



Historical Association Quality Mark Final Report

Visit to:

**STAFFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
TSSMAT**

Date: 22 and 23 November 2023

Context:

This report covers four schools who form the (Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust) TSSMAT. All have much in common with regard to planning and systems but each was visited separately and assessed as separate schools.

The four schools are:

- St Mary's CE Primary, Colton, Rugeley
- Richard Crosse CE Primary, Kings Bromley
- The Howard Primary, Elford
- Anson CE Primary, Great Haywood, Stafford

There are several common features of the four schools. They are all fairly small and below national average size for primary schools, their intakes are predominantly white British, the free school meals eligibility is low and achievement is generally well above average when measured against national statistics.

Because there is considerable overlap in aspects such as leadership, curriculum, planning, assessment etc, the main report largely covers issues common to all for schools although examples are used for particular schools.

During the two-day assessment, it was possible to visit each school for a half day and see history taking place in all classes. Additionally discussions took place with a sample of pupils in each school and pupils' history work books examined. It was also possible to go around each school and speak to relevant staff and in some cases governors, parents and managers.

This report is thus organised as:

- a) Generic report under the four Quality Mark criteria;
- b) Observations regarding each of the four schools largely relating to Teaching, Learning and Achievement
- c) Summary final comments including the specific strengths noted.

1.) Teaching, Learning and Achievement

Teaching, learning and achievement in all four schools is of a very high standard. Particular strengths are the quality of teaching based on consistent planning, teacher adaptation to suit the needs of their pupils, teacher awareness of the characteristics of good primary history teaching and the effective use of resources. Another strength is the positive attitudes and understanding by pupils about the purpose and value of history in the school. Staff in all schools are confident about teaching the subject and the visit confirmed that it was a popular subject area amongst teachers and pupils.

Teacher awareness of the characteristics of effective primary history is high. In particular there is an understanding of aspects such as the importance of knowledge in context, practical history, the effective use of good range of resources, the significance of concepts, the incorporation of diversity and the careful monitoring of individual pupil progress. A particularly notable strength is the emphasis on chronology which is well understood by pupils as a result of extensive use of timelines and carefully considered tasks associated with comparison, contrast and links. The pupils experience a range of carefully-selected texts which have been identified through the Reading Spine including core reading, non-narrative books, reading for pleasure and poetry. Examples include the Great Fire of London, the Roman soldiers handbook, Anglo Saxon Boy, Escape from Pompeii, One Boys War, In Flanders Field and The Illiad.

In common with many schools, the planning adopts an enquiry approach rather than topic headings. What is distinctive about many of the enquires is their quality allowing the pupils to engage in discussion and analysis as well as the questions which are open ended and challenging, eg. why is Alfred called the Great? what are the biggest changes? In what ways have things changed; comparing two contrasting societies such as Roman and Tudor crime. These often work well because they support pupil progression in key concepts such as similarity and difference, change, chronology, causation and significance.

The end result is a high level of pupil knowledge from EYFS upwards with a good grasp of sequence and the characteristic features of periods including significant events and people. They were particularly adept at comparing and contrasting societies, people and societies across time – a situation helped by careful targeting of activities and questions.

Planning is superb. The result is a pleasant blend of appropriate learning strategies such as independent research, stories, using a wide range of sources including written, visual and artefacts, drama, practical reconstruction, reading and discussion, using war posters and working out how to play old games. Good use is made of ICT particularly research using Google Chrome There are also debates such as one discussing the relative merits of the two sides in the Civil War. One very commendable aspect is the active use of timelines that are provided for each pupil and regularly used along with whole school (such as in the hallway) and classroom versions. Pupils acknowledged that these were significant aspects of their history and helped considerably in contextualising their history. They confirmed that timelines are used in most lessons. Knowledge mats are also a key feature and help teachers and pupils alike identify and contextualise the key information. These are being used with increasing consistency across the schools.

