

St Barnabas CE Primary School

Preparing for a positive future, achieved through faith.

Christian values are central to the life of our school, where we are devoted to inspiring our children to succeed, flourish and live life in all its fullness.

“Let your light shine.”

Matthew 5:16



History Subject Policy

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Chair of Governors:	Dr C Kressel

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1. Purpose of the Policy

Our school policies reflect St Barnabas' commitment to an inclusive, creative and exciting curriculum, based around high-quality teaching and learning. This policy provides information on the development, delivery and management of the History curriculum at our school. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out a framework for the consistent and high-quality implementation of the History curriculum across the school.
- Provide guidance to all members of the school community on their roles in supporting the effective implementation of the policy.
- Provide information to families about what their children will learn in the History curriculum and how their children will be supported to make progress.
- Support governors to work alongside senior and subject leaders to monitor the implementation and impact of the History curriculum.
- Provide information to external stakeholders on how the History curriculum is developed, delivered and monitored.

2. Curriculum Intent

2.1 What is our vision for the History curriculum?

At St Barnabas, our History curriculum is intended to ignite pupils' curiosity and fascination about the past, helping them to develop a lifelong love of learning and a deep appreciation of how history shapes the world around them. Through an ambitious and thoughtfully sequenced curriculum, we seek to equip pupils with rich and connected knowledge of local, national and world history. In doing so, we aim to instil an appreciation of the complexity and diversity of the human experience through time, while nurturing an understanding of how the past shapes our identities, communities and futures.

Across carefully sequenced lessons, we intend to deepen our pupils' understanding of key substantive and disciplinary concepts, allowing them to develop increasingly sophisticated mental models that prepare them for future study. With high-quality teaching and well-designed tasks, we seek to enable our pupils to think and communicate like historians, using domain-specific language with precision. Through engaging historical enquiries, we aim to develop our pupils' understanding of history as a discipline: asking perceptive questions, weighing evidence, sifting arguments, and forming balanced judgments.

Our vision for History is rooted in our whole-school commitment to preparing pupils for a positive future and providing plentiful opportunities for them to let their light shine. By exploring significant individuals, events, and achievements from the past, we hope our pupils are inspired to recognise their own potential to make a difference. They learn that every voice and action matters, and that their curiosity, knowledge, and historical thinking can help shape the world of tomorrow.

2.2 What are our aims for the History curriculum?

Our History curriculum is intended to achieve the ambition and rigour of the National Curriculum and therefore aims to ensure our 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.

3. Curriculum Implementation

3.1 How have we designed our History curriculum to achieve our intended vision and aims?

At St Barnabas, we believe that a knowledge-rich curriculum is vital in ensuring all pupils develop the historical understanding needed to master the subject. Our History curriculum has therefore been carefully designed to strike a purposeful balance between three interdependent categories of knowledge: *finger tip* knowledge of specific topics and periods to support historical thinking and understanding; *chronological* knowledge to enable pupils to situate topics within broader historical narratives; and *generative* knowledge of recurring substantive and disciplinary concepts which underpin the curriculum. By integrating these elements, we enable pupils to develop both a substantive knowledge of the past and the disciplinary knowledge needed to think critically as historians.

This knowledge has been deliberately organised into well-structured historical enquiries that ensure new learning is built upon week by week, term by term, and year on year. Alongside this, a clear progression of subject-specific vocabulary allows pupils to developing increasing precision and confidence in using historical language to communicate their ideas. Curriculum plans and ongoing professional development ensured a shared understanding among teachers of the most important content and concepts to emphasise in lesson, supporting consistency and depth across the school. In addition, meaningful enrichment opportunities are carefully planned to nurture pupils' cultural capital in History, including close links with our local museum and other opportunities to connect classroom learning with real-world historical experiences.

3.2 How do we teach our History curriculum to achieve our intended vision and aims?

In the EYFS, our practitioners begin to lay the foundations for pupils' future learning in History. Through the *Understanding the World* strand of the EYFS framework, children explore similarities and differences between the past and the present day, and develop a sense of the past through settings, characters and events they encounter in stories and play. The language-rich environment of our EYFS enables our youngest pupils to become familiar with vocabulary that will later support their access to and understanding of the History curriculum.

From Year One, pupils begin their formal History education. At this stage, History is taught as a distinct subject in weekly lessons during the Autumn and Summer terms, helping pupils to develop an appreciation of History as a separate academic discipline. Each sequence of lessons is structured around an overarching enquiry

question, ensuring teaching and learning is purposeful and that, through small-step progression, pupils can make sense of the knowledge needed to answer the enquiry. Within lessons, retrieval tasks and clear teacher explanations activate prior knowledge and support pupils to make conceptual links across the curriculum. Through carefully designed tasks, substantive knowledge is first secured before pupils are challenged to engage with it in more sophisticated ways.

