



# History policy

**Last updated by subject leader**

September 2021

**Last reviewed by Principal and  
Headteacher**

September 2021

**Next review due**

August 2022

## Overview of the subject

- Lead of Subject: Christopher Mattingly  
Prep School Coordinator: Lee Irwin
- There are eleven History teachers at St. John's Prep and Senior School. At the Prep. School the classroom teachers cover EYFS to KS2. The teaching at the Senior School is split between three History teachers across KS3, KS4 and KS5.
- All teachers have expert knowledge in the subjects they teach and receive regular up to date professional development.
- At the Senior School the GCSE and A Level qualifications offered in the subject are through Edexcel at KS4 and through OCR at KS5.
- The History teachers at the Prep. School liaise with the History teachers at the Senior School at least termly to ensure the consistency of the curriculum as the progression model.
- This policy is supported by suitably sequenced schemes of work from EYFS through to KS5 as well as a visual learning journey which maps out all of the units covered in a spiral curriculum until they reach KS4 and KS5, where pupils begin to specialise on exam related content.
- The curriculum reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and ensures that pupils are thoroughly taught in line with all national curriculum aims, ensuring they:
  - 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.

## **Intent**

The key intention of the history curriculum is to ensure that pupils develop broad and deep knowledge of history over time. Teaching aims to engender a love of the subject. Pupils are expected to develop the range of skills needed to become confident in articulating their own opinions and making well-evidenced judgements.

The teaching in History has been planned based on a spiral curriculum from EYFS to the end of KS3. As the pupils move through the school, they build on their understanding of the concepts previously taught, allowing them to develop their understanding, advance their knowledge and gain a better appreciation of Britain's past and of the wider world. When pupils reach KS4 and KS5 they continue to develop their previous knowledge and skills. At the same time, they have the opportunity to specialise their subject knowledge further as they prepare for university and beyond.

## **EYFS**

History is taught through 'understanding the world'. Children learn through experiences that introduce the concept of time and change. Children will be asked 'What happened next?' after reading a story or looking at other sequences of events, such as getting dressed, planting a seed or making a sandwich. A popular focus is to get children to bring in photographs of themselves as babies and to discuss how they have changed over time. Children will also explore patterns and routines and may be given opportunities to take part in events to celebrate time, like planting an anniversary tree. It's common for children to be encouraged to record their findings by drawing or writing.

For the formal history curriculum to be successful, teachers aim for pupils to achieve specific end points. By the end of each key stage, pupils need to be able to do the following:

### **KEY STAGE 1**

By the end of KS1 pupils will have been taught about:

- Changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these are used to reveal aspects of change in national life.

- Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally (for example, the Great Fire of London, Captain Cook, the first aeroplane flight or events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries).
- The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Pupils develop comparative skills by comparing aspects of life in different periods (for example, Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, William Caxton and Tim Berners-Lee, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and LS Lowry, and Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell).
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

## **KEY STAGE 2**

By the end of KS2 pupils will have been 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.
- An aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066.
- 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; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300.

## **KEY STAGE 3**

By the end of KS3 pupils will have been taught about:

- The development of Church, state and society in Medieval Britain 1066-1509.
- The development of Church, state and society in Britain between 1509-1745.

- Ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain, 1745-1901.
- Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day.
- An aspect or theme in British history that consolidates and extends pupils' chronological knowledge from before 1066.
- One significant society or issue in world history and its interconnections with other world developments (for example, Mughal India 1526-1857; China's Qing dynasty 1644-1911; Changing Russian empires c.1800-1989; USA in the 20th Century).

#### **KEY STAGE 4**

By the end of KS4 pupils will have been taught:

- Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment: Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present *and* Whitechapel, c1870–c1900: crime, policing and the inner city.
- Paper 2: Period study and British depth study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 and Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88.
- Paper 3: Modern depth study: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

#### **KEY STAGE 5**

By the end of KS5 pupils will have been taught about:

- England 1485—1603
- The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774—1815
- The Middle East 1908—2011: Ottomans to Arab Spring
- Undertaken an independent topic essay comprised of a 3000–4000-word study.

Teachers have ensured that all schemes of work are fully aligned with the National Curriculum for History, and each provides detailed individual lesson plans with learning objectives, lesson summaries, comprehensive lesson descriptions, activities with all resources, open questions to aid assessment, formative assessment and tracking pupils' learning (how much they know and can remember). As the pupils reach KS4 and KS5 they begin to work towards nationally recognised examinations. These examinations require specific topics to be covered in order to achieve intended end points.

## **Implementation**

Over time, pupils develop skills of research and debate and learn to critically evaluate arguments. They learn to express their arguments and evidence fluently in their essay writing. During lessons they develop their skills of public speaking and active listening. Work is marked regularly to provide pupils with constructive feedback to help them develop effective examination techniques. Learning is embedded through the development of knowledge and skills over time and through a spiral curriculum where there is an overlapping of concepts from EYFS to KS5.

History requires high levels of comprehension and an ability to write effectively. This is needed to meet the demands of the assessment tasks and to demonstrate pupils' knowledge and understanding of key aspects of the subject. It is also challenging as it requires developed skills in analysis and evaluation to meet the highest levels in source based and essay questions. Pupils produce regular essays and work with their teachers to establish good practice pieces.

Key concepts are embedded in long term memory through concrete examples, elaboration, and dual coding. Elaboration involves asking "how" and "why" questions about a specific topic, and then trying to find the answers to those questions. The act of trying to describe and explain how and why things work helps pupils understand and learn. Pupils can also explain how the topics relate to their own lives or take two topics and explain how they are similar and how they are different. Dual Coding combines verbal words with pictures. When these are combined it is easier to understand the information being presented.

The assessment for pupils is set in the form of digital or written progression tests and later on building on exam question practice for KS4 and KS5. Assessments establish the level of the pupils, provide feedback about how to improve their learning, and understand what successful work looks like for each task being completed. Summative assessments such as exams are also used formatively to help pupils improve.

## **Impact**

History is about the acquisition of vital learning skills. Pupils need to be able to read and digest large amounts of information and to prioritise what is and is not relevant to the question they are dealing with. History teaches pupils how to analyse, reflect and to argue clearly verbally and in writing.

Pupils develop highly sought after and transferable skills. These include being able to effectively communicate complex ideas, the ability to research, analyse and evaluate information, both orally and in writing, and the capacity to make substantiated judgements, all whilst developing independent thinking skills.

All learning leads to an end point. At the end of each key stage the pupils need to have achieved specific targets to develop further in the following key stage. The end points are in line with the national curriculum and exam board specifications. Pupils' work is typically of very high quality with examination results consistently far above national averages.

History can be useful in many job families including those linked with law, journalism and publishing, marketing, sales and advertising, arts, crafts and design, broadcast media and performing arts, leisure, sport and tourism, as well as education and training.

### **Cultural capital**

Pupils learn about areas of significant historical interest within their local area. In addition, they learn about topical historical events such as changes within the monarchy and government.

Teachers of history use the school's proximity to London to their advantage, with field trips to historic sites such as the Houses of Parliament, the Supreme Court, Hampton Court Palace, the Royal Courts of Justice, and the Central Criminal Court.

Various workshops are arranged with external university lecturers and specialist historians to develop pupils' understanding of, and interest in, various historical topics.