



DUKE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

History Policy

Knowledge-rich, locally rooted and spoken with confidence

VOCABULARY	ENQUIRY	ORACY	LOCAL HISTORY	ASSESSMENT
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Policy owner	History Subject Leader - Michael Hibbert
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Approved by	_____
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Document control

Title	History Policy
School	Duke Street Primary School
Policy lead	History Subject Leader
Effective from	September 2026
Review cycle	Every three years, or earlier when curriculum, statutory guidance or school priorities change

Key updates in this edition

- Updates the curriculum model and references to current units, including the Great Plague, Lancashire Cotton Industry, a focused local history study, early Islamic civilisation (Baghdad), Crime and Punishment and World War II.
- Makes meaningful local and regional history a planned thread within units, not a single isolated topic.
- Establishes a lesson-level expectation that the Tier 3 historical vocabulary needed for the lesson is introduced or explicitly revisited at the beginning of every history lesson.
- Strengthens structured oracy, historical discussion and oral rehearsal across the subject.
- Requires an end-of-unit assessment in every history unit, aligned to the unit enquiry, taught knowledge and Lancashire Key Learning in History statements.
- Replaces outdated references to National Curriculum levels and Chris Quigley milestones with the school curriculum, National Curriculum and Lancashire Key Learning in History.

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1. Introduction and rationale

This policy outlines the intent, implementation, assessment and leadership of history at Duke Street Primary School. It applies to all staff who plan, teach, support or monitor history from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6.

History at Duke Street is designed to help pupils build a coherent understanding of Britain's past, the wider world and the history of the community in which they live. Pupils learn substantive knowledge about people, places, events and developments, alongside disciplinary knowledge about how historians ask questions, use evidence, construct accounts and reach judgements.

The curriculum is deliberately knowledge-rich and enquiry-led. It is sequenced so that pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of chronology, cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, significance, evidence and interpretation. Local history is woven through relevant units so that pupils can connect national and global history with Chorley, Lancashire and the North West.

Our five non-negotiables

Every history lesson begins with the Tier 3 vocabulary needed for the lesson; pupils are positioned within chronology; learning is driven by a valid historical question; pupils are expected to talk and reason historically; and every unit ends with an assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do.

2. Vision, intent and aims

Our vision is for every pupil to leave Duke Street as a curious, knowledgeable and reflective young historian who can speak and write about the past with confidence, precision and respect for evidence.

2.1 We aim to ensure that pupils:

- develop secure and increasingly connected knowledge of British, local and world history;
- understand where people, periods and events fit within a coherent chronological framework;
- use historical vocabulary accurately, including increasingly demanding abstract and subject-specific terms;
- ask and answer historically valid questions about change, cause, consequence, similarity, difference and significance;
- understand that knowledge of the past is constructed from sources and that accounts may differ;
- select, evaluate and use evidence to support claims and judgements;
- communicate historical understanding through purposeful talk, writing, timelines, maps, diagrams, presentations and creative outcomes;
- make meaningful connections between local, regional, national and international history;
- recognise diversity within the past and consider whose experiences and perspectives are represented;

- develop a lasting curiosity about the past and the confidence to participate in historical discussion.

3. Statutory and curriculum framework

History is taught in accordance with the National Curriculum in England. The National Curriculum requires pupils to gain coherent knowledge of Britain's past and the wider world; understand historical concepts and enquiry; use historical terms; construct informed responses; and make connections between local, regional, national and international history.

The school curriculum is also informed by Lancashire Professional Development Service's Key Learning in History. These phase-appropriate statements provide a progression framework for historical content, enquiry and interpretation, chronology and communication. They are used to shape medium-term plans, lesson objectives, end-of-unit assessments and subject monitoring.

History is planned as a two-year rolling programme in phases where mixed-age classes make this necessary. The detailed whole-school curriculum overview is the definitive source for the timing and sequence of units and is reviewed annually by the subject leader. Changes to individual units may be made where they strengthen coherence, local relevance, diversity or progression, while full National Curriculum coverage is maintained.

4. Curriculum organisation and current units

Units are organised around an overarching historical enquiry. Each sequence identifies the substantive knowledge pupils need, the disciplinary concepts being developed, the chronological context, the local or regional connection where meaningful, the Tier 3 vocabulary, planned oracy opportunities and the end-of-unit assessment.

The table below summarises the current curriculum architecture. Exact termly placement is set out in the school history overview and medium-term plans.

