

# Askwith Primary School

## History rationale

"The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future."

Theodore Roosevelt

At Askwith Primary School, we believe that all children's education (this includes SEND, EAL, PP and vulnerable children) begins in Early Years.

'Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances' (*EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021*).

Our curriculum is aligned to the Early Years Framework and shows the sequential steps of essential knowledge acquired from Reception to Year 6. We have a determined approach that drives us to ensure that all children meet the expected standard in history and have the knowledge required for secondary school. Our history curriculum allows children to develop their cultural capital. Purposeful and natural links to Fundamental British Values and global themes e.g. being democratic, and discussions around being good UK and global citizens are threaded through the curriculum. Our history curriculum promotes the rich diversity of the world, Britain and an appreciation of our locality. History at primary level not only helps children to gain knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world, it involves understanding how time changes the world, how people and societies live and have lived in very different ways, as well as how we as individuals and as a society live today. History allows children to develop the following key skills: ask perceptive questions, think critically, evaluate evidence and examine arguments.

### Why this, why now?

The Whole School Long Term Plan is designed in year groups but can equally be used for mixed age classes. History is taught in a block at least once per term.

In Early Years, Nursery children focus on their own experiences and events from their own lives to begin to build knowledge of chronology. Reception children build on this knowledge of chronology and other substantive concepts through rhymes and stories, as well as their own experiences and events from their own lives. Stories are also used to introduce the concepts of kings, queens and the abstract concept of 'monarchy'.

- Toys old and new (Year 1 & 2)

This unit of knowledge looks at concepts such as similarity and difference as well as old and new and change through time. It includes the question, 'How do we know?' to introduce the idea of evidence. Pupils develop the vocabulary to talk about times past and change over time.

- Gunpowder Plot (Year 1 & 2)

This unit of knowledge is taught in autumn term, near Bonfire Night, as it gives children a good understanding of how events of the past can result in celebrations and festivals today.

This topic presents the opportunity to discuss tolerance of different beliefs, making a purposeful link to British Values.

- Great Fire of London (Year 1 & 2)

This unit of knowledge enables pupils to gain experience of using accessible forms of historical evidence to reconstruct the past and develops pupils' understanding of cause and consequence. It coincides with the KS1 geography unit of knowledge that focuses on UK countries and capital cities. This allows for the deliberate practice of identifying London as a capital city.

- Mary Seacole (Year 1 & 2)

Mary Seacole is carefully chosen because she is a significant female figure in British history and this unit of knowledge offers excellent opportunities to explore the changing attitudes to race, then and now. It links well with the global theme of 'Being Aware of Others.' As she was born in Jamaica, this provides a natural link to the KS1 unit of knowledge about Jamaica.

- Ancient Egypt (Year 3 & 4)

This unit of knowledge focuses on the ways of life, which seem very remote to us today, and on the way, we can build a clear picture of a past society 5,000 years ago through the study of evidence, which has come to light scarcely 200 years ago. More specifically, pupils focus on the Gift of the Nile, the iconic images of pyramids, the centrally important religious beliefs and the way we can work out details of people's daily lives by interpreting the fragments of evidence that have survived. This unit of knowledge explores the abstract concept of 'civilisation.' This concept is built upon when the children learn about Stone Age to Iron Age, Mayan Civilisation and Ancient Greece.

- Stone Age to Iron Age (Year 3 & 4)

This unit of knowledge is taught in lower KS2 so that comparisons can be drawn with Ancient Egypt, another early civilisation. Pupils will be able to contrast societies that built the pyramids with life in Britain at the time Stonehenge was built. Throughout the unit of knowledge, the focus is on developing pupils' grasp of the key concept of change and continuity. As written records are non-existent for this period, pupils can concentrate on strong visual images and artefactual evidence.

- Romans in Britain (Year 3 & 4)

Deliberately sequenced to be taught directly after the Stone Age to Iron Age, this unit of knowledge develops pupils' chronological understanding and their ability to see clear contrasts between these connected but very contrasting periods. This topic emphasises the changes the Romans brought to Britain, both at the time and over time. This unit of knowledge explores the abstract concepts of 'empire' (Roman Empire and British Empire) and 'invasion' (this concept is reinforced when children learn about the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings).

- Anglo-Saxons and Vikings (Year 3 & 4)

This unit of knowledge links the teaching of the Saxons and the Vikings so the interrelationship between the two is explained without too much repetition. Key changes such as the coming of Christianity are carefully explored as a pivotal development in the nation's past. This gives opportunity for links to British Values and tolerance. The reign of King Alfred not only provides a great way of linking the Saxons and the Vikings, it also offers a fruitful context for exploring historical interpretations. This unit of knowledge explores the abstract concept of 'invasion'. This builds upon when the children learn about Roman Britain.

