St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School

History Policy

Mission statement

This policy reflects our Mission Statement. We aim to provide education to all pupils in the Roman Catholic faith as well as children of other faiths and backgrounds from our catchment area. As a school community, we observe the rites, practices and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. We take Jesus Christ as our model and the children are encouraged by word and example to live according to His Gospel in order to develop love and forgiveness, worship and prayer, truth and justice, freedom and tolerance, compassion and respect for others.

In keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school, we recognise that each child is a gift from God with his or her own abilities and needs. St Peter's RC Primary School is committed to meeting the medical needs of pupils and ensuring that they access full time education and are properly supported in school, so they can play a full and active role in school life and achieve their academic potential.

History statement of intent

Why we teach history

History is about real people who lived, and real events which happened in the past. It is concerned with sequence, time and chronology and is the study of evidence about the past; it gives us a sense of identity, set within our social, political, cultural and economic relationships. History fires the children's curiosity about the past in Britain and the wider world and plays an essential part in preparing us for living and working in the contemporary world. Pupils consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, how these societies organised their politics, and what beliefs and cultures influenced people's actions. As they do this, children develop a chronological framework for their knowledge of significant events and people. They see the diversity of human experience, and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. What they learn can influence their decisions about personal choices, attitudes and values. In history, children find evidence, weigh it up and reach their own conclusions. To do this they need to be able to research, sift through evidence, and argue for their point of view – skills that are valuable in adult life. Therefore, history is an important part of our curriculum at St Peter's Primary school.

At St Peter's, we believe good history teaching inspires children's curiosity to know more about the past and should equip children to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. We aim to provide a programme of history learning so that the curriculum plan we have designed will ensure children acquire and develop the key knowledge that has been identified within each topic, as well as progressively acquire and apply historical skills to reach their full potential. As a school, we recognise the need for all pupils to develop their historical skills as an essential element of a broad and balanced curriculum and as a subject in its own right.

Aims and objectives

Our history teaching aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of the British Isles as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day.
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world, including the nature of ancient civilisations.
- gain and use a wide range of historical terms and vocabulary.
- understand historical concepts such as: cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, historical significance, sources and evidence and historical interpretations.
- use historical concepts to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, ask historically valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives.
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used to make historical claims.

We aim to do this by:

- providing opportunities for children to gain historical perspective by making connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.
- inspiring children to develop their curiosity to know more about the past.
- encouraging children to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement.
- providing children with a progressive programme of history lessons suitable for all learners
- identifying key knowledge for each topic, as well as a progression of history skills.
- embedding disciplinary and substantive concepts throughout the curriculum so that each one is encountered multiple times.
- providing opportunities for children to work historically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment, including other people's experiences and knowledge.
- teaching interesting and engaging lessons which make cross-curricular links, especially with English, geography, art and DT.
- ensuring all pupils are challenged to make good or better progress at their appropriate level.
- encouraging a positive attitude to history from both children and staff.
- delivering all the requirements of the National Curriculum in relation to history.

The 2014 National Curriculum for history

The National Curriculum for history aims to ensure that all 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 and difference, historical significance, sources of evidence and historical interpretations, 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.

Intended impact

The following learning outcomes are derived from the aims above and will assist us to evaluate our intentions for history learning at St Peter's.

Children will:

- gain historical perspective by making connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social History; and between short- and long-term timescales.
- be inspired and curious to know more about the past.
- ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement.
- be provided with a progressive program of history lessons suitable for all learners.
- acquire and develop the key knowledge that has been identified within each topic, as well as progressively acquire and apply history skills to reach their full potential in this subject.
- work historically in a range of appropriate contexts, using a variety of materials and equipment, including other people's experiences and knowledge.
- take part in interesting and engaging lessons which make cross-curricular links, especially with English, geography, art and DT.
- make good or better progress at their appropriate level.
- demonstrate a positive attitude to history.

History curriculum planning

Statutory requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of history are laid out in The National Curriculum in England (2014) and the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Structure of history throughout the school

Planning for history is a process in which all teachers are involved in to ensure that the school gives full coverage of the history contained in The National Curriculum and Understanding of the World in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Teachers carefully plan using the 4-year curriculum cycle document. This ensures progression between year groups and full skills and knowledge coverage as outlined in the National

Curriculum. Teachers have access to planning units and key learning documents to support them in the delivery of history lessons.

