**Vision and Purpose in History**

Our intention in our history curriculum is to give pupils the skills to understand the world around them, to be confident in their own opinion and being able to empathise with someone else’s. Our curriculum will study how the events of the past have contributed to Britain’s position today and its relationship with the world. By studying events of the past, we hope to give students the chance to reflect on the significant changes that have taken place, but also the diverse experience of those who have lived through it.

The key principles that underpin our curriculum arethat students should be able to articulate and support their opinions with evidence, understand and be tolerant of other cultures and be ambitious with their learning to develop the knowledge and skills to be an active citizen. History staff support this by participating in regular courses for professional development to expand their subject knowledge and be familiar with the current pedagogy. Our thought-provoking Holocaust scheme of learning has been developed with support from the University College of London, through our Beacon School status. Furthermore, the department has high expectations for all students and the curriculum is scaffolded so all students can engage and embrace our rich curriculum.

We study history because we want to inspire a sense of curiosity, interest and debate about history. We want to challenge perceptions of our own role in history, to question what it means to be ‘British’, to debate decisions taken by leaders and ensure lessons are truly learnt from the past. We will give opportunities to engage with the past through school trips and experiences. Ultimately, we want to support pupils in finding their voice and identity through the study of the past.

We have chosen to study a range of issues that have influenced lives over the course of the last thousand years. These include economic, religious, social, political, racial, environmental, technological, scientific and gender-based factors. We examine events chronologically from a local, national and international perspective to identify change, continuity, cause and consequence. We look at this, not only through the eyes of the decision makers, but from the everyday people, the resistance and opposition. We hope that this prepares our pupils for a world where media information needs careful contemplation.

Our KS3 history curriculum is carefully planned so that key historical concepts are revisited later in the curriculum and are part of our deliberate thread. Each historical unit is centred around a key enquiry question that students explore and reflect upon at the end of the unit.

The skills and knowledge we develop are largely focused on literacy-based skills. We have worked hard over the last few years to promote ambitious reading in our classroom to give students the confidence to embrace complex language and views. The skills of analysis by evaluating sources and interpretations are central to students’ engagement with historical debates, but also to support an understanding of how those involved in careers (such as historians, archaeologists, journalists and police) use evidence. We ask students to assess opinion by using facts and evidence and encouraging them to support and justify their conclusions. Students are also supported in lessons to develop their oracy work through class discussions and debates. Over the three years, we guide them in constructing coherent and persuasive arguments, so they can communicate effectively, ready for GCSE and future job opportunities. Our history course encourages students to be the best communicators and listeners they can be, which are vital employability skills for a range of careers.