



Theale Church of England Primary School

History Policy

Why study History?

“A people without the knowledge of their past History, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.” - Marcus Garvey

“History is who we are and why we are the way we are.” - David McCullough

“We are not makers of History. We are made by History.” - Martin Luther King Jr.

“Nowhere is it ordained that History moves in a straight line.” - Barack Obama

The study of History encourages pupils to think. From there, pupils can begin to think critically and gain an understanding of cultures past and present, as well national and international traditions. History widens children’s experiences and enhances their perception and judgement of the world. The study of the past provides pupils with a platform to gain not only substantial knowledge about significant lives and events in History, it also provides an opportunity to contemplate complex and moral questions and to explore what it means to be human. Perhaps most importantly, History as a discipline promotes the value of scholarship and the power of knowledge.

Intent

At Theale CE Primary School, the History curriculum is designed to be ambitious, enjoyable and knowledge rich; sparking pupils’ enthusiasm and curiosity about the past. Thus, the curriculum provides not only in-depth, subject-specific knowledge and study, but kindles an intellectual interest about the past and encourages students to grapple with complex questions and dilemmas. The teaching of History at Theale strives to promote critical thinking, weigh evidence, identify key arguments and develop perspective and conclusions surrounding historical figures and events. History enables pupils to understand the process of change, the diversity of societies, the complexity of people’s lives, the interweaving nature of chronology

and the inextricable links between cultures and civilisations, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time. Our curriculum seeks to reflect the diverse nature of our student cohort and interests, with a focus on global History. Furthermore, the opportunity for the children to explore global History exposes children to the History of cultures and civilisations that they would otherwise not encounter. They are able to compare and contrast different civilisations during the same time period in order to develop deeper understanding. As a result, by studying a wide range of cultures and chronologies, pupils are able to contemplate and question the past and our knowledge of the past in innovative ways.

Implementation

The History Curriculum inspires pupils throughout the Early Years, KS1 and KS2 to find out about the past. We ensure that all children understand how to use different types of sources, evidence and artefacts – as well as learning that sources have limitations and need to be interrogated. Children gain a clear and in-depth understanding of historical chronology, from ancient civilisations to significant figures of the 20th century.

History is a subject that is underpinned by carefully chosen knowledge. For the pupils to access this knowledge, lessons prioritising strong content knowledge are planned and taught by specialist teachers. We strive for our pupils to first gain a detailed and clear understanding and knowledge of content, and then develop and use their critical thinking and analysis skills. For example, when studying Ancient Greece, children first need a secure understanding of different City States and their features, the political organisation of Greece into poleis and what it meant to be ‘Hellene.’ Only then are they able to compare and contrast the city-states in Ancient Greece during the Classical Period.

Whilst History as a discipline is acknowledged and taught in its own right, it naturally lends itself to cross-curricular links, which both inspire and challenge the children. It supports their development of knowledge and understanding in Literacy, Geography and RE and aids their progression in particular styles of writing, such as factual and report writing.

Our mixed age classes provide a particular challenge to us. We have thought hard about how to structure our provision so that we can ensure knowledge is carefully sequenced in spite of the necessary cyclical nature of our implementation.

EFYS/KS1

Our EYFS and Key Stage One curriculum provides a vital introduction to the study of History and provides the foundations on which future knowledge and skills are built. Pupils are taught, with the guidance of the National Curriculum and knowledgeable teachers, to develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. Key concepts such as the ‘past’, ‘present’, ‘chronology’, ‘monarch’, ‘countries’ and ‘sources’ will be identified and discussed concurrently with significant people and events within a chronological framework. Pupils are encouraged to ask and answer questions, and utilise the resources and stories shown to them to demonstrate that they know and understand the

most significant events. They will begin to look at how we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Pupils will be taught:

- 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 children examine the key events surrounding the Great Fire of London, how we can find out about this event, and how it changed life in London. From that, children learn how life was the same and different in this time and can begin to make comparisons between the past and the present. To ensure progression across KS1, the children then embark on an in-depth study of the Stuarts in Year 2, including the political, religious and social organisation of Britain during this period. This allows progression in not only their content knowledge, but also their understanding of chronology and of different sources that are used to find out information regarding past events.
- 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. At the end of the unit on castles the children will conduct an in-depth study of Highclere Castle/Windsor Castle, as this will provide a strong progression of knowledge from their topic.

KS2

In line with the National Curriculum, pupils are taught to “identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and over long arcs of time. They should use historical terms and concepts in increasingly sophisticated ways. They should pursue historically valid enquiries including some they have framed themselves, and create relevant, structured and evidentially supported accounts in response. They should understand how different types of historical sources are used rigorously to make historical claims and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.” (National Curriculum 2013 DfE).

