



History Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the intent, implementation and impact of history education at St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School. It reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum and supports the school's commitment to providing a broad, ambitious and inclusive curriculum which enables all pupils to develop secure historical knowledge, disciplinary understanding and a lifelong curiosity about the past.

History plays a vital role in helping children understand the world around them. Through studying the past, pupils gain knowledge of how societies have developed, appreciate diversity within Britain and beyond, and develop the skills necessary to think critically and evaluate evidence.

Purpose of Study

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Curriculum Intent

At St. Thomas the Martyr C.E. Primary School, our history curriculum is designed to:

- Develop pupils' understanding of Britain's past and the wider world.
- Foster curiosity, critical thinking and a love of learning about the past.
- Build secure substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge progressively from EYFS to Year 6.
- Enable pupils to understand chronology and make meaningful connections across historical periods.
- Develop pupils' understanding of key historical concepts including:
 - chronology
 - change and continuity
 - cause and consequence
 - similarity and difference
 - significance
 - interpretation and evidence
- Reflect local, national and global histories.
- Promote diversity and representation through the study of a wide range of individuals, communities and cultures.
- Equip pupils with the skills to investigate, analyse and communicate historical understanding confidently.

Aims

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative.
- Know and understand significant aspects of world history.
- Gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as civilisation, empire, parliament and peasantry.

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance.
- Understand the methods of historical enquiry.
- Understand how evidence is used to make claims about the past and how interpretations can differ.

At St. Thomas the Martyr, we additionally aim:

- To develop children's sense of identity through learning about local, national and world history.
- To promote enquiry-based learning through carefully planned historical questions.
- To develop pupils' skills as historians through investigation, evidence analysis and interpretation.
- To encourage respect for different cultures, beliefs and experiences.
- To enable pupils to communicate historical understanding through speaking, writing and discussion.

Principles for Teaching History

History gives children a sense of identity and an understanding of their social, political, economic and cultural heritage. Pupils learn how people have shaped the world in which we live and how societies have changed over time.

History is taught through the development of both:

Substantive Knowledge

The facts, concepts, vocabulary and content that pupils learn about different historical periods and civilisations.

Disciplinary Knowledge

The ways historians work, including:

- Examining evidence
- Asking questions
- Forming conclusions
- Considering interpretations
- Understanding that historical knowledge is constructed

Pupils learn that historians may interpret evidence differently and that our understanding of the past can change as new evidence emerges.

History within the National Curriculum

History is taught through carefully sequenced units which ensure progression in both knowledge and disciplinary understanding.

The curriculum enables pupils to develop:

- Secure chronological understanding.
- Knowledge of local, British and world history.
- Historical vocabulary.
- Historical enquiry skills.
- Critical thinking and analytical skills.
- Understanding of diversity and cultural heritage.

Cross-curricular links are made where appropriate, whilst maintaining the integrity and disciplinary nature of history as a distinct subject.

Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, history forms part of the Understanding the World area of learning.

Children begin developing historical understanding through:

- Exploring changes within living memory.
- Talking about significant events in their own lives.
- Learning about family histories.
- Comparing past and present.
- Exploring the lives of people who have helped shape society.

These experiences provide important foundations for chronological understanding and historical enquiry.

Key Stage One

Pupils develop an awareness of the past using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They:

- Develop chronological understanding.
- Identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.
- Ask and answer questions.
- Use a range of sources.
- Learn about significant individuals and events.
- Begin to understand how we find out about the past.

Key Stage Two

Pupils continue to develop a chronologically secure understanding of British, local and world history. They:

- Establish clear historical narratives.
- Identify connections and trends over time.
- Use increasingly sophisticated historical vocabulary.
- Evaluate evidence.
- Consider different interpretations.
- Construct informed responses using relevant historical information.
- Develop increasingly independent historical enquiry skills.

Historical Vocabulary

The teaching of vocabulary is an integral part of history learning.

