History Policy

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

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Policy lead:	History Subject Leader – Mr Redmond
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Contents

1. Vision and Principles

2. Curriculum Intent and Progression

3. Teaching and Learning – Implementation

4. Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching

5. Assessment, Monitoring and Impact

6. Enrichment and Historical Experiences

7. Roles and Responsibilities

8. Policy Review and Implementation

1. Vision and Principles

At St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to explore the past, understand how people and societies have changed and recognise the ways in which history shapes the present. Our aim is to inspire curious, knowledgeable and confident young historians.

History supports our Catholic ethos by encouraging respect for different people, cultures and experiences. We maintain high expectations for all pupils and provide an ambitious, inclusive curriculum that values knowledge, thoughtful enquiry and purposeful discussion.

- Develop secure historical knowledge and chronological understanding.
- Build and revisit subject-specific vocabulary and key historical concepts.
- Use sources and evidence to ask questions and construct informed explanations.
- Encourage curiosity and enjoyment through memorable historical experiences.

2. Curriculum Intent and Progression

History in Years 1–6 follows the CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership) History curriculum. Units are carefully sequenced so that pupils revisit and extend knowledge as they move through school. Teaching is informed by the National Curriculum for History.

Children study significant individuals, events and civilisations in British and world history. Across the curriculum, they develop understanding of chronology, change and continuity, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, historical significance and the use of evidence.

Teachers use the agreed curriculum sequence and supporting materials to identify the essential knowledge and vocabulary for each unit, make links with prior learning and maintain appropriate progression. In EYFS, relevant foundations are developed through Understanding the World, including children's growing awareness of past and present.

3. Teaching and Learning – Implementation

3.1 A consistent approach to History lessons

At the beginning of each unit, pupils experience a WOW lesson designed to spark curiosity, introduce the historical context and motivate them to find out more. Activities may include artefacts, visual sources, role-play, investigations or other purposeful experiences.

Every History lesson begins with a starter that retrieves and consolidates previous learning. These short activities revisit essential facts, concepts and vocabulary from earlier lessons and, where appropriate, previous units. Teachers use responses to identify gaps and adjust explanations or practice.

New learning is taught explicitly through clear explanations, modelling, questioning, discussion and opportunities to apply knowledge. Historical sources such as artefacts, images, maps and documents are used purposefully to develop enquiry and help pupils understand how claims about the past are supported by evidence.

Every lesson ends with an assessment quiz to check what pupils have learned. Teachers use the outcomes alongside discussion and pupils' work to address misconceptions and plan retrieval or additional teaching.

3.2 Historical vocabulary and knowledge notes

Historical vocabulary is explicitly introduced, explained and revisited. Knowledge notes summarise the essential content and key vocabulary for learning. Pupils can refer to these during lessons to support understanding, recall and increasing independence; teachers use them alongside modelling and discussion, not as a substitute for teaching.

3.3 Recording and feedback

Pupils communicate their understanding through discussion, written explanations, timelines, comparisons, source work and other appropriate outcomes. Teachers provide timely verbal and whole-class feedback, checking for accuracy and addressing misconceptions. Recording is purposeful and proportionate to the historical learning objective.

4. Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching

History is for every child. We aim to ensure that all pupils can participate in ambitious learning, contribute to discussions and experience success. Adaptive teaching is part of everyday classroom practice.

Teachers use knowledge notes, visual sources, timelines, clear modelling, vocabulary support, structured discussion and appropriately scaffolded activities to make historical learning accessible. Support is adjusted in response to pupils' understanding and reduced where appropriate as confidence and independence grow. Challenge remains high for all.

5. Assessment, Monitoring and Impact

5.1 Assessment for learning

Assessment is an integral part of History teaching. Retrieval starters help teachers establish what children remember, while end-of-lesson quizzes check understanding of the knowledge taught. Questioning, classroom dialogue, observation and pupils' work provide further evidence of learning.

Teachers use this evidence to identify misconceptions, revisit essential content and adapt subsequent lessons. End-of-unit assessment is an area of continuing development, intended to strengthen the evaluation of knowledge retained across a unit.

5.2 Monitoring and evaluation

The History Subject Leader, working with senior leaders, evaluates curriculum implementation and impact through appropriate lesson visits, reviews of pupils' work, pupil voice, assessment evidence and professional discussion with staff. Monitoring considers whether the intended curriculum is being taught consistently, whether pupils can recall and connect knowledge, and how teaching supports all learners.

Findings inform staff support, resource decisions and manageable priorities for subject improvement. Our intended impact is that pupils can talk confidently about historical periods, use accurate vocabulary, explain key concepts and show enthusiasm for learning about the past.

6. Enrichment and Historical Experiences

We aim to bring History to life through WOW lessons, meaningful encounters with historical evidence, educational visits, visitors and practical experiences where appropriate. Opportunities to explore local heritage help pupils make connections between the history of their community and wider historical developments.

Enrichment is selected to deepen curriculum understanding and encourage curiosity; it complements, rather than replaces, the carefully sequenced knowledge taught in lessons.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Class teachers

Class teachers deliver the agreed CUSP History curriculum, plan for retrieval and assessment, teach vocabulary and historical concepts explicitly, provide inclusive support and use assessment evidence to inform next steps.

7.2 Teaching assistants

Teaching assistants support access to learning in line with teacher direction, using agreed scaffolds and knowledge notes while encouraging pupils' participation and independence.

7.3 History Subject Leader

The History Subject Leader supports consistent curriculum delivery, reviews progression and assessment, monitors the quality of learning, helps colleagues access appropriate resources and identifies priorities for improvement.

7.4 Senior leaders and governors

Senior leaders oversee the implementation of the policy and support subject development. Governors provide appropriate strategic oversight and challenge.

8. Policy Review and Implementation

This policy sets out the agreed principles and expectations for History at St John Fisher Catholic Primary School. It should be read alongside relevant school policies, including Assessment, SEND and Feedback, and the school's History curriculum overview.

The policy will be shared with relevant staff and reviewed in accordance with the school's policy review cycle. Its implementation will be evaluated through monitoring, assessment information, pupil voice and professional discussion.