

Curriculum Policy for History

DATE OF REVIEW: Autumn 2024

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Autumn 2026

TO BE REVIEWED BY: Teaching & Learning committee



Introduction

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of race, gender, religion or ability.

History is a Foundation Subject in the National Curriculum.

This policy outlines the Intent, Implementation and Impact of the History taught in our school. The Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. History is considered to be a key driver subject, meaning that this is a specialist area of the curriculum. Through our teaching, we aim to develop pupils' growing knowledge and understanding of past world events and encourage them to recognise how these have shaped society in the form it takes today. The school policy for History reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body.

Intent

History is a powerful medium through which the future of humanity can be preserved by understanding the successes and failures of what has come before.

A coherent, chronological knowledge of Britain's colourful past, and an understanding of how this links to the history of the wider world, strongly promotes a sense of identity within our pupils.

At Hatherleigh, pupils' perceptions of the past are developed through lessons which provide: active participation; opportunities to ask questions; and a safe environment in which to express, discuss and debate their viewpoints. Through these channels, our pupils' innate curiosity and imagination is ignited as they yearn to 'know more'.

Through the development of subject knowledge, alongside the fundamental historical skills of research, exploration, evidence gathering and articulating opinions, pupils shape their ideas and viewpoints, using evidence to support their thinking.

As historians, pupils are encouraged to link the follies and achievements of the past with the formation of society today; understanding that life as they know it, is a direct result of historical events and movements.

Through their studies, pupils are empowered to pre-empt and prepare for what their own futures may hold, equipping them to anticipate and perhaps even avoid mistakes and challenges in their own lives, by learning from the fascinating existences and experiences of those who have gone before.

Our intention is directly aligned with the National Curriculum which 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 the 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 own 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.

Implementation

The teaching of history forms part of our broad curriculum; and by incorporating the knowledge and skills from our History Curriculum overview and Progression of knowledge, skills and understanding documents, excellent teaching, resulting in hands-on learning, brings the subject to life.

Through the meaningful context of exciting topics, underpinned by a high-quality, relevant text, the key skills of research and exploration, evidence gathering and articulating opinions are purposefully interwoven.

Our engaging topics span all periods of history, beginning with Prehistory, through the Ancient Era, the Medieval Period, the Early Modern Period and culminating in the Modern World.

Learning is linked year on year as pupils learn about the key institutions of power such as; Governance, Monarchy and Religion.

As a result, pupils are exposed to examples of continuity and change, providing them with a sound understanding of society and how these institutions have evolved over time.

Teaching facilitates the exploration and analysis of primary and secondary evidence, enabling pupils to learn how sources (in the form of documentation and interesting artefacts) can be interpreted at a range of levels; with consideration of factors such as origin, authenticity and the perspective and motivation of their author/creator.

Our experienced Subject Lead is extremely passionate, knowledgeable and instrumental in the planning and delivery of a curriculum that is practical, engaging and contextualised by visits to historical sites, both within the local area and further afield.

Weekly planning is informed by our History Curriculum overview and Progression of knowledge, skills and understanding documents which is taken from the National Curriculum and crafted where necessary to meet the unique needs and interests of our pupils. As the National Curriculum prescribes, these statements span Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. In addition, our EYFS to Year 1 and 2 document links the Early Years bridging both curriculums in order to plot a seamless progression.

These statements inform the History Curriculum overview and Progression of knowledge, skills and understanding documents, allowing us to focus closely on how knowledge and skills progress more specifically within each year group, in order to meet the bespoke needs of our school.

Lesson planning in History takes account of pupils' prior knowledge and skill development, by building further upon existing skills in readiness for the next stage in the learning journey. Key skills and knowledge within each strand are clearly set out, enabling teachers to deliver the precise requirements of each study area within their year group.

The Subject Lead has also prioritised and highlighted the prerequisite vocabulary needing to be taught in order to fully immerse pupils in the subject. This is also progressive year-on-year and the History Vocabulary Progression document captures this concisely.

Our dedication to inclusive practice means that, regardless of their ability, pupils are aided to access learning with the highest possible levels of independence, due to carefully designed tasks. Where necessary, pupils requiring extra help are sensitively supported, with minimal disruption to quality-first teaching. Our ambition is to narrow the gap between different groups of pupils and to ensure that their life-opportunities are equal, irrespective of background or ability.

Extended Curriculum Opportunities

Significant commemorative days are acknowledged and historical links made. Examples include: anniversaries of World Wars and Remembrance Days, the anniversary of the Moon Landings and Bonfire Night.

Throughout the school year, each year aims to visit places to enhance the children's learning. In Year 1 visits include Exmouth World of Country life linking to the topics Transport and Victorian homes, and the beach. (Seasides in the past).

In Year 2 visits include a trip to the Fire station (Great Fire of London), Okehampton Castle and the lifeboat station (Coasts).

In Year 3 visits include Merrivale (Stone Age) and an Egyptian visitor invited into school.

In Year 4 visits include a residential to Hooke Court to learn about the Greeks.

In Year 5 visits include walking to the Monument when exploring 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and the battle of Balacava and to consider the different uses of Dartmoor through the ages. In year 6 we are planning for the future to incorporate a city trip to include cultural activities, museums etc to enhance and consolidate skills and knowledge learnt.

Impact

In their history learning, our pupils show a genuine passion and thirst for learning through high levels of independence in their explorations; demonstrating curiosity by asking perceptive questions and growing increasingly confident to clearly communicate their well-informed and carefully considered views in relation to the past - both orally and in written form. As a result of high-quality teaching, hands-on experiences and continuous immersion in the chronological order of historical events, pupils fully understand that the past is something which has already happened and cannot be changed; but that history's reverberations are still tangible, relevant and can positively shape their lives today. By learning about their own past, in a way that clearly illustrates their significance within history, pupils develop a strong sense of identity from an early age. This learning provides firm foundations upon which a coherent and complete knowledge about the history of Britain and beyond is built. Our curious, passionate pupils move into the secondary phase of their education as passionate and curious historians who are equipped with the key skills and knowledge to enable their future success.