The range and quality of teaching and learning can be evidenced in two enquiries, one on the Romans and another on World War 2. The Roman enquiry focuses on impact and explicit consideration is given to historical concepts, skills and knowledge such as chronology, narrative, trends, research. Pertinent sub questions have also been formulated such as why did the Romans leave sunny Italy and come to Britain? How does Claudius and Ceasar's reason for coming differ? How did the Romans manage to

keep control of such a vast Empire? Explicit consideration is given to pupil understanding of relevant terms such as invader, settler, refugee and immigration. They are helped to understand different arguments such as three reasons to advise Claudius to come to Britain and three against. Also built in is hot seating and the use of a range of sources and different forms of output such as persuasive letters, diaries, card sorting and ranking, characterisation, reports, writing from different perspectives and information booklets. Strategies to show how sources can mislead are built; for example, through pupils having to devise scenes based on just 10 seconds scrutiny and then compared and explained with discussion on how interpretations might vary. Throughout the enquiry there is a considerable emphasis on comparison such as weapons then and now, how Romans compared with Celts which allows pupils to comfortably move between areas of study and make good links and connections. Boudica's significance is also discussed and images interpreted. The validity of sources are also considered. Throughout there is a wide range of content especially about Roman life. Two other impressive aspects are a "black history" dimension, something built into many enquiries – in this case, "how racially and ethnically diverse was the Roman Empire?" including a case study of Septimus Severus and an examination of where Romans came from. This enquiry is also not unique in having a visit also built in – in this case to the English Heritage site at Wall. In summary a rewarding, valid enquiry.

Another example is the enquiry on World War II. This illustrates the ubiquitous qualities that characterise the teaching programme particularly the coherence, balance, inspiring content and concept-rich approaches. In common with other enquiries this starts with a timeline, prior learning and key vocabulary. Again the emphasis is on historical skills and understanding such as chronology, contrast, comparison and connections, trends and narratives, relevant terminology, change, causation, significance, research, the use of sources and the range of texts including comparing reliability, exploring feelings and emotions, stories and biographies. For example, terms are defined and reinforced such as civilisation, sources such as those related to evacuation are evaluated. Concepts are sometimes examined deeply; for example, chronology looks not just at sequence but also duration. The wider context is addressed through sub questions such as why the Italians changed sides. The same thought is given to the range of different forms of communication such letters, puppet plays and playscripts, preparing wartime menus and diaries and devising questions. As with other enquiries, diversity is given explicit attention with an enquiry on the impact of different nationalities, races and genders in the War using a case study of Birmingham. The accompanying visit is to the National Arboretum.

Monitoring and assessment is good. There are clear assessment objectives often linked to second order objectives that are progressively more challenging. Target marking allows informed judgements after each lesson. Pupil voice again confirmed that many pupils understood the assessment system. There was plentiful evidence of regular marking with comments. Pupils also self assess. In terms of recording, pupils are assigned to red, amber (the most common) and green categories and this is used to determine levels of support and challenge.. Phase standardisation exercises help ensure common standards and consistency amongst teachers.

From EYFS upwards, achievement is high and for most pupils above expectations. Again this is aided by meticulous planning of adapted tasks and suitable challenge activities. Equally SEND pupils are carefully considered with resources and tasks adapted to ensure that history is both accessible to all and popular. A recent Ofsted deep dive also recognised the accessibility of history for all. In the books examined, pupil work in history is presented to a very high standard.

The achievement standards were reinforced by talking to a representative group of pupils in the four schools which corroborated the evidence provided by the school's own monitoring of pupil voice often using Google Meet. Additionally the school has elaborate systems for measuring pupil attitudes. This demonstrated that pupils value history and understand its importance. They clearly see the value of the past informing the present, the fact that history is not fixed and that it is influenced by new discoveries from sources, that history can be personal in that everyone has their own history, that there is the potential to benefit society if history is better known and understood and that in a practical way history can help other subject areas such as English and mathematics. One area that stood out when looking at pupil work and talking to them is their ability to retrieve and recall work done in earlier years. Another noticeable feature was the ability to recall and relate local, British and world history and to understand something of the relationship between them. Also demonstrated through sampling work and discussions were good listening and oracy skills. The characteristics along with the very high levels of enjoyment and motivation embrace the different schools as well as different year groups. The emphasis on demanding conceptual enquiries often results in some mature understanding, eg. the use of terms such as "impartial" or "propaganda" when analysing sources or substantiated judgements on which side to fight in at the Battle of Hopton Heath done as part of a local study on the English Civil War,

The MAT as a whole has put a strong emphasis on metacognition and this has been reflected in history through building on prior knowledge and embedding skills. Prior knowledge is a key consideration in all planning and teaching. It is linked with progression which is generally well understood by teachers and tracked through the formative assessment, target setting and end of year data.