Phase	Core curriculum content / current units	Key progression emphasis
EYFS	Past and present through pupils' own lives, families, school, stories, objects, photographs and significant events.	Using language of time; noticing change; comparing then and now; talking about evidence from familiar sources.
KS1	Changes within living memory; significant events beyond living memory; significant individuals; and significant people, places and events in the locality. Unit titles are specified in the current overview.	Past/present; simple sequencing; similarities and differences; asking questions; using stories, objects, images and oral history.
Lower KS2	Changes from the Stone Age to the Iron Age; Roman Britain; earliest civilisations and Ancient Egypt; the Great Plague; Lancashire Cotton Industry; a focused local history study.	Chronological placement; cause and consequence; significance; primary and secondary sources; connections between local, national and world history.
Upper KS2	Anglo-Saxons and Scots; Vikings and Anglo-Saxon struggle; Ancient Greece; early Islamic civilisation including Baghdad c. AD 900; Crime and Punishment; World War II and the Blitz.	Secure chronology across periods; interpretations and reliability; change over time; historical argument; selecting evidence and forming substantiated judgements.

Current units may be refined as the curriculum develops. Any revision must preserve statutory coverage, progression across Lancashire Key Learning statements and the planned development of chronology, enquiry and historical communication.

5. Local history and sense of place

Local history is a core curriculum principle at Duke Street. It is taught through a dedicated local study and through purposeful local and regional connections within wider units. This approach helps pupils see that major national and global developments affected real people and places in Lancashire, and that the local environment is itself a historical source.

5.1 Expectations for local history

- Every medium-term plan identifies a meaningful local or regional connection where one genuinely supports the historical enquiry.
- Local links are used to deepen, not distract from, the central historical concepts and required knowledge of the unit.
- Pupils encounter a range of local sources, such as maps, census returns, photographs, newspapers, memorials, buildings, artefacts, oral histories, archives and museum collections.
- Teachers make use of Chorley, Lancashire and North West examples when exploring national developments, such as plague, industrialisation, migration, war, crime, punishment and social change.
- Visits, visitors and fieldwork are planned where they add educational value and are accessible to pupils.
- The subject leader develops partnerships with local heritage organisations, including Lancashire Archives, museums and community historians.

5.2 Examples within the current curriculum

Unit	Possible local or regional lens
Roman Britain	Roman roads, forts, settlements and archaeological evidence in Lancashire and the North West.
The Great Plague	Evidence of plague and burial practices in Lancashire; links between national events and local communities.
Lancashire Cotton Industry	Local mills, workers, trade, child labour, migration, transport and the Cotton Famine.
Local history study	Duxbury, Chorley and the relationship between local people, places and wider historical developments.
Crime and Punishment	Local court, prison, policing and newspaper records; change and continuity in Lancashire.
World War II	Evacuation, industry, service, rationing, air-raid precautions and remembrance in Lancashire.

6. Lancashire Key Learning in History

Lancashire Key Learning in History is used as the school's progression framework. Medium-term plans identify the most relevant age-phase statements and show how they are taught, revisited and assessed. Teachers do not attempt to cover every statement in every unit; they select the statements that best serve the historical enquiry and ensure balanced progression across the year and phase.

Lancashire strand	How it is implemented at Duke Street
Events, people and changes	Pupils acquire the period-specific knowledge required by the National Curriculum and the school's chosen units.
Enquiry, interpretation and using sources	Pupils ask historical questions, use primary and secondary sources, make inferences, consider reliability and compare interpretations.
Chronology	Pupils place learning on class and personal timelines, use period terminology and make connections, contrasts and links across time.
Communication	Pupils use historical vocabulary and communicate findings through structured talk, writing, debate, maps, timelines, ICT and other appropriate forms.

Lancashire guidance emphasises that pupils should be engaged in a valid historical enquiry or puzzling key question and, at the end of a sequence, should organise and communicate their findings. Duke Street's end-of-unit assessments are designed to fulfil this expectation while also checking secure knowledge, vocabulary and chronology.

7. Teaching and learning expectations

History lessons combine explicit instruction, careful modelling, source-based enquiry, structured discussion, guided practice and independent application. Teachers provide enough background knowledge for pupils to reason historically; enquiry is not used as unguided discovery.

7.1 Every history lesson should:

- begin with the introduction or explicit revisiting of the Tier 3 vocabulary needed for that lesson;
- make the chronological context clear, including where the lesson fits within the unit and wider history;
- be driven by a clear historical enquiry question or focused learning question;
- activate and retrieve relevant prior knowledge;
- teach accurate, carefully selected substantive knowledge;
- develop at least one relevant disciplinary concept or process;
- use high-quality historical sources, representations or scholarship appropriate to pupils' age;
- include planned opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, explain, justify and respond to others;
- model the use of evidence and historical vocabulary;
- check understanding during the lesson and adapt teaching where misconceptions or gaps emerge;
- end with a brief review of the enquiry, vocabulary and key learning.

