

Castle Primary School

History Policy

Review Date: June 2026

Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the History taught and learnt in our school. History is a foundation subject within the National Curriculum. The school policy for History reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff. It has been drawn up as the result of consultation with staff and has the full agreement of the governing body and teachers. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

Rationale for History Teaching

History should be concerned with stimulating the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We aim for the children to develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach the children to investigate these past events and, by so doing, develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem solving.

Aims for the teaching of History at Castle Primary School

At Castle Primary School, our intention is to provide quality teaching and learning of History. We aim for our pupils to:

- Develop an interest in the past
- Gain an awareness of the world around them
- Develop an understanding of society and their place within it, so that they acquire a sense of their cultural heritage
- Gain an ability to investigate and interpret different versions of past events
- Learn to study historical evidence and to ask and answer questions about the past
- Understand other people, their beliefs, thoughts, values and experiences
- Learn about the roles that individuals and events have played in shaping modern society
- Build up an understanding of events over time and in a chronological structure
- Gain the ability to communicate historical knowledge and understanding using a variety of techniques
- Grow their knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world

Through History we can also:

- Develop empathy
- Promote pupils' awareness and understanding of gender, cultural, spiritual, ethical and moral issues
- Develop interpretation of secondary and primary sources
- Develop historical enquiry
- Allow pupils to communicate historical events dramatically, verbally and narratively
- Develop research skills
- Improve pupils' skills in English, Mathematics and Computing
- Develop pupils as active citizens
- Develop independent learning and collaborative skills

The Role of the Humanities Lead is:

- Taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendment of History schemes of work as and when necessary
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on History resources, visits, visitors, curriculum changes, classroom teaching and learning ideas
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, pupils' views about the subject, displays and teachers' planning
- Auditing History resources and ordering resources when needed
- Keeping up to date with developments in History and disseminating information to the rest of the teaching staff
- Leading staff meetings as appropriate
- Attending relevant in-service training and prompting others about relevant training

Early Years Foundation Stage

History in the Foundation Stage and Nursery (EYFS) is taught as an integral part of topic work. Historical aspects of the children's work are related to the objectives set out in the Statutory EYFS Framework, for the specific area of learning 'Understanding the World'. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their families and past and present events in their lives. They are guided to make sense of historical aspects of their world and their community through:

- Studying photographs
- Listening to stories and memories of older people
- Role play activities
- Discussing events in the past and their own personal lives
- Sequencing events to gain a sense of time

Key Stage 1

The National Curriculum Programme of Study at Key Stage 1 focuses on developing children's 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. Children 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 Stage 2.

Pupils should be taught about:

- Changes within living memory, which, where appropriate, reveal aspects of change in national life
- Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally
- The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements; some should compare aspects of life in different periods
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality

Key Stage 2

The National Curriculum Programme of Study at Key Stage 2 should continue to allow children 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. Children 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, 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.

Pupils should be taught about:

- Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age
- The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots
- The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor
- A local history study

- A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- The achievements of the earliest civilizations - an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer; The Indus Valley; Ancient Egypt; The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China
- Ancient Greece - a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- A non-European society that provides contrasts with British history - one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300

Recording of History

Pupils are encouraged to record their work using a variety of methods and to communicate their findings to others. These may include written or verbal reports, charts, collages, models, pictures and role play activities. Examples of children's work will be retained to provide evidence of on-going History, including photographic evidence of displays, presentations or field trips, and to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school.

Assessment

Children's progress should be monitored through observation and by using planning and learning objectives.

Marking

Feedback to pupils should be provided on their attainment against the objectives of History. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the school marking policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

History will be monitored throughout the school by the Humanities Lead, who will be responsible for gathering samples of curriculum work.

The Humanities lead will also monitor topic books and History schemes of work to ensure that the Programmes of Study are being effectively taught and match the needs and abilities of the pupils.

Lessons ideally will also be monitored to help promote quality of learning and standards of achievement in History.

Resources

The school's resource base contains artefacts, primary and secondary source documents, and photographs. Resources are centrally stored, largely in historically themed boxes. All staff may access them, but they are responsible for their prompt and orderly return.