

Hanley St Luke's C of E (V) Aided Primary School

History Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 History is a foundation subject within the National Curriculum.

1.2 This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of history taught and learnt at our school. It has been written in consultation with staff and governors.

1.3 The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

1.4 The responsibility for monitoring and reviewing history is the responsibility of the history co-ordinator. An annual report is produced and submitted to governors.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 The aim of history teaching here at St Luke's C of E Aided Primary 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 multicultural 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 contributes to citizenship education by raising awareness of different ways Britain and other countries have been governed. 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.

2.2 The aims of history in our school 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;
- Enable children to know about significant events in British history and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- Develop a sense of chronology;

- Understand how the past was different from the present and that people of other times and places may have had different values and attitudes from ours;
- Understand the nature of evidence by emphasising the process of enquiry and by developing the range of skills required to interpret primary and secondary source materials;
- Distinguish between historical facts and the interpretation of those facts;
- Understand that events have a multiplicity of causes and that historical explanation is provisional, debatable and sometimes controversial
- Understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture and to study some aspects of European history;
- Have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- Help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- Develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

These aims will be achieved by teaching Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum and by following the guidelines set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

3 Teaching and Learning Ethos

3.1 The school uses a variety of teaching and learning strategies in history lessons. History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians.

We use both primary and secondary sources of history, including examining historical artefacts, to work towards this.

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.

Focus days for history topics are sometimes used by year groups. These help to foster greater enthusiasm for and understanding of history through focused activities and sometimes wearing costumes and tasting food related to the topic.

We recognize 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 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.

3.2 Children are taught history in their classes according to their particular topic or focus. We recognise the fact 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 common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty. Not all children complete all tasks;
- providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

3.3 Various different activities take place within the classroom to teach history. In learning history pupils will use a range of sources such as people, the local environment, sites, photographs, portraits, artefacts, written materials, ICT based materials, data, TV / video extracts, Espresso and the internet.

In Year 2, the "history mouse" is an effective way of engaging the children in the past and helping them to understand chronology whenever history lessons are done.

3.4 Children will work in a variety of contexts - individually, in groups, as a whole class. As part of our history curriculum, the children will be given opportunities to present their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways such as through drama, art, models, various writing styles / genre, collage, timelines, sketches, and maps.

3.5 When teaching history we always explain what we want pupils to know, understand and be able to do through the history they are about to do.

Teachers will often use a key question to direct pupils' thinking / enquiry about the past. Teachers will vary the resources and activities to ensure each pupil can be effective in finding out about and trying to explain the past.

3.6 Teachers will encourage the children in their class to be reflective learners and to self-assess their own understanding and knowledge through questioning, class and small group discussion.

3.7 Our history curriculum places some lessons within broader topics, or stand alone history lessons as appropriate to each history focus and to each year group.

4 History and the wider curriculum

The history curriculum also enhances other subjects:

4.1 Literacy

History contributes significantly to the teaching of Literacy and drama in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that are used during Literacy lessons are historical in nature. Children develop oracy through discussing historical questions or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports, letters, diary writing, writing postcards, descriptions, creating leaflets or composing narratives that use history as their inspiration. Drama and history complement each other by providing children with empathy opportunities for different situations taken from the past. We also expect our pupils to maintain high standards in handwriting, as described in our handwriting policy.

4.2 Mathematics

History teaching contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through doing activities such as time-lines and reading dates. Numbers occur within many different historical contexts such as armies and battles. Aspects of shape can be addressed in the Year Five topic of Native American Indians.

4.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT in history teaching where appropriate and we meet the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their work in history at Key Stage 2. Children use ICT in history to enhance their skills in presenting written work, creating posters and pictures relating to history and they research information using the Internet. Children have the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images and they communicate with other children in other schools by using e-mail.

4.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognize and challenge stereotypes and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

When teaching history, we contribute to the children's spiritual development where possible. Children learn about the role of the church in Tudor times and they find out how British society has changed over time. The history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

5.6 Art and Design and Technology

Events or people from some areas of history are a rich source of inspiration for art and design and technology projects. Examples of art through history are practising Roman mosaic techniques, creating Greek masks and battle scene pictures. In design and technology, practising design skills for models can be inspired by history; for example making models of Greek temples and making Egyptian pyramids and war shelters.

5.7 P.E. and Music

In P.E. lessons, music from different periods of history can be used as a stimulus for dance. There are opportunities in music lessons to learn or create songs or raps using history as a stimulus.

6 History curriculum planning

6.1 We use the national scheme of work for history as the basis for our curriculum planning in history, but we have adapted this to the local context by 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 build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

6.2 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 year group in each key stage and 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.

6.3 As the basis for our medium-term plans, we use the national scheme of work which gives details of each unit of work for each term. Medium-term plans are written and developed by the year group teachers and are either on the school's planning grid or they are the QCA plans, as appropriate to each year group.

6.4 The class teacher writes an outline for each history lesson (short-term plans). These list the specific learning objectives of each lesson.

7 Foundation Stage

We teach history in Nursery and Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the history side of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, looking at pictures of famous people in history or discovering the meaning of new and old in relation to their own lives.

8 Teaching history to children with special educational needs

8.1 At our school we teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

8.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors - classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation - so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

8.3 Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to history.

8.4 We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning history. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, practical work, such as archaeology, at a museum, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8.5 Able and Talented children in history are identified by their class teacher. During the academic year, they will have the chance to attend appropriate workshops and/or visits and/or activities which will further enhance their knowledge, understanding, ability and talent in this subject.

9 Assessment and monitoring

9.1 We assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe them during each history lesson. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary. Verbal comments are given to children during lessons, as appropriate and children are encouraged to self-evaluate, especially at Key Stage 2, their own knowledge and understanding.

9.2 At the end of a unit of work, the teacher highlights on a record sheet for each year group the objectives that the child has achieved. Teachers can also include any further notes on this record sheet as appropriate. The next class teacher receives these record sheets. Parents are informed as to their child's understanding and effort during history lessons on the annual school report, written by the class teacher.

9.3 Foundation Stage pupils are assessed through the Foundation Stage profiles.

9.4 The history co-ordinator monitors the history curriculum and children's work at least once a year. This is done via a book trawl and also teachers' responses to a questionnaire on their teaching of history. Throughout the year, conversations with other teachers regarding history also inform assessment and monitoring.

9.5 The work of the history subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The history co-ordinator will consult with the headteacher as appropriate regarding the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicate areas for further improvement. This usually forms part of the co-ordinator's Personal Development Interview.

10 Resources

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school but resources are added to each year as appropriate and subject to school budgets. Class teachers are consulted regarding their wishes for resources to enhance history in each classroom. These resources are generally kept in teachers' classrooms. The history co-ordinator keeps a few more general resources in the History Cupboard outside her classroom.

11 Monitoring and Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the history co-ordinator annually. Should any changes need to be made, consultation with staff and governors will take place prior to any changes. Staff will inform the co-ordinator at any time during the year of any necessary changes that are needed to be made to the policy.