Across all year groups, subject-specific vocabulary is explicitly taught and modelled to enable pupils to think and communicate with precision. Teachers are supported in the delivery of History lessons by high-quality resources, including in-house curriculum plans, as well as adopted materials from Curriculum Maestro, the Historical Association, and Stuart Tiffany (Mr T Does Primary History). These resources are carefully evaluated by senior and subject leaders to ensure they meet the standards of our knowledge-rich curriculum and support the effective delivery of History across the school.

3.3 How do we use assessment in History?

Assessment in History is integral to understanding how well pupils are learning, retaining, and applying key historical knowledge, skills and vocabulary. Teachers use assessment to identify and respond to misconceptions and plan next steps in learning, while the subject leader uses assessment data to identify trends, strengths and areas for development. To achieve these purposes, we use a range of formative and summative assessment procedures.

- **Formative assessment** is embedded throughout History lessons. Teachers use questioning, discussions, retrieval tasks, low-stake quizzes, and observation to check understanding and address misconceptions as they arise. Pupils are given opportunities to revisit prior learning through regular retrieval practice, helping them to strengthen their long-term memory and develop increasingly complex mental models of key historical concepts. Feedback, both verbal and written, supports pupils to develop their historical thinking and improve the quality of their responses.
- **Closing the Gap assessments** are used as progress checkpoints at the mid- and endpoint of each enquiry and are recorded in floorbooks in Key Stage One and in pupils' workbooks in Key Stage Two. These assessments are another tool through which teachers can identify misconceptions or gaps in knowledge, and the outcomes of the assessments inform teaching to target these gaps during our school's half-termly Closing the Gap weeks.
- **Summative assessment** takes place at the end of each enquiry. Teachers use the judgments they have collected of pupils' progress throughout the enquiry to assess pupils against the enquiry's expected outcomes regarding substantive and disciplinary knowledge. This data is submitted to subject and senior leaders to analyse for trends, strengths and areas for development.

3.4 How do we ensure our History curriculum is inclusive?

An inclusive curriculum is one in which all pupils receive the appropriate level of support to meet the challenges of an ambitious curriculum. To achieve this, our commitment to inclusion is built into our curriculum by design, not bolted on: the curriculum's spiral structure and the opportunities this provides to revisit key concepts is central to supporting all pupils to know more, remember more and do more as they progress through the curriculum. Our teachers utilise a range of evidence-informed teaching strategies to ensure all pupils make good progress, including:

- **Carefully planned scaffolding** to support access to complex tasks.
- **Dual coding** to reinforce key concepts and vocabulary.
- **Pre-teaching vocabulary** to develop subject-specific language.
- **Explicit oracy instruction** to develop disciplinary literacy.
- **Responsive questioning** to extend pupils' thinking.
- **Clear modelling** of historical thinking to make abstract ideas more accessible.
- **Targeted adult support** to provide additional instruction.

3.5 What opportunities are there for enrichment in our curriculum?

As well as ensuring our pupils develop the essential knowledge and skills set out in our curriculum, we expect our pupils to leave our school having enjoyed experiences that bring their History education to life and that nurtures their cultural capital. Enrichment activities include:

- **Educational visits**, which expose pupils to real-world experiences beyond the classroom, helping them connect their learning to the wider world and deepen their appreciation of heritage.
- **Visitors**, who bring expert knowledge, personal stories and different perspectives into school, enriching the curriculum and inspiring pupils' curiosity and eagerness to learn more.
- **Loan boxes**, which provide access to artefacts and high-quality replicas which support pupils to appreciate how historians use historical evidence to understand the past.
- **Whole school events**, which commemorate historical events, including Remembrance Day and VE Day, and support pupils to appreciate their importance in our local, national and world history.
- **Extracurricular activities**, which allow pupils to work with volunteers from the local community to learn more about the history of their local area and the lives of people within it.

4. Curriculum Overview

This section provides an overview of the expected outcomes for pupils at the end of key phases of their journey through our History curriculum.

4.1 History in the Early Years Foundation Stage

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils at the expected level of development will talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. They will know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. They will understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

4.2 History in Key Stage One

In Key Stage One, pupils will develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They will 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 will use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They will 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 will understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Pupils in Key Stage One will undertake the following enquiries:

- How is growing up today different to growing up in the 1950s? (Year One)
- How is our school different to schools in the Victorian era? (Year One)
- What were the causes and consequences of the Great Fire of London? (Year Two)
- Why are some people from the past still remembered today? (Year Two)

4.3 History in Key Stage Two

In Key Stage Two, pupils will 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 will note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They will regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They will construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They will understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Pupils in Lower Key Stage Two will undertake the following enquiries:

- How did life in ancient Britain change from the Stone Age to the Iron Age? (Year Three)
- What were the consequences of the Roman invasion on life in Britain? (Year Three)
- What caused the rise and fall of the world's earliest civilisations? (Year Four)
- What impact did invasion have on life in early medieval Britain? (Year Four)

Pupils in Upper Key Stage Two will undertake the following enquiries:

- How have the achievements of the ancient Greeks impacted life in the West? (Year Five)
- Why was Baghdad significant to the Golden Age of Islam? (Year Five)

- What impact did World War II have on life in twentieth century Britain? (Year Six)
- How has industry changed life in Warrington through time? (Year Six)

5. Curriculum Impact

5.1 How do we monitor the impact of our History curriculum?

To ensure the intended curriculum is being implemented effectively, the subject leader works alongside senior leaders to regularly monitor the quality of education across the subject throughout the year.

Monitoring activities include:

- **Lesson visits**, which allow the subject leader to see History teaching and learning in action, enabling them to evaluate how well the curriculum is being delivered, the effectiveness of teaching strategies and tasks, and pupil engagement.
- **Book looks**, which allow the subject leader to evaluate the quality, consistency and progression of pupils' work over time, providing insights into curriculum coverage, expectations, feedback, and how well pupils are retaining and applying their historical knowledge.
- **Environment checks**, which allow the subject leader to ensure that working walls are used purposefully to support pupils' learning by emphasising key knowledge and vocabulary throughout a learning sequence.
- **Pupil voice**, which allows the subject leader to gain an insight into pupils' attitudes about the subject, how well they are retaining knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary, and how they articulate their understanding of the subject.
- **Staff voice**, which allows the subject leader to identify strengths and areas where further professional development may be required, ensuring effective and responsive support can be put in place to strengthen the delivery of the curriculum.
- **Data analysis**, which allows the subject leader to identify trends, strengths and areas for development in the teaching and learning of History, which can be used to inform the subject's action plan and improve pupil attainment in the subject.
- **External validation**, which plays an important role in quality assuring our internal monitoring and allows leaders to work alongside external bodies (including our School Improvement Partner, subject leaders within the Emmanuel Trust, and Historical Association Quality Mark Assessors) to seek further support and challenge in developing the subject.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

At St Barnabas, we have a clear structure of roles and responsibilities to ensure the successful implementation, monitoring and development of the History curriculum.

6.1 Senior leaders

Senior leaders at our school will:

- Support the subject leader in the strategic development of History across the school.
- Allocate sufficient time, training and resources to allow the subject leader to fulfil their role effectively.
- Monitor the quality of education through appraisal processes and school improvement planning.
- Ensure that History supports the wider curriculum intent and contributes to pupils' cultural capital.

6.2 Subject leader

The subject leader at our school will:

- Lead the development of the History curriculum, ensuring it is broad, balanced and progressive.
- Monitor teaching and learning through book scrutiny, lesson visits and pupil voice.
- Support staff with subject knowledge, planning, resources and assessment processes.
- Lead staff meetings and provide professional development to enhance the quality of History teaching.
- Stay up to date with national developments and curriculum changes in History.
- Analyse assessment data to identify trends, strengths and areas for development.

- Maintain and organising resources to support high-quality delivery across the school.
- Liaise with senior leaders and governors to report on curriculum impact and development plans.

6.3 Governors

Governors, including the Humanities Link Governor, at our school will:

- Monitor the impact of the curriculum through discussions with the subject leader and senior leaders.
- Meet with the subject leader at least biannually to stay up to date with the curriculum.
- Provide support and challenge to ensure a high standard of leadership and implementation.

6.4 Class teachers

Class teachers at our school will:

- Plan and deliver high-quality History lessons in line with the agreed curriculum and progression map.
- Ensure all pupils are supported and challenged appropriately within the History curriculum.
- Assess pupil learning through agreed assessment procedures to identify and address misconceptions.
- Contribute to the wider enrichment of History by arranging appropriate educational visits.

6.5 Parents and carers

Parents and carers in our school community will:

- Ensure pupils are well-prepared for learning.
- Support pupils to complete home learning tasks.

7. Links to Other Policies

This subject policy links to the following policies:

- Assessment Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Inclusion Policy

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 Monitoring

The subject leader will work alongside senior leaders to monitor the effective implementation of this policy in line with the school's monitoring procedures. Monitoring will be conducted using lesson visits, book looks, environment checks, pupil and staff voice, and data analysis. The outcomes of the subject leader's monitoring activities are shared with senior leaders and are used to identify next steps, develop the curriculum, plan appropriate continuing professional development, and inform the action plan for the subject.

8.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed by the subject leader, senior leadership team and governors annually. The policy will be updated as appropriate to reflect developments in the teaching, organisation and management of the History curriculum.