7.2 Retrieval and chronology

Retrieval is used to strengthen connected knowledge, not simply to test isolated facts. Questions may draw on the current unit and earlier units, especially where they help pupils compare periods, revisit concepts or place events in chronological context. Timelines are used routinely and consistently across the school.

7.3 Historical sources and interpretations

Pupils should encounter a broad range of sources. Teachers make clear what a source is, who created it, when and why it was created, what it can reveal and what its limitations may be. Pupils are taught that sources do not “speak for themselves” and that historians construct accounts by selecting, comparing and interpreting evidence.

8. Tier 3 vocabulary

Historical understanding depends on precise language. Tier 3 vocabulary means the subject-specific words and phrases pupils need in order to access the lesson, understand the period and express historical thinking, for example empire, invasion, primary source, chronology, civilisation, peasantry, propaganda, industrialisation and suffrage.

Lesson-start requirement

At the beginning of every discrete history lesson, the teacher introduces and/or explicitly revisits the Tier 3 vocabulary necessary for that lesson. Vocabulary is not left to incidental exposure and is not confined to a list on a slide.

8.1 Effective vocabulary teaching includes:

- selecting a small, manageable set of essential words for the lesson;
- saying the word clearly and expecting pupils to rehearse pronunciation;
- giving a pupil-friendly definition while preserving historical accuracy;
- using visuals, examples, non-examples, morphology or word families where helpful;
- placing the word in a meaningful historical sentence or source;
- checking understanding through questioning and pupil explanation;
- requiring active oral use of the word during the lesson;
- revisiting vocabulary through retrieval across the unit and in the end-of-unit assessment;
- providing visual and symbol-supported vocabulary for pupils who need it, without reducing the ambition of the content.

Tier 2 vocabulary that supports reasoning and academic communication, such as significant, consequence, contrast, justify and interpret, is also explicitly modelled and revisited. However, lesson planning must always identify the Tier 3 historical vocabulary that is essential to the learning.

9. Oracy in history

Oracy is both a means of learning history and an important historical outcome. Pupils need repeated opportunities to rehearse new vocabulary, organise their thinking, explain causal relationships, compare evidence, challenge interpretations and justify conclusions before and alongside written work.

EEF evidence indicates that oral language approaches have a high average impact, estimated at six additional months of progress. The evidence is strongest when talk is integrated with the existing curriculum and includes explicit vocabulary, structured questioning and purposeful curriculum-focused dialogue. For this reason, historical talk is planned as part of the curriculum rather than added as an optional activity.

9.1 Planned oracy may include:

- teacher modelling and think-alouds that demonstrate historical reasoning;
- brief partner rehearsal before cold calling or independent writing;
- structured "turn and talk", think-pair-share and paired explanation;
- source discussion using observation, inference and evidence prompts;
- ranking, sorting and continuum tasks followed by justification;
- debate and discussion in which pupils acknowledge competing evidence or interpretations;
- oral retelling and chronological explanation;
- short presentations of historical findings;
- sentence stems and speaking frames that are gradually removed as pupils become more independent.

9.2 Historical talk expectations

Teachers explicitly teach and model how to listen, take turns, build on another pupil's idea, disagree respectfully and refer to evidence. Talk is structured so that all pupils participate; it should not rely only on confident volunteers. Useful stems include: "The source suggests...", "This may be reliable because...", "The most significant reason was...", "In contrast...", "I agree/disagree because the evidence shows...".

Oral rehearsal should regularly precede extended written responses. For pupils with communication needs, staff use visual prompts, pre-teaching, reduced language load, partner support, Colourful Semantics, Widgit symbols, communication aids or assistive technology as appropriate.

10. Assessment and feedback

Assessment in history identifies what pupils know, how well they can use that knowledge and how confidently they can think and communicate as historians. Assessment is proportionate and purposeful. It should inform teaching, identify misconceptions, support pupils to improve and provide evidence of curriculum impact.

10.1 Assessment across a unit

Stage	Purpose	Examples
Beginning of unit	Establish relevant prior knowledge, vocabulary and chronological understanding.	Discussion, timeline placement, short retrieval task, concept question or diagnostic quiz.
During lessons	Check understanding and adapt teaching.	Questioning, mini-whiteboards, partner explanation, source annotation, retrieval, exit question, pupil work and observation of talk.
End of unit	Evaluate secure knowledge and progression against the enquiry and selected Lancashire Key Learning statements.	A short knowledge/vocabulary/chronology check plus an independent historical enquiry response or outcome.
After assessment	Address gaps, provide feedback and strengthen future retention.	Whole-class feedback, correction, re-teaching, pupil response, planned retrieval in later units and adaptation of curriculum planning.

