

HISTORY POLICY

St. John's Church of England Primary School



Approved by:	Date: September 2025
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'From the smallest of seeds fed with faith and love, our St John's family will flourish and grow.'

All of our policies are written with the aim of improving our school and of realising our Christian vision:

From the smallest of seeds fed with faith and



love our St John's family will flourish and grow.

Our vision underpins every document, procedure and decision made within our setting. We are committed to enabling all members of our small community to **flourish and grow** through the values of faith and love and to ensuring that they go on equipped for 21st century living and to have a positive impact on the world.

Based on the teachings of Matthew 13:31

Aims and objectives

History forms part of our foundation subjects within our curriculum and is taught as part of our topic work. We strive to create a culture that is inclusive, engaging, and relevant to all pupils by delivering high-quality teaching, an ambitious, progressively sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum and opportunities for students to be curious about the past. Thus, students should be able to acquire a knowledge, **love** and understanding of history that enables them to achieve their best.

We provide a safe and supportive environment for all children to **flourish** in a range of different activities to promote their emotional, spiritual, social and moral development. We also aim to increase children's awareness of other world histories and subsequently teach a **respect** and understanding of what it means to be a positive, **kind** well-rounded individual in 21st century Britain.

Within history, children will become proficient at historiography and develop an inquisitiveness about the past through analysing and discussing a range of primary and secondary sources. Children will be provided with opportunities to examine pictures or artefacts from historical periods, to understand how life has evolved at a local and global level, to conduct historical investigations, to understand the chronology of history and appreciate significant people from the past. Students will also develop enquiry, presentation and ICT skills whereby they will learn how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way with regards to evidence.

Significantly, we encourage our children to transfer our school values of **faith, love, kindness and respect** into all of our learning activities to create a positive attitude towards learning and to their peers. Similarly, our core concept of the British values and our responsibilities to the wider community are further instilled into our students throughout our history curriculum.

Subject Aims

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We provide challenging and enjoyable learning through our fantastic, immersive Cornerstones Curriculum that is designed and adapted to meet the needs of all pupils at the school. A strong emphasis is placed on personal development, positive interactions and an optimistic mindset across all history lessons to ensure that all children enjoy learning and attain well. History is taught throughout a series of topics across year groups following the national curriculum guidance to ensure a broad and balanced coverage of all objectives.

Every history lesson taught within school is assessed rigorously to monitor children's progression. All lessons will contain an accessible challenge for the children to complete to extend and expand upon their main learning. Furthermore, children will have the chance to demonstrate what they have learnt within their lesson with an 'Assessment For Learning' task at the end of their work. Holiday homework will include activities that encourage engagement with the past.

When a new historical period is being learned about, children are introduced to subject-specific vocabulary through knowledge organisers that are scaffolds to support the retention of new facts and entice the curiosity of the pupils. The knowledge organisers also aid retrieval practice, home learning and highlight overarching themes or information that the children need to know in order to aid their learning.

A weekly History Detective challenge is available to all students to complete which exposes them to a range of primary historical sources and enables them to understand the various ways we can find out about the past. Additionally, our children celebrate Black History Month in October which exposes the children to historical figures that reflect the context of the pupils' backgrounds within our school.

The aims of History in our school are for the children to:

- Learn and understand the history of the United Kingdom as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the Stone Age to the present day. Furthermore, how significant people have shaped our nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world;
- To develop a sense of the chronology of history;
- To learn and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolutions of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind;
- To gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry';
- To 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;
- To understand 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;
- To 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.

Teaching and learning style

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources as much as possible. In each key stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of

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historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', about information they are given.

We recognise that in all classes, there are children of widely-different abilities in history and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- Setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- Providing increasing challenge work to extend learning;
- Grouping children into mixed ability pairs to be able to share ideas and model vocabulary;
- Providing tasks that are accessible to all children but using adaptive teaching to ensure progress is made.
- Providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child;
- Using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

History curriculum planning

Our long-term planning follows a two year cycle allowing mixed year group classes to access the full National Curriculum without repeating themes. Curriculum Maestro allows exciting themes to be carefully chosen by teachers to teach History over the year.

Foundation Stage

During the Foundation Stage, young children are given opportunities within the Early Learning Goals, 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World', to find out more about the world in which they live and the people and things they encounter. The children take part in first experiences, including the chance to explore their local environment, gather information and communicate their views.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

During Key Stage 1, pupils should develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should 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 should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical items. They should 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 should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Pupils should be 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 (e.g. The Great Fire of London.)

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- 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 during different time periods (e.g. Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, Rosa Parks and Emily Davison).
- significant historical events, people and places within their own locality.

Local History Study

A study investigating how an aspect in the local area has changed over a long period of time, or how the locality was affected by a significant national or local event or development, or by the work of a prominent individual.