One observation was that teachers were regularly using the terms "primary" and "secondary" sources with children. This is potentially deceptive as there is no clear binary divide. Much depends on the context and it may be better to consider instead the usefulness and reliability of the evidence.

The evidence suggests that teaching, learning and achievement in all four schools is of a gold standard.

Areas for possible development:

- To consider whether the use of the terms "primary" and "secondary" in relation to sources is always appropriate (1.2)

2.) Leadership

The subject has clear status with the Executive head of the Trust having the strategic lead across the MAT for history. Each school has a "history champion" who leads the subject in their particular school. They meet half termly to address history issues and ensure effective co-ordination. Discussions with senior staff such as the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust, a governor as well as parents confirmed its importance, status and quality in the school. It is clearly seen as important in terms of time available (difficult to quantify as history is often taught through other subjects such as English as well as its own timetabled slot), the focus in development plans and the resourcing as well as prominence in each of

the schools where history display was a noticeable feature. Ofsted recently noted that the subject could serve as a useful blueprint.

The organisation and management of the subject is excellent with a shared vision and direction for history as well as effective leadership. The recent school development plan reaffirms that “history is a vital part of the curriculum which helps us understand change and societal development”. Intent and implementation for the subject are well understood being consistent with what has been observed – the stress on interweaving key concepts, the central importance of chronological understanding, comparisons and analysis. The documentation as well as observed practice showed a clear structure based strongly on the National Curriculum, world, black and local history but with opportunities for the schools in the MAT to adapt to suit their cohorts.

The October 2023 School Development whilst putting an overarching stress on whole school issues such as reading, writing and especially metacognition identifies history as one of the few subject areas with specific key priorities providing an indication of its status and importance. These developments have not suddenly appeared. Earlier development priorities have been identified including improving trust-wide systems for tracking and monitoring, improving feedback from parents and governors and further developing chronological understanding. It is a testament to the effectiveness of the leadership that there is evidence of improvement in assessment and tracking and chronological understanding as well as continuing development of knowledge, skills, enquiry-based work as well as enrichment opportunities. The fact that the priorities also included an HA Quality Mark in the four schools is evidence of the subject’s importance and successes and represents the largest number of schools so far being assessed as a group since the start of the HA’s Quality Mark.

The leadership of the subject has led to well-documented systems and policies such as a guide to historical progression and how to interpret the National Curriculum. . What is especially commendable is the good level of awareness of the recognised features of effective primary history. It is widely understood that everything is underpinned by good historical knowledge but also that there is a vital need to see progression as requiring the different aspects of the discipline to be planned, taught and developed together. The significance of conceptual understanding and the need to avoid atomisation of the history curriculum are stressed. So is the essential requirement to see historical terminology not in isolation but in context and hence the need to compare in a greater range of contexts. A dominant feature of what has been developed is linked learning. Another piece of evidence regarding the deep understanding of the subject in the schools is the move away from pupils’ assertions about significance to also embrace how others have assessed it and pupils’ own interpretations being replaced with more emphasis on how history is constructed.

In terms of CPD, the schools have made extensive use of the Historical Association and the evidence of its impact is demonstrated in changed planning of aspects of the curriculum. They are aware of the range of opportunities provided by the HA. There is also an opportunity for schools to consider the features of effective history although much of the inset is more generic. For example, the schools have considered as a whole why they are teaching what they are with consideration of individual subjects. Teachers were given some aspects to consider such as progression in the subject.

There may be opportunities in the future to access a greater variety of history CPD perhaps liaising with other primary and some local secondary schools. It is, however, a strong feature partly because of expertise in the Trust with some staff having a qualification in the subject including a Higher Level Teaching Assistant. Observing lessons showed that support staff were well versed in the requirements and methodology of the subject.

The evidence suggests that leadership in all four schools is of a gold standard.