10.2 End-of-unit assessment

Every history unit concludes with an end-of-unit assessment. The assessment is planned at the same time as the unit and directly reflects the taught curriculum. It must not depend on untaught background knowledge or introduce substantial new content.

- The assessment addresses the overarching enquiry question or a closely related historical question.
- It checks core substantive knowledge, chronology and essential Tier 3 vocabulary.
- It assesses at least one disciplinary dimension, such as using evidence, explaining cause, evaluating significance, comparing change or considering interpretation.
- It contains an independent element so that teachers can judge what the pupil can do without excessive adult direction.
- It may use an age-appropriate form, including a structured written response, enquiry booklet, annotated timeline, source challenge, presentation, poster or recorded oral explanation.
- In KS2, a short factual/vocabulary check should normally be combined with a more open historical response so that recall and reasoning are both assessed.
- Teachers record a summative judgement using the school's agreed assessment terminology and the relevant phase expectations.
- Assessments are retained or sampled to support moderation, monitoring and curriculum evaluation.

10.3 Feedback and use of assessment

EEF feedback guidance emphasises that feedback should build learning and address misunderstandings. History assessment therefore leads to action. Teachers provide timely feedback, give pupils an opportunity to respond where appropriate, and identify content or concepts that require re-teaching or later retrieval. The subject leader uses patterns in assessment to evaluate curriculum strengths and gaps rather than treating end-of-unit outcomes as isolated scores.

11. Inclusion and adaptive teaching

All pupils are entitled to an ambitious history curriculum. Adaptive teaching supports access to the same core historical ideas while maintaining high expectations. Staff anticipate barriers connected with reading, language, memory, attention, vision, hearing, motor needs or emotional regulation and plan appropriate support.

11.1 Adaptations may include:

- pre-teaching and repeated rehearsal of Tier 3 vocabulary;
- visual timelines, maps, photographs, artefacts, diagrams and Widgeit-supported resources;
- shorter chunks of text, adult reading, audio, enlarged print or accessible digital text;
- carefully selected sources with reduced extraneous information;
- sentence stems, oral rehearsal, word banks and writing frames;
- task chunking, worked examples and clear models;
- recording through speech-to-text, typing, scribing, symbols, diagrams or recorded oral explanation;
- additional processing time, strategic pairing and frequent checks for understanding;
- planned extension through deeper source evaluation, comparison, independent research or more complex historical argument.

Adaptations to assessment should remove barriers to demonstrating historical understanding, not change the knowledge or concept being assessed. For example, a pupil may give a recorded oral response or use a scribe while still being expected to use evidence, vocabulary and chronological understanding.

12. Early Years Foundation Stage

History in EYFS is taught through the "Past and Present" element of Understanding the World and through high-quality talk, stories, play, objects, photographs, visits and family or community experiences. Children develop early historical language, notice change, compare familiar experiences and begin to understand that evidence can tell us about the past.

Practitioners model and revisit vocabulary such as past, present, before, after, old, new, same, different, memory and change. Opportunities are planned for children to speak in full sentences, ask questions, retell events and explain what they notice. Assessment is based on observation, interaction and evidence gathered across provision rather than a formal written end-of-unit test.

13. Cross-curricular learning, enrichment and resources

13.1 Literacy and reading

History makes a substantial contribution to disciplinary literacy. Pupils read historical accounts, source extracts, maps, captions, timelines and age-appropriate non-fiction. Teachers explicitly teach how historical texts are organised and how vocabulary, evidence and author perspective shape meaning. Written tasks are used when they advance historical learning, not merely to practise an English genre.

13.2 Geography, art, computing and mathematics

Links are made where they strengthen historical understanding, for example mapping trade and migration, interpreting scale and dates, analysing local landscapes, studying art and architecture, using databases and digital archives, or presenting information through timelines and graphs. History retains its own disciplinary integrity within cross-curricular work.

13.3 Enrichment

Pupils should experience history beyond the textbook through artefacts, visitors, local walks, museums, archives, memorials, historical sites and carefully selected digital collections. History Ambassadors and other pupil leadership opportunities help raise the profile of the subject and promote curiosity about local heritage.

13.4 Resources

Resources are reviewed for accuracy, accessibility, representation and educational value. Teachers use reputable sources and avoid materials that reproduce myths, stereotypes or historically inaccurate simplifications. The subject leader supports access to unit resources, local archive material and professional development.

