

Askwith Primary School

History rationale

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

Theodore Roosevelt

Intent

At Askwith Primary School, our curriculum is aligned to the Early Years Framework and shows the sequential steps of essential knowledge from Reception to Year 6. We adopt a determined approach so that all children, including SEND, EAL, PP and vulnerable pupils, meet the expected standard in history and have the knowledge required for secondary school. The history curriculum builds cultural capital and threads purposeful links to Fundamental British Values and global themes (e.g., democracy, citizenship), promoting appreciation of Britain's rich diversity and our locality. History helps pupils understand how time changes the world, how people and societies have lived in different ways and how we live today, developing the skills to ask perceptive questions, think critically, evaluate evidence and examine arguments. Substantive knowledge includes secure chronology, significant people/events and key concepts (e.g., monarchy, empire, equality). Disciplinary knowledge includes historical enquiry - using sources, weighing interpretations and forming reasoned conclusions. Clear endpoints define what pupils should know and do by the end of each year group.

Implementation

The long-term plan is organised by year groups and accommodates mixed-age classes. History is taught in blocks at least once per term. In EYFS, Nursery explores personal experiences and events (early chronology); Reception builds on chronology and introduces concepts such as monarchy through rhymes, stories and real-life events. In KS1, pupils study Toys: Old and New (similarity/difference, change over time, "How do we know?"), the Gunpowder Plot (links to British Values and commemoration), the Great Fire of London (cause and consequence; London as a capital city) and Mary Seacole (significant individual; diversity and global links). In LKS2, pupils explore Ancient Egypt (civilisation, evidence, comparison), Stone Age to Iron Age (change/continuity, artefacts) and Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings in Britain (chronology, invasion, empire, Christianity, interpretation - King Alfred). In UKS2, pupils study Ancient Greece (citizenship, democracy, legacy), the Maya (global balance, features of civilisation) and the Suffragette movement (post-1066, equality, sources and interpretations).

Teachers use explicit instruction, modelling and repetition. Retrieval practice begins every lesson to consolidate long-term memory. Lessons incorporate enquiry questions, structured discussion, source handling (primary/secondary) and guided writing. Adaptive teaching supports access while maintaining high challenge (visual timelines, dual-coded knowledge organisers, sentence stems, chunked extracts, vocabulary pre-teaching). Misconceptions such as assuming a single source is "the truth", are addressed immediately. Reading underpins the curriculum: key texts and information are selected for age-appropriateness and are available during daily reading-for-pleasure time to strengthen historical vocabulary and background

knowledge. Resources include knowledge maps, word banks, timelines, source sets and model answers.

Impact

Assessment is formative and summative. Teachers use questioning, retrieval checks and observation to adapt instruction and address misconceptions quickly. End-of-unit assessments (knowledge checks) evaluate pupils' knowledge and enquiry skills; outcomes feed into termly progress reviews and future planning. Progress is tracked against the Reception-Y6 progression document to ensure pupils build on prior learning and that gaps are identified and addressed promptly. By the end of KS2, pupils secure chronology and abstract concepts (e.g. monarchy), recall key facts and use historical enquiry to investigate the past, preparing them well for secondary history.

Inclusion

History is inclusive and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND. Planning and delivery are adapted so every child can engage with periods and enquiry. Support may include visual aids, simplified vocabulary, scaffolded tasks, dual-coded resources and additional adult support. High expectations remain consistent; adaptations remove barriers without lowering challenge.

Personal Development & SMSC

Spiritual development is supported through exploring diverse beliefs and traditions across periods, recognising and respecting difference. Moral development is fostered through engagement with abstract concepts such as parliament and democracy and through critical discussions (e.g., whether the Gunpowder Plot was justifiable), as well as themes of war, racism and equality. Social development arises from collaborative enquiry and understanding how societies function and change. Cultural development includes studying art, architecture, music, customs and philosophies of different civilisations, enabling comparisons that deepen appreciation of human diversity and heritage.

Leadership & Professional Development

Staff receive ongoing CPD to enhance subject knowledge and pedagogy, including training on historical content and principles of cognitive science. The subject leader monitors curriculum delivery through learning walks, book looks and pupil voice, supports staff and ensures consistency across year groups. Planning scrutiny and collaborative planning sustain high standards and continuous improvement.

Enhancements

A rolling programme of enhancements broadens experience and cultural capital. Examples include local history walks, museum workshops, handling boxes and a Stone Age experience at Otley Chevin for Years 3 and 4, providing practical contexts that deepen substantive knowledge and enrich historical enquiry.

History Priorities for Improvement 2025-2026

Intent	Implementation
Implement changes to history curriculum in light of review 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All teachers introduced to changes to history curriculum (new essential knowledge overviews, drop in forms)• Amend all LTPs• Review all resources used for teaching chronology to ensure consistency and alignment to progression document• Update history rationale• Monitor history lessons (drop ins and discussions with pupils)• Check sample pupils developing understanding of chronology at age-related expectations• Impact ascertained and evaluated

Reviewed September 2025