Areas for possible development:

- To consider the benefits of more liaison with other local schools such as secondary schools as evidence suggest that several children from the four schools are achieving expectations of secondary age pupils (2.3)

3.) Curriculum

This is a real strength. The curriculum is based on a high level of awareness of effective history, a willingness to continue to develop, the tailoring to pupil interests and contexts and the importance of balance. Of particular note is the knowledge/chronology/concepts interweaving; the explicit attempt to provide links; the role of local history; diversity (where black history is built into the curriculum and is not just a bolt on) and the interaction with other subjects especially English but also other areas including art, drama and ICT.

The curriculum can be summarised as knowledge and conceptually-based with a strong focus on connections, contrasts, trends, framing questions and constructing accounts. It has a blend of knowledge dissemination and pupil independence. The curriculum is also based on values and broader skills such as preparing pupils to be citizens of the future including sustainability, role models, team players, critical thinkers, problem solvers, inquisitive, reflective, mindful and with a moral compass.

The curriculum is considered coherently from EYFS through to upper Key Stage 2. In EYFS they encounter settings, characters and events with explicit addressing of similarities and differences. They make use of books and story telling. In reception they discuss why some images were black and white, examine seashores in the past and look at toys. Key Stage 1 has a strong emphasis on personal, family and local history as well as diversity. There is a higher proportion of significant women than is often the case including Mary Seacole, Edith Cavell, Elizabeth I, Queen Victoria and Sarah Forbes Bonetta. Each unit of work has at least one linked concept. For example, the history of the school compares buildings now and then as well as school days and a local dimension is provided by looking at the impact of local families on the school. Other Key Stage 1 enquiries include the moon landing with extensive attention given to the biographies of black female scientists working on the space programme. The inspiration for the history builds in WOW activities such as a visit to the Leicester Space Centre, a Family Day where relatives of different generations can share stories and recreating a battlefield in the school grounds.

The same approach to the curriculum is adopted in lower Key Stage 2. Again there is a good balance of local, national and world history with enquiries related to the local history of the communities of the MAT schools such as Kings Bromley, Colton and Elford; World War 1, Ancient Egypt, Anglo Saxons, Romans, the Age of Man. The coverage is not sequential but this is more than made up for with the emphasis on timelines, links and connections. A particular strength is the way the local history links to wider British and global history. As with other Key Stages, enquiries are closely related to particular concepts with some quite advanced aspects such as the notion of "turning points". Also common to the whole history curriculum is the building in of WOW elements such as walks, theatre groups, visitors from the local history society and a range of visits such as Wall, Cannock Castle Ring and Lindisfarne.

The same impressive pattern emerges in upper Key Stage 2 again effectively linking local and national history when covering themes such as the English Civil War and World War 2 as well as ensuring diversity. Also covered are Ancient Greece, Vikings and Saxons and a thematic crime and punishment study. The WOW factors include a Greek day, building a Mayan house and various visits such as the National Arboretum, Boscobel House and Moseley Old Hall.

The curriculum is not fixed and there is plentiful evidence of it being adapted and tweaked. For example, a local enquiry into Burton and its brewing industry has been replaced by one on the local impact of the English Civil War and the study of the Maya has been extended to broaden the study of ancient civilisations. The HA has played a role in producing a more diverse curriculum, for example, by choosing and identifying a resource on Sarah Forbes Bonetta.

The links with other subjects and themes is another impressive element as a result of careful integration of planning. The closest links are with English. For example, English supports history's coverage of diversity. The moon landing is used to develop historical understanding through work in English using books such as "Hidden Figures" examining four black women in the space race. English and History both encourage biographies and diversity with English supplementing history creating biographies and characterisation (for example Factfiles on people such as Tim Peake) as well as extending understanding of the achievements of diverse people such as Wilma Rudolph and Dorothy Vaughan. English and History also link in other ways such as when covering Ancient Egypt using books such as Ancient Egyptian Cinderella and reports from Howard Carter and in the Romans where English covers myths and legends. Other cross-curricular links include drama (wartime diaries), art (Lowry, Wedgwood) and PHSE (challenging gender stereotypes). Pupils in discussion also talked about history and maths co-operation in aspects such as Roman numerals. Some of the range of visits are also designed to embrace different curriculum areas.