Year 2/3 centres around the study of prehistoric Britain and ancient civilisations. The pupils will embark on detailed units of Stone, Bronze and Iron Age Britain, interspersed with contemporary ancient civilisations in other countries, including Egypt and China. This provides students not only with a secure understanding of prehistoric Britain, but also allows them to draw comparisons between Britain and other cultures, and provides crucial contextual knowledge and understanding of world History. Crucially, it also demonstrates to pupils that key historical moments, such as the discovery of bronze and the birth of writing, occurred at different times throughout the world. The pupils are increasingly encouraged to draw comparisons between different civilisations using the terminology ‘meanwhile, elsewhere’,

which in turn, develops their ability to understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw conclusions, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts.

In Year 4/5, pupils will investigate how artefacts, written sources, art objects and monuments (such as cathedrals, churches and houses) are all key sources of information and evidence. The pupils need to be exposed to these different types of sources and how these can be used to pose historically valid questions. Using the case studies of Anglo-Saxon and Viking Britain, pupils will use a variety of the sources provided to investigate what everyday life may have been like. The accuracy of these sources should be discussed. Comparisons should be made between Britain during this period and contemporary civilisations, using a variety of both primary and secondary sources. Pupils should investigate different accounts of settlement structure, farming, religion and battles, from different perspectives, explaining some of the reasons why the accounts may differ. Pupils will engage in the scholarly debates regarding why the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings chose to settle in Britain.

Pupils in Year 6, with support from their teacher, will examine a variety of sources and use these to make inferences about the past, in particular, about the economy, culture, religious beliefs and societal structure of the culture in question. Pupils will be encouraged to select the information provided to them to devise historically valid statements. The pupils will examine the timeline of Britain from the early 20th century to the present day and consider where there was rapid change and where there was very little change and discuss why this may be the case. Using the 'meanwhile, elsewhere' phrase, pupils will be encouraged to compare their study of civilisations from other countries, including Mexico and Iraq, with Britain in this period. By the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to understand the significance of studying History as a discipline in its own right, its relevance for understanding how the past has shaped (and continues to shape) the world today and its importance in key areas such as developing respect, tolerance and understanding towards other cultures and traditions.

Impact

Through providing our students with a high-quality, varied and informative History curriculum that provides a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge of the past, understanding and analytical skills, we hope to foster a love of learning, academia and excellence and to promote the value of scholarship. We strive to develop their ability to think critically and engage in complex debates. Our varied History curriculum combines the examination of large regions over extended periods of time, with more focused work on topics which pivot around certain countries (such as Egypt, Greece and Britain), shorter periods and particular themes. We hope to impart a unique and varied education of the past, by developing an awareness of the differing political, cultural, social and economic structures within past societies and how they interrelate and contrast. In the latter years of the pupils' primary education, the curriculum, alongside providing detailed chronological and contextual

units, combines historically valid debates over questions of interpretation, with attention to source material and artefacts.

Structure of Provision

History is taught every other week for 2 hours every other short term.

Evaluation and Assessment

Assessment of History is an integral part of teaching. For each term of planned work, assessments are ongoing throughout lessons and through marking pupils work but also key assessments are also clearly identified. The assessments are for two purposes. Firstly they are to provide feedback for the teachers on the extent to which a child has understood a concept, learned a skill or acquired some new knowledge. The results will enable the teacher to reflect on how well they have taught the curriculum and will inform future planning. Teachers keep records of the results of the assessments, the collection of the overall data is the responsibility of the subject co-ordinator.

Extended Curriculum and Cross-Curricular Links

We believe that building upon the experiences out of the classroom is crucial to the development of the History curriculum. Trips to museums and nationally or locally significant sites are therefore invaluable. Cross-curricular links are where the opportunity arises embedded in the planning, teaching and learning of all subjects including History. Subject plans are adapted and linked to topics where appropriate.

Information and Communication Technology

The use of ICT and the teaching of ICT should enhance, develop and support pupils' learning of History, it will also provide invaluable opportunities in the event of remote learning.

Equal Opportunities and Special Needs

Every pupil will be given equal opportunity to follow the National Curriculum or Foundation Stage Curriculum irrespective of their ethnic or linguistic background, gender, disability or religious beliefs. Children with Special Educational Needs will have full access to the History curriculum which will be modified to best meet their needs. Those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented in Literacy will be given opportunities to develop their skills.

Monitoring

The monitoring of History will take the form of classroom observations, scrutiny of planning and children's work, pupil voice and the learning environment. The subject leader, working with the head teacher and SLT is responsible for the monitoring of History. The head teacher will report to governors through her termly report.