

# St. John Bosco RC Primary School



## History Policy

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# History

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## 1. Aims and objectives

The aim of history teaching here at St. John Bosco School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and, through this, they develop a sense of identity, and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. Thus, they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multi-cultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school, history makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

*Our objectives in the teaching of history are:*

- to foster in children an interest in the past, and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history, and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- to develop a sense of chronology;
- to know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education;
- to understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture, and to study some aspects of European history;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation;
- to develop the cross-curricular use of history in other subjects;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of the history of any non-European country when children from that part of the world make up a significant proportion of the school's role.

*The National Curriculum Aims for History*

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, 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

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- 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.

### 2. 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. In each key stage, we give children the opportunity to visit sites of 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 in history teaching, and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children to 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, children have a wide range of ability 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;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support children individually or in groups.

### 3. History curriculum planning

History is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our curriculum planning in history, but we have adapted this to our local context, building on the successful units of work already in place. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage. The long term plan is devised by the Senior Leadership Team in partnership with the Subject Leader and class teachers. The children study history topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. Some topics have a particular historical focus, and in Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our medium-term plans as well, which give details of each unit of work for each term. The Senior Leadership Team keeps and reviews these plans with the Subject Leader on a regular basis. Because we plan our Creative Curriculum topics in Key Stage phases, e.g. Y1/Y2, Y3/Y4, Y5/Y6, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum, but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and copies are kept and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leader on a regular basis..

### 4. The Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage History is incorporated in ‘Knowledge and Understanding of the World’ underneath the heading of ‘A Sense of Time’. In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in ‘history’.

Specific points covered across the curriculum are:

- Remembering and talking about significant things that have happened to them.
- Showing an interest in the lives of people familiar to them.
- Beginning to differentiate between past and present.

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- Finding out about past and present events in their own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know.

History is taught through planned cross curricular topics. Opportunities are given to allow the children to:

- Handle and talk about artefacts, pictures and photos
- Compare old and new photos, artefacts etc. and look for clues that tell us how we can tell the difference.
- Look for information in a story that indicates when the events took place.
- Compare buildings and environmental features and decide which are older/newer.
- Talk about older people in their families and the locality.
- Explore, talk about and sequence events that have occurred in their families before and during their own lives.

### 5. History in KS1

History in Key Stage 1 is about the recent and distant past, events and famous people from Britain and overseas. It also covers change, comparing life today and in the past. Children are introduced to the skills needed for enquiry, communication ideas and time vocabulary. 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 terms. 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. In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching about the people, events and changes outlined below, teachers are often introducing pupils to historical periods that they will study more fully at key stages 2 and 3. Pupils should be 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 [for example, the Great Fire of London, 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 and significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

### 6. History in KS2

Pupils should 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 should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources. In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching British, local and world history, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

### 7. History and ICT

Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of history, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their history work in Key Stage 2. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as word-processing, finding information on the Internet and presenting information through PowerPoint presentations and making creative use of the digital camera to record photographic images. For example, they might do some image manipulation by importing a digital photograph of themselves into a photo-editing program, along with a figure in period costume and some historical background scenery. Role-playing software can engage children in visual scenarios which they can direct themselves.

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### 8. History and inclusion

There are children of differing abilities in all classes at St John Bosco RC Primary School. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.

### 9. Assessment

Formative assessment involves spending time before and during each unit or theme time eliciting children's knowledge and understanding – Mind Mapping, discussions etc. We follow the principles of Assessment for Learning in all of our Knowledge and understanding. This involves identifying a child's progress in each area of learning, determining what each child has learned and identifying the next steps in his/her learning, linked to the learning intention and success criteria for the session. Effective tools used by our teaching staff include:

- Sharing explicit learning intentions and success criteria
- Quality questioning
- Self assessment and peer assessment against learning intentions and success criteria
- Quality marking to identify areas where the success criteria has been met and areas that need to be improved

Summative assessment involves spending time at the end of each unit or at the end of year assessing children's skills and understanding. The Early Year Outcomes provide a baseline assessment level in each area of learning. This can be used to produce end of year targets throughout KS1 and KS2. Class teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether each child is working at, above or below the expected level using the key skills document termly and levels are inputted into the school's foundation subject tracking system.

The history subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of achievement is in history for each age group in the school.

### 10. Resources

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. This allows resources to be matched to any developments in the curriculum through the teaching of key skills. The library also contains a good supply of topic books and software to support children's individual research.

### 11. Monitoring and review

The coordination and planning of the History curriculum and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and standards of children's work in History is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leader. The work of the Subject Leader also involves supporting colleagues in their planning and teaching, being informed about current developments in History and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject in the school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_