Although diversity is a strength, there may be opportunities to consider a broader definition of diversity such as disability and LGBTQ+.

The evidence suggests that curriculum in all four schools is of a gold standard.

Areas for possible development:

- To extend the impressive diversity coverage such as to the disabled, LGBTQ+ (3.1)

4.) Enrichment

Pupils receive a wide variety of experiences beyond the school as well as inputs from those connected to the world of history.

That includes a wide range of visits both local and further afield such as to the National Arboretum, Wall Roman site, the National Space Centre, the Black Country Museum, the Staffordshire Regimental Museum, Shugborough, Jorvik, Lindisfarne. Sometimes the visits are planned to link subject areas such as Faith Trails where there is consideration of the history of different religions and the Earth and Space Day (with science). Involvement with the local community is encouraged not just for Remembrance but displays by pupils in local buildings to commemorate events. One example of this was Anson

school's taking part in a village event at the Memorial Hall in which children researched local history including that of their school, transport and Shugborough Estate creating posters, drawings and written work which was then displayed in the village hall for an open weekend. Children and their families were also invited to a special open morning

Experience days are also arranged for the MAT such as an Egyptian Day evidencing how well schools in the MAT work together. A theatre group also performed with younger pupils to all four schools on the Great Fire of London. Links have also been established with a local history society who come into the school to talk to pupils and provide artefacts. There are some good links with local historical sites and organisations such as the Johnson's Birthplace Museum in Lichfield where the focus was on the life of Francis Barber supporting the role of black British people and aimed at Year 3 and 4 pupils.

Links with parents are developing but there are already positive aspects. The history curriculum is available to parents on the school's website and there is guidance on resources. Knowledge mats are uploaded for each history topic. Sometimes family involvement is more direct with a topic on families leading to research and posters. This was observed on the assessment visit and was a successful sharing and research of parents, grandparents and even great grandparents including some from a non white British heritage.

The evidence suggests that enrichment in all four schools is of a gold standard.

5.) Observations from individual schools

RICHARD CROSSE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, KINGS BROMLEY

The visit to the school embraced observation of all classes, discussions with a sample of pupils, with staff as well as some parents, a governor and the head of the Trust.

Nursery and reception children were highly engaged with the idea of families and family relationships using terms such as "parents" and "grandparents". There was a strong focus on similarity and difference. Good use was made of visual images. The nursery and reception children worked well together.

Year 1 and 2 pupils had a special afternoon at which relatives joined the class to discuss family history. A good number attended bringing a collection of artefacts. Alternative work on coats of arms were available to those whose parents could not attend. This was a really successful inter-generational lesson where pupils selected images and information and discussed relationships understanding devices such as family trees, source to investigate families and discoveries about family life and the context of the times. Pupils could see a range of backgrounds and experiences including that of a Punjabi family. Pupils prepared posters for display.

Pupils in Years 3 and 4 experienced a very impressive lesson on women in war. Different groups researched and reported on different roles such as land army, canary girls and nurses. Sources were interpreted such as women fire fighters and sensitive issues were raised about discrimination and fairness. Pupils showed very good capabilities with recall and used specific terminology such as "trench foot" and "shell shock". The concept of similarity and difference was well targeted and the lesson was helped by pupils having to make inferences and deductions. Some links were made between the

locality and the wider picture.

The oldest pupils were investigating aspects of World War II. Targeted use of timelines located the events and comparisons were made with other points of time. Misconceptions were addressed – such as pointing out that Britain did not fight alone but that there was a huge contribution from the Empire. This seemed to have become embedded as later questioning saw pupils refer to Great Britain and its Empire. There was a sharp focus on impact and the distinction between what people did and what impact they had. Pupils often used quite sophisticated terminology such as “collaboration”. Comparisons were made with World War 1 which they had previously studied and the pupils were able to explain differences such as why evacuation was more significant in World War 2. Pupils then started to investigate the roles and significance of key individuals in the War.

The representative sample of pupils showed that there was a high level enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject. They were easily able to justify its place in the curriculum pointing out that it was not just about what happened but that history could give insights into why things happen and how and why things change. They understood that history was constructed from a wide range of sources and