14. Leadership, monitoring and review

The History Subject Leader provides strategic direction, supports curriculum development and monitors the quality and impact of history across the school. All teachers are responsible for implementing this policy and for ensuring that pupils receive the planned curriculum.

14.1 The subject leader will:

- maintain and review the whole-school history overview, progression and medium-term planning expectations;
- support staff with subject knowledge, vocabulary, sources, assessment and adaptive teaching;
- monitor planning, books and other outcomes, end-of-unit assessments, pupil voice and teaching through the school's agreed monitoring cycle;
- check that Tier 3 vocabulary, local history, oracy and end-of-unit assessment are consistently implemented;
- sample and moderate work across phases, including work from pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils;
- analyse assessment evidence to identify curriculum strengths, gaps and priorities;
- maintain links with Lancashire networks, CHIP schools, archives, museums and local heritage partners;
- report to senior leaders and governors on standards, curriculum developments, strengths and next steps;
- ensure resources and professional development support high-quality teaching.

14.2 Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if there are changes to statutory requirements, the school curriculum, assessment arrangements or evidence-informed practice. The detailed unit overview and medium-term plans may be updated more frequently under the direction of the subject leader and senior leadership team.

15. Evidence base and references

This policy draws on the following statutory and evidence-informed sources:

- Department for Education (2013), National curriculum in England: history programmes of study, key stages 1 and 2. [Online source](#)
- Lancashire County Council / LPDS (2020), Key Learning in History.
- Education Endowment Foundation (2025 update), Teaching and Learning Toolkit: Oral language interventions. [Online source](#)
- Education Endowment Foundation (2021), Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2, second edition. [Online source](#)
- Education Endowment Foundation (2021), Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning. [Online source](#)

Evidence-informed summary

EEF evidence supports purposeful, curriculum-integrated talk, explicit vocabulary development and structured questioning. End-of-unit assessments at Duke Street are used to generate actionable evidence: feedback, re-teaching, future retrieval and curriculum refinement. Lancashire Key Learning provides the progression and communication framework through which these practices are applied specifically to history.

Appendix A. Expected lesson sequence

The sequence below is a common framework rather than a rigid minute-by-minute script. Teachers adapt it to the enquiry, age phase and needs of pupils while retaining the non-negotiables.

Element	Expectation	Examples
1. Vocabulary first	Introduce and/or explicitly revisit the Tier 3 words essential for the lesson.	Pronounce, define, illustrate, use in context, partner rehearsal and quick check.
2. Chronology and retrieval	Locate learning in time and activate relevant prior knowledge.	Timeline, "what came before?", retrieval questions, comparison with a previous unit.
3. Enquiry focus	State the historical question and explain what pupils will be able to answer.	Why did...? How did...? What changed? How significant? What can this source tell us?
4. Explicit teaching and modelling	Teach accurate knowledge and model the historical thinking required.	Teacher explanation, worked source analysis, think-aloud, map or timeline modelling.

Element	Expectation	Examples
5. Structured oracy	All pupils rehearse vocabulary and reasoning through purposeful talk.	Partner explanation, ranking and justification, source discussion, sentence stems, debate.
6. Guided/independent application	Pupils use taught knowledge to answer, investigate, organise or communicate.	Written response, source task, timeline, map, comparison, enquiry booklet, oral recording.
7. Check and recap	Return to the enquiry and check the lesson's knowledge and vocabulary.	Exit question, mini-whiteboard, cold call, "complete the sentence", self-explanation.

Appendix B. End-of-unit assessment expectations

Required feature	Minimum expectation	Quality check
Alignment	Directly assesses the taught unit enquiry, core knowledge and selected Lancashire statements.	Could a pupil succeed by using what was actually taught?
Knowledge	Checks essential people, events, developments, chronology and vocabulary.	Are the most important unit ideas represented, rather than trivia?
Historical thinking	Requires pupils to use evidence or explain a concept such as cause, change, significance or interpretation.	Does the task assess history, not only memory or writing fluency?
Independence	Includes a section completed with limited adult prompting.	Can the teacher distinguish independent understanding from scaffolded performance?
Accessibility	Removes barriers through appropriate presentation or recording methods.	Are adaptations enabling access without lowering the historical expectation?
Feedback and response	Leads to correction, improvement, re-teaching or planned retrieval.	What will happen because of the evidence gathered?
Recording	A judgement is recorded and representative samples are available for moderation.	Can leaders evaluate progression and curriculum impact across classes?

Signed on behalf of the school: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____