Throughout Key Stage 1 there should be a progression of education.

By the end of Key Stage 1, most children are able to:

- speak and write about familiar and famous people and events from the recent and more distant past, using everyday terms concerned with the passing of time
- distinguish between aspects of their own lives and the lives of people in the past
- identify ways in which the past is represented
- find out about the past by asking and answering questions.
- record their knowledge and understanding about the past in a variety of ways using dates and historical terms.

The contribution of History to children's enjoyment of a creative approach to learning:

The thematic approach being taken means that the cross-curriculum links that were once made by teachers are beginning to be made also by children themselves. Learning through a theme is meaningful and memorable to the children. It enables them to develop greater control and motivation as learner.

The requirements of the National Curriculum and the age and ability of the children at St John's Infant School influence the resources employed.

- Artefacts, pictures and photographs, stories, myths and legends, written sources including documents and printed sources, computer-based materials and computer-generated simulation activities.
- Music.
- Adults talking about the past.
- Buildings and sites, educational visits to museums, the use of fieldwork.

Health and Safety

Visits by pupils to the immediate locality, museums and sites of historical interest are an essential part of the History Curriculum. Visits should be well organised and provide a stimulating and valuable experience. The pupils should prepare well for the visit and, on their return, use the experience to good effect in the classroom. The class teacher, or leader, should plan the visit meticulously, with the pupils' safety and welfare paramount.

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The following health and safety issues should be taken into consideration:

- The teacher in charge should make a preliminary visit.
- Parents should be informed fully of any visits outside the school grounds, and sign a consent form.
- All voluntary helpers should be fully aware of the procedures and their areas of responsibility.
- The children should be supervised at all times, with extra care taken near water and busy roads.
- Adherence to the school policy of <adult: pupil ratio>.
- If using the school grounds, teaching assistants/helpers should provide extra support.

Please see the Policy for Educational Visits for more detailed information.

Equal Opportunities

All teaching and non-teaching staff at St. John's School should ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to, and make the greatest progress possible in, all areas of the curriculum. History provides opportunities for teaching that reinforces this ideal.

The National Curriculum for History states that, at Key Stage 1:

- 'Pupils should be taught about the everyday life, work, leisure and culture of men, women and children in the past ...'
- 'Pupils should be taught about the lives of different kinds of famous men and women ...'

In line with this, the work covered in History takes account of the commonality and diversity of societies and of the men and women in past and present times.

The implementation of the Policy for Equal Opportunities is ultimately the responsibility of the Head Teacher and the Senior Management Team, but every member of staff is responsible for promoting good practice in the day-to-day operation of the policy.

Special Educational Needs

Children with Special Needs are taught the full History curriculum. Some children might find visits to museums or historical sites difficult, because of their physical disability or medical needs. Additional support will be given to these children so that they can take a full and active role. Tasks will be adapted if necessary, so that these children can succeed. Sensitive grouping should also reduce problems.

Monitoring and review

The history subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in History. The history subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of History, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. We allocate special time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject.

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Assessment, record keeping and reporting

Every lesson contains specific Assessment for Learning activities. Teachers make assessments against National Curriculum objectives at the end of either each lesson on the Curriculum Maestro assessment system and use these to guide their future medium term planning needs/ coverage. Marking will frequently be done during the lesson so feedback can be immediate. Written comments for marking will focus on the lesson objective identifying next steps for improvement. Where possible children are involved in the marking / evaluation process and this aspect is built into all history lesson plans.

Resources

There are a range of resources for all history teaching units in the school. which are kept in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. The library contains topic books and software to support children's individual research.

The history curriculum leader is responsible for maintaining history resources, monitoring their use, organising the history storage and ordering new resources. Staff must inform the leader of any resources they would like added to the store. The curriculum leader plans the purchase of resources each year based on the history budget for that year. The history budget reflects the degree of priority given to history in the School Development /Improvement Plan for any one year. Resources are replaced and purchased by the leader in accordance with the general ordering procedure.

Our aims

St. John's C of E values and celebrates diversity and endeavours to meet each pupil's individual needs.

We aim to provide equal opportunities for all our children to learn and develop. This includes:

- Minority ethnic and faith groups
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Girls and boys
- Children with special educational and additional needs
- Gifted and talented
- Pupil Premium children

This is achieved through:

- Long and short term planning which includes differentiation for SEN and EAL.
- Continual reviewing and analysis of pupils' progress
- Consideration of different learning styles
- Reasonable adjustments and additions to the learning environment
- Making information/communication more accessible through translation and interpreters.

As a learning community we will promote inclusive policies and practices.

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We at St. John's actively encourage the involvement of families to help support the teaching of History. Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children with topic-based homework. History homework tasks have a clear purpose, often providing children with the task of researching and exploring a topic to support their classroom work. Projects have been on display to parents in school and on the school website.

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