History

Curriculum Intent:

Our history curriculum is designed to build pupils' knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively. Developed through the Opening Worlds programme, it offers a carefully structured exploration of World history, from ancient civilisations to the modern era. It develops deep historical knowledge, extends language and vocabulary, and promotes key skills such as understanding causation, continuity and change, and historical interpretations. This rich, connected approach fosters curiosity and a lasting love of history.

Curriculum Vision:

Grounded in a consistent pedagogical approach, our history curriculum uses explicit instruction, retrieval practice, and storytelling to bring the past to life. It is designed to build pupils' knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively through a carefully structured plan based on the Opening Worlds programme. Pupils explore a wide range of British and world history, from ancient civilisations to the modern era, enabling them to make meaningful connections across time and place. The curriculum develops deep, substantive knowledge, enhances historical thinking skills, and extends pupils' language and vocabulary, fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of history.

I feel incredibly lucky to lead the History curriculum. I have a real passion for history, from exploring the rise and fall of great empires to discovering the events that have shaped the world we live in today.

Building on Opening Worlds, pupils will explore a range of fascinating historical events, sparking curiosity, deepening their understanding and hopefully inspiring a lifelong love of history.

Mrs Battersby
Subject Champion



Curriculum Sequencing:

Our history curriculum is carefully sequenced from EYFS to Year 6 to build knowledge progressively and lay strong foundations in historical understanding. In EYFS, Learning Enquiries such as 'Changes to Life in Britain', 'Kings and Queens', and 'Inventors' spark curiosity and introduce key historical concepts. In Key Stage 1, learning builds on this through the study of significant individuals and events, following the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 2, the Opening Worlds curriculum provides a structured progression through British and world history, from ancient civilisations to the modern era. This approach deepens substantive knowledge, develops historical thinking skills, and enables pupils to make meaningful connections across time and place.

Joyful Readers:

Reading is at the heart of our history curriculum, nurturing joyful readers through rich, meaningful texts that bring the past to life. In KS1, our carefully curated History Reading Spine features one core text per term, chosen to provide the 'big picture,' explore complex ideas, and enrich vocabulary for all learners. These texts anchor each unit and are shared, explored, and discussed as a class. Through the Opening Worlds curriculum, reading remains central—engaging narratives, historical accounts, and primary sources captivate pupils and deepen their understanding. This approach builds historical knowledge, strengthens key reading skills such as comprehension and analysis, and expands vocabulary. By embedding reading into every stage of historical learning, we develop joyful readers who connect with history in meaningful and lasting ways.

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Curriculum Progression:

Our history curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure pupils "know more, remember more, and can do more." From EYFS onwards, pupils build a foundation in key concepts like past, present, and change, with more complex ideas such as empire and monarchy introduced from Year 2. Each year includes at least one British and one world history unit, selected by cognitive demand rather than strict chronology.

Through the Opening Worlds curriculum in KS2, knowledge is revisited and deepened, supported by strategies like retrieval practice and active learning. Alongside this, pupils progressively develop disciplinary skills such as source analysis and critical thinking, enabling them to understand and approach history as historians.

Our Journey Drivers in History:

Joyful Readers

Through the Opening Worlds curriculum, reading remains central—engaging narratives, historical accounts, and primary sources captivate pupils and deepen their understanding. This approach builds historical knowledge, strengthens key reading skills such as comprehension and analysis, and expands vocabulary. By embedding reading into every stage of historical learning, we develop joyful readers who connect with history in meaningful and lasting ways.

Opportunities to Build on Knowledge and Skills

Our history curriculum is designed to build pupils' knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively. Developed through the Opening Worlds programme, it offers a carefully structured exploration of World history, from ancient civilisations to the modern era.

Understanding British and Christian Values

Trips and local visits that connect classroom learning to real historical places and events.
Opportunities to handle and explore artefacts from specific historical periods using library service resources, deepening engagement and understanding.
Celebration and exploration of national events such as Bonfire Night and St. George's Day, helping pupils understand key moments in British cultural history.
Participation in online workshops and webinars, such as those for Remembrance Day, to broaden pupils' cultural awareness and historical understanding.

Resilience and Perseverance

Open ended tasks promote perseverance.

Planned big write assessments used within history lessons to encourage the children of St James to become more resilient.

Nurturing Curiosity

Using a range of historical artefacts and engaging reading materials to spark curiosity and bring history to life.
Encouraging children to ask questions, investigate the past and discover answers for themselves.
Celebrating historical events and themed days to inspire interest and excitement in history.

Encourage Articulate Learners

Creating discussion time in the classroom so children can articulate their learning.
Allowing children to explore historical events and being able to retell ancient stories.
Whole class discussions to address misconceptions.
Insisting on key vocabulary being used during discussions.

Your Wellbeing and Health

Exploring a wide range of histories also allows us to see connections across time and cultures, broadening my perspective and fostering a sense of belonging in the wider world. Developing language and vocabulary skills supports clear expression, while the consistent approach provides stability and reduces stress, contributing positively to both my learning and wellbeing.