History is taught through topics which are planned on our 4-year cycle. Delivery of the National Curriculum requirements and all of the aims and intentions listed above, as well as progression through the year groups, are carefully set out within each topic in our topic overviews and assessment sheets.

Over the course of the 4-year cycle, children develop their understanding of the following key disciplinary concepts (knowledge about how historians investigate the past, and how they construct historical claims, arguments and accounts):

- cause
- consequence
- change and continuity
- similarity and difference
- historical significance
- sources and evidence
- historical interpretations

Substantive concepts (concerned with the subject matter of history) are embedded throughout the curriculum so that each one is planned to be encountered multiple times throughout the curriculum. Substantive concepts are best understood with repeated encounters in specific, meaningful contexts, rather than being taught in an abstract way. At St Peter's, our substantive concepts are:

- leadership
- migration/invasion
- civilisation
- childhood
- justice and equality

Early Years

In the Early Years, history is taught through the strand of Understanding the World. However, through activities, the children will also develop in the following strands of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are supported in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. Their learning is supported through offering opportunities for them to:

- begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history.
- comment on images of familiar situations in the past.
- compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past.
- talk about the lives of people around them and their roles in society.

- know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

Focussed activities are planned to incorporate these opportunities, linked to a topic or theme of learning. Provision, where children have the opportunity to engage in self-initiated activities in order to develop their history skills, curiosity and a widening vocabulary, is planned across each term and can be found in the EYFS learning plan on the EYFS section of our website

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, children are provided with the opportunities to:

- develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time.
- recognise where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.
- use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms.
- ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events.
- understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Children are taught about:

- changes within living memory – where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life.
- events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally.
- the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements, some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods.
- significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, pupils 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 are provided with the opportunities to:

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

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history, overview and depth studies are combined to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Children are taught about:

- changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.
- the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain.
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots.
- the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor.
- a local history study.
- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066.
- a study of the achievements of the earliest civilizations – an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer; The Indus Valley; Ancient Egypt; The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China.
- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Maya civilisation c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300.

Key features of history teaching at St Peter's include:

- lessons having clear learning objectives which are shared with the children.
- first-hand practical experiences, where appropriate, including access to artefacts.
- assessment for learning, ensuring appropriate pace of learning and high expectations for all children, including challenge for more able pupils and support and adaptation for those who struggle.
- revisiting pupils' prior knowledge at the start of topics
- encouraging high standards of presentation.
- using technology, where appropriate, to enhance learning.
- developing children towards becoming independent learners and developing their skills to work collaboratively.
- using the outdoor environment, where possible.

Active learning in history

At St. Peter's, we are committed to engaging pupils in active, purposeful learning across all subjects. We believe that children learn best when they are fully involved in their learning. Physical movement, collaboration, and hands-on experiences help to deepen understanding, improve focus, and promote lifelong learning.
Wherever possible, we encourage lessons that allow pupils to get out of their seats - to move, think critically, explore, and interact with others both inside and outside the classroom. Across all subjects, active learning strategies are embedded to engage pupils, enhance progress, and make learning meaningful and memorable - supporting our simple but powerful approach: '*Sit less, move more and learn better*!'

Assessment of history

Pupil's work is assessed in accordance with the school's assessment policy. Teachers assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as they observe pupils during lessons and the teacher marks and reviews the children's work. This is recorded by the teacher in their topic marking book. Feedback is given verbally to pupils from previous lessons and any misconceptions dealt with at the start of each lesson. At the end of a topic, children also demonstrate their knowledge by answering a summative question which links to the disciplinary and substantive concepts of the topic. At the end of each topic, the teacher makes a summative judgement of both the historical knowledge and ability to work historically and records on the assessment sheet whether children are working below or above expectations (unnamed pupils are at the expected levels). Where children are assessed as working below, end of unit learning gaps are identified and noted on the assessment sheets.

The teacher uses these assessment sheets to complete a termly assessment tracker where all children are given one of the following assessment levels for each year group:

- Mastery – pupils are consistently working above year group expected levels and show a deeper understanding of historical knowledge and key skills.
- Secure – pupils are working at an appropriate ability for their year group and are able to recall and explain all key knowledge and demonstrate appropriate skills.
- Developing – pupils are mostly working within an appropriate level for their age group and are able to recall most key learning, but a few concepts, skills, knowledge and understanding within their year group are not quite secure.
- Emerging - pupils are starting to recall some key learning and use some of the skills appropriate for their age group.
- Below – pupils are struggling to access and understand history learning from their year group.