Key vocabulary is:

- Identified within each unit.
- Explicitly taught and modelled.
- Revisited regularly.
- Applied in discussion and written work.

Children are encouraged to use historical terminology accurately and confidently in order to explain their understanding.

Diversity, Equality and Representation

Our history curriculum reflects the diversity of Britain's past and the wider world.

Pupils encounter:

- People from different cultures and backgrounds.
- Historically significant women and men.
- Diverse societies and civilisations.
- Different perspectives and experiences.

This helps pupils develop respect, empathy and understanding while preparing them for life in modern Britain.

Contribution to Other Areas of the Curriculum

English

History makes a significant contribution to literacy by providing meaningful opportunities for reading, writing, speaking and listening. Pupils engage in a range of genres including reports, diaries, letters, debates and explanations.

Personal Development

History contributes significantly to pupils' personal development by encouraging them to understand different viewpoints, challenge assumptions and appreciate diversity. It supports pupils in understanding their place within society and the wider world.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

History enables pupils to explore moral questions, understand the actions and beliefs of people in the past and appreciate cultural heritage. The subject encourages reflection upon values, justice, conflict and human achievement.

Computing

Technology enhances the teaching and learning of history through:

- Access to high-quality historical sources.
- Digital timelines.
- Research opportunities.
- Multimedia presentations.
- Virtual visits to museums and historical sites.

Pupils are taught to use digital resources critically and safely.

Teaching and Learning

History is taught through engaging and purposeful lessons which encourage active participation.

Teachers ensure that pupils:

- Retrieve previously learned knowledge.
- Build on prior learning.
- Explore historical questions.
- Use a range of evidence.
- Participate in discussion and debate.
- Record learning in a variety of ways.

Children work individually, in pairs, groups and whole-class settings as appropriate. Creative and memorable learning experiences enrich the curriculum and deepen understanding.

Inclusion

At St. Thomas the Martyr CE Primary School, we believe that every child is entitled to access an ambitious history curriculum.

Teachers use adaptive teaching strategies to ensure all pupils can achieve success. This includes:

- Appropriate scaffolding.
- Carefully selected resources.
- Visual supports.
- Explicit vocabulary teaching.
- Additional challenge where required.

The needs of pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with EAL and those working at greater depth are carefully considered during planning and delivery. All pupils are encouraged to participate fully and achieve their potential.

Assessment

Assessment is integral to effective teaching and learning in history.

Teachers use a variety of formative assessment strategies including:

- Retrieval practice
- Low-stakes quizzes
- Questioning
- Discussion
- Observation
- Written outcomes
- Enquiry tasks

Summative assessment opportunities are built into units to evaluate pupils' understanding of both substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

Assessment information is used to:

- Identify misconceptions.
- Inform future teaching.
- Monitor progress.
- Support curriculum development.

The subject leader monitors attainment and progression across the school to ensure pupils are developing secure historical understanding over time. The use of end-point assessment questions supports evaluation of long-term learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The History Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring the quality of provision across the school.

Monitoring activities may include:

- Lesson visits.
- Book scrutiny.
- Pupil voice activities.
- Curriculum reviews.
- Planning scrutiny.
- Assessment analysis.

These activities enable leaders to evaluate curriculum effectiveness and ensure pupils develop secure knowledge, understanding and skills over time.

Resources

History resources are maintained and reviewed by the History Subject Leader.

Resources include:

- Artefacts
- Books
- Historical source materials
- Digital resources
- Local history materials

Resources are regularly audited to ensure they support curriculum delivery, diversity and progression.

Educational Visits and Health & Safety

Educational visits play an important role in enriching the history curriculum.

All visits are planned in accordance with:

- The school's Educational Visits Policy.
- Health and Safety procedures.
- Risk assessment requirements.

Pupils are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour during visits as they do within school and to show respect for people, places and the environment.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner should statutory guidance change.

Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Mrs A. Davies

History Subject Leader