Inclusive Practice in History:

EYFS as the Bedrock of Learning:

In EYFS, the foundation of our history curriculum is rooted in the Early Learning Goal for ***Understanding the World***, with a focus on ***Past and Present*** as the bedrock for developing historical understanding. Through the discipline of history, children begin to explore time, change, and significant people and events.
Learning is shaped by the ***Characteristics of Effective Learning***, which guide how children engage with historical content:
Engagement – through playing and exploring, children investigate the past with curiosity.
Motivation – active learning encourages persistence and enjoyment as they uncover historical ideas.
Thinking – creative and critical thinking supports children in making connections and asking questions about the past.
Our EYFS curriculum is centred around three key learning enquiries: ***'Changes to Life in Britain'***, ***'Kings and Queens'***, and ***'Inventors'***. These themes are outlined in the EYFS Knowledge Planner and carefully designed to spark interest while laying essential foundations for historical thinking and preparing children for more structured study in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

Strong Foundations:

Strong foundations for History are established through the carefully sequenced Opening Worlds curriculum, beginning in EYFS and KS1 with key concepts such as past, present, and change. Through engaging enquiries like 'Changes to Life in Britain', 'Kings and Queens', and 'Inventors', pupils are introduced to historical thinking in a meaningful and age-appropriate way. As they progress, the curriculum builds knowledge and skills cumulatively, supported by explicit teaching, storytelling, and retrieval practice. This consistent approach enables pupils to explore both British and world history, develop critical thinking, and grow in confidence as young historians with a rich vocabulary and cultural understanding.

Meeting the needs of all learners:

Our in-depth history planning allows children to improve their own metacognition and access the lesson at their own level. Children are encouraged to deepen their own understanding with use of our knowledge organisers for pupil support, while pupils are given additional support within lessons dependent on their individual needs. Pre-teaching and interventions also take place to support the retention of knowledge for all pupils.
To identify the key content that is most important to enable pupils to move their next stage of education (and reduce cognitive overload), Historical stories have been created to stipulate the essential knowledge that ALL pupils need to know and remember (as recommended by teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery). Our Chapter breakdowns is the pre-determined essential knowledge that children require to progress to the next stage of their learning.
The 'Historical Stories' are also used to support learners that are unable to access their current year group's curriculum due to a particular Special Educational Need or Disability [SEND].
For other children with a SEND, they are supported within History by the following recommendations from the LDST 'Quality First Teacher Toolkit'. This supports our work on the EEF's recommendations around 'Adaptive Teaching' and meeting the needs of all learners through appropriate explicit instruction, cognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping and technology.

Wider Curriculum Considerations in History:

Teaching Pedagogy:

The ten teaching techniques are embedded throughout the History curriculum to ensure consistent, high-quality instruction that supports all learners. These techniques—such as explicit vocabulary teaching, structured discussion, modelling, and regular retrieval—are woven into every lesson, reinforcing key knowledge and concepts. By using these approaches systematically, teachers build pupils' confidence, deepen understanding, and support long-term retention. This shared pedagogical framework also promotes consistency across classrooms and year groups, helping pupils make meaningful connections and progress securely through the curriculum

Developing Cultural Capital:

Trips and local visits that connect classroom learning to real historical places and events.
Opportunities to handle and explore artefacts from specific historical periods using library service resources, deepening engagement and understanding.
Celebration and exploration of national events such as Bonfire Night and St. George's Day, helping pupils understand key moments in British cultural history.
Participation in online workshops and webinars, such as those for Remembrance Day, to broaden pupils' cultural awareness and historical understanding.

Personal Development:

Through the Opening Worlds curriculum in KS2, knowledge is revisited and deepened, supported by strategies like retrieval practice and active learning. Alongside this, pupils progressively develop disciplinary skills such as source analysis and critical thinking, enabling them to understand and approach history as historians.

Staff CPD:

Our history curriculum has been planned and adapted to meet our school community needs through the Opening Worlds curriculum approach to support staff subject knowledge. Use of a consistent knowledge planner supports all staff in their subject knowledge ensuring they feel confident and have the relevant knowledge to deliver the lesson to a high standard.
Finally, the history subject leader is part of the 'LDST History Curriculum Network', supported by 'School Improvement Liverpool' with relevant curriculum updates. These updates are shared and regularly disseminated to teaching staff to ensure all staff are supported with their history subject knowledge

Assessment:

Across our History Curriculum, a range of robust assessment procedures are in place. Consistent across all year groups, assessment procedures aim to record progress in both substantive and working scientifically statements. Our assessment procedures include:
– Complete of pre and post activities alongside a 'Vital Vocabulary Assessment'.
– Retrieval based learning strategies every lesson with 3 formally evidenced per topic.
– Exit tasks at the end of the unit which are practical and allow for evidence of historical enquiry.
– Final judgement as emerging, expected or exceeding per topic, using bespoke assessment statements.
– Assessment sheet for books and completion on assessment snapshot by class teacher.
– A report generated termly by subject leader with moderation of judgements.