These assessments are monitored and reviewed by the subject leader on a termly basis so standards in history can be evaluated.

Equal opportunities

At St. Peter's, we teach history to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. History forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We recognise, however, that there are children of different abilities in all classes, so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- setting open-ended tasks which allow children to respond at their own level.
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty (not all children complete all tasks).
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group.
- providing resources depending on the ability of the child.
- using classroom assistants to support the work of individuals or groups of children.

We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, Gifted and Talented pupils, and those learning English as an Additional Language. We take all reasonable steps to achieve these goals. We recognise the importance of ensuring that children with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities have access to an ambitious history curriculum. Within the curriculum area of history, SEND children will be provided with reasonable adjustments through their tasks and level of challenge provided. Advice can be sought from the school's SENCO, where applicable.

Equal Opportunities curriculum planning will ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to take part in the full scheme of work and its associated practical activities regardless of gender or cultural background. Gender and cultural stereotypes will be challenged when they arise. Contexts used in teaching will also be sensitive to different ethnic and religious backgrounds and both gender and cultural differences will be reflected positively in the teaching materials used.

Curriculum leadership

The history leader will ensure that the monitoring and development of the subject is maintained at a high standard by:

- monitoring teaching and learning of history across the school.
- undertaking discussions with pupils.
- conducting learning walks and book monitoring to observe the coverage of history (some aspects of history may be recorded in other ways such as videos in evidence folder on See Saw).
- analysing the data collected from each class to ensure good, if not better, progress is being made at child, year group and whole school level, and taking relevant actions and interventions or providing teacher training if not.
- providing guidance to colleagues as needed.
- assisting with maintaining and replenishing resources that are required within the budget.
- assisting staff to implement assessment throughout school.
- ensuring that the curriculum plan allows for progression across school.
- keeping up to date with changes or new initiatives that would support the development of history at St. Peter's.
- prepare reports on the above to inform the school's Governors.
- formulate an action plan each year to ensure the provision of history remains current, relevant and of the highest possible quality.
- review this policy every three years.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Links to History

Spiritual development

The study of history involves a sense of curiosity and the mystery of how and why events in the past happened, as well as raising questions as to what could have happened if an event's results were different. Artefacts are used to give pupils a sense of the past and aid pupils in understanding the people who produced and used these objects. Pupils are encouraged to explore the role played by important individuals, for good or ill, in the shaping of the world we live in.

Pupils also reflect upon different interpretations of the past and how these interpretations have been arrived at.

Moral development

Pupils are asked to consider and comment on moral questions and dilemmas. Events and beliefs in the past will often be at odds with what we would consider unacceptable today (and were to some people in the past also). Pupils will be encouraged to show compassion for people facing dilemmas and to empathise with decisions which people in the past made and the reasoning behind these decisions. Notions of right and wrong are explored in connection with events from the past, linking with the value of justice.

Social development

Pupils will explore the similarities and contrasts between past and present societies and be made aware of how, in the main, we are very fortunate to live in 'the modern world', which links with the value of thankfulness. They will examine how other cultures have had a major impact on the development of 'British' culture. Pupils will also be encouraged to build up their own social development through collaborative and team working activities. The study of social issues is a common theme in history lessons.

Cultural development

Pupils will study, and be encouraged to gain an understanding of, and empathise with, people from different cultural backgrounds. They will examine how other cultures have had a major impact on the development of 'British' culture. Pupils develop a better understanding of our multicultural society through studying links between local, British, European and world history. The contribution of different cultures to human development and progress are studied.

Resources

History resources are kept in the Class 4 cupboard. The resources are clearly labelled. Staff are to notify the history leader if any resources are broken. It is each member of Staff's responsibility to return, safely store and tidily put away any resources they use from the cupboard.

Wider opportunities and cross-curricular Links

History will be taught through our overall topic cycle in three topics per year. Each year, enrichment experiences are organised by teachers and the Senior Leadership Team, to enhance history and enrich teaching. This can include external visits (including residentials), expert visitors, special focus days and outdoor learning experiences.

The Governing body

Regular reports are made to the Governors on the progress of history provision. The policy will be reviewed every three years or in accordance with any changes to legal requirements.

(Updated September 2025)