guided practice, pupils learn to select, scrutinise and evaluate primary and secondary sources, considering their reliability and relevance. They are encouraged to understand that history is multi-perspective: events can be interpreted in different ways depending on viewpoint and context. In doing so, we cultivate curious, questioning and empathetic minds with a drive to understand others.

We are committed to ensuring that historical knowledge and disciplinary skills are taught hand in hand. Our curriculum is both ambitious and accessible, designed to support all learners through effective scaffolding while maintaining high expectations. As pupils progress, the support is gradually reduced, fostering independence and confidence so that they can increasingly take ownership of their historical thinking.

History at Rockcliffe is immersive and purposeful. We provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to link their learning across subjects and within historical units, strengthening understanding through connection and context. We make full use of our local environment and resources, including visitors, artefacts, outdoor learning and educational visits, so that pupils experience history beyond the classroom. Ultimately, our aim is to develop thoughtful, analytical and informed young people who can draw upon secure foundations of historical knowledge to make sense of the present and contribute wisely to the future.

Implementation

How we deliver History

Our curriculum is underpinned by our core value of growing wise learners by equipping pupils with a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and understanding on which they can confidently build over time. Through a carefully structured spiral curriculum model, pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of key historical themes and concepts as they progress through school. This ensures that learning is not simply repeated, but strengthened and expanded, enabling children to make meaningful connections, retain knowledge and achieve mastery.

Revisiting key concepts allows pupils to encounter important ideas multiple times throughout their education, with each revisit adding greater complexity and depth. This progressive approach strengthens long-term knowledge retention and supports pupils in refining and applying their skills in different contexts. As a result, they develop critical thinking, enquiry and problem-solving abilities — key characteristics of wise learners. By continually building on prior knowledge, the curriculum is adaptive, meeting pupils at their current level and supporting all learners, including those who require additional reinforcement and those ready for further challenge.

History is taught in focused blocks, one per term, allowing children to gain depth in their learning. The key knowledge and skills within each block have been carefully sequenced to ensure clear progression between year groups and across the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils will have developed a secure chronological understanding of British history from the Stone Age to the present day, enabling them to draw comparisons, identify change and continuity, and make connections between different periods and their own lives. This strong chronological framework provides the solid foundation necessary for future historical learning.

Knowledge organisers play a central role in supporting both teaching and learning from Year 1 to Year 6. Teachers use them as planning and assessment tools, while pupils use them in every lesson to revisit prior learning, reinforce key vocabulary and reflect on learning intentions. This consistent reference to core knowledge supports memory retention, demonstrates clear lesson-to-lesson progression and empowers pupils to take ownership of their learning — another key aspect of becoming wise, reflective learners. End of unit assessments are used to gauge progress and gaps.

Planning is rooted in the National Curriculum and enriched through consideration of the school's local context. Where possible, pupils engage with local history and take part in visits to places of interest, enabling learning both inside and outside the classroom. The use of primary and secondary sources — including resources such as Cumbria County Council book and artefact boxes — helps pupils understand the difference between sources and develop their enquiry skills. By embedding contextual, hands-on experiences, learning becomes personalised, meaningful and memorable. Through thoughtful differentiation and appropriate challenge, all learners are supported to thrive.

Impact

The learning environment supports children in the use of chronology and period specific vocabulary and high-quality models of enquiry.

The majority of pupils achieve age related expectations at the end of each phase.

Clear evidence of continuity and progression across phases in displays and books.

As Historians our children will:

- Be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to become enquiry based learners.
- Be prepared for the next stage in their learning at secondary school and beyond.
- Have a secure understanding of chronology.
- To be able to ask questions, deduct information and make informed evaluations to make sense of the world around them.
- Have a deep sense of curiosity, enjoy investigating and deepening their understanding of how the physical world works.
- Have a passion and understanding of the world both past and present.
- Make key links between time periods and understand how events are significant to how we live today.
- Spot similarities and differences between the way others have lived.
- Learn how to become critical thinkers and examine sources as one view point of a time period.