- Ancient Greece (Year 5 & 6)

This unit of knowledge is so rich on so many levels, not least in its contribution to citizenship. Not only does it provide many opportunities to explore contemporary issues to do with democracy, rights and freedoms, it also allows pupils to explore a society very different from their own. Pupils also explore why Ancient Greece has had such a long and dramatic legacy as well as working to piece together the fragments from the past. This unit of knowledge explores and build upon the children's knowledge of the abstract concepts of 'empire'.

- Maya civilisation (Year 5 & 6)

There are three key ideas behind this unit of knowledge. Primarily, it is there to show pupils that by comparison with British society, the Maya were in many ways more advanced. Secondly, it gives due weight to other world societies so that pupils experience a balance of local British, European and world topics. It allows pupils to compare this with earlier ancient civilizations such as Egypt, thus providing a context for showing progression in understanding characteristic features of past societies.

- Local study (Year 5 & 6)

This unit of knowledge uses local records to look at the history of Otley. It explores what happened during the Industrial Revolution and how this was influenced by monarchy. This builds on pupils' understanding of monarchy and its historical importance. This unit allows pupils to apply their knowledge of the Industrial Revolution to our local area and how Otley has and changed in the past.

- The Suffragette Movement (Year 5 & 6)

This end-of-key stage unit fulfils the post-1066 thematic requirement of the National Curriculum in a particularly imaginative way. It looks at the Suffragette Movement: who was involved, what happened and why it happened. It concludes the abstract concept of 'equality' and allows great opportunity for older children to explore differences in sources of evidence. They can evaluate primary and secondary sources, make decisions around their reliability, compare of contrast different interpretations and begin to look at the past in a more analytical way.

## Knowledge in history

Knowledge in history refers to the understanding and interpretation of key concepts taught within different historical contexts. The key concepts consist of: chronological knowledge, characteristics of a unit of knowledge, similarities and differences/continuity and change, cause and consequence, significance, sources of evidence and abstract concepts.

**Substantive knowledge** in history is the knowledge and understanding of the key concepts taught within historical contexts. It can be categorised as declarative knowledge - the 'know what' and procedural knowledge - the 'know how'. In history, declarative knowledge is the facts associated with each unit of knowledge and procedural knowledge is the skills of historical enquiry such as asking questions and answering questions about units of knowledge.

**Disciplinary knowledge** in history is the interpretation of some of the key concepts, such as how historians find out about the past or different sources of evidence. It involves applying second-order concepts such as historical thinking, reasoning and argument. For example, when children have an understanding of how historians find out about the past, they can look at different sources, build their own reasoned interpretation and compare how these sources are interpreted. Disciplinary knowledge is taught in KS2 when children have secure knowledge of the relevant substantive concepts such as chronology and characteristics of a historical person or event. As children build upon their substantive and disciplinary knowledge within historical contexts, they will have continuous opportunities for historical enquiry. Children must understand the methods of historical enquiry including:

- how to ask perceptive questions
- how evidence is gathered and used to make historical claims
- how to thinking critically to evaluate evidence and examine arguments

## Reading opportunities in history

Reading underpins our entire curriculum. Key texts and pieces of information are carefully selected ensuring that the content and reading age are appropriate. Key texts are on display and are made available for the children to access during daily 'reading for pleasure' time.

## SMSC in history

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural attributes are developed in our pupils throughout the history curriculum.

**Spiritual** education in history is developed when looking at different religious beliefs and traditions throughout history, including secular and non-secular beliefs. A variety of units of knowledge look at the religions or beliefs of that particular time and this allows our children to recognise and appreciate the importance of tolerating and respecting different beliefs.

Their **moral** education in history is through their understanding of abstract concepts such as parliament and democracy. Exploring these concepts within different contexts gives opportunity for critical discussions such as whether the Gunpowder Plot was a justifiable

course of action. Many themes of morality are explored throughout the units of knowledge such as war, racism, sexism and equality.

**Socially**, history allows rich opportunities for children to find out about different societies and civilisations. It provides an insight into how modern Britain and the wider world has changed and how our society functions today. Through the units of knowledge explored, our children can discuss and consolidate their own beliefs, values and feelings about British history and the history of the wider world.

**Cultural** education in history involves the exploration of art, architecture, music, traditions, customs and philosophies associated with the each civilisation and society within each unit of knowledge. Learning about the characteristics of each unit of knowledge and being able to make comparisons allows children to see how cultures have developed in society today and thus appreciate the diversity and wonder of human civilisation.

### **Enhancements in history**

At Askwith Primary School, we have a carefully planned rolling programme of enhancements to ensure that all year groups are exposed to a wide range of opportunities that enhance children's knowledge and cultural capital in all subjects. For example, a visit to the Otley Chevin for a 'Stone Age experience' gives children in year 3 and 4 the practical experience of life in the Stone Age thus enhancing their substantive knowledge.

### **History Improvement Priorities 2024-2025**

History will be monitored throughout 2024-2025 to identify any emerging priorities.

**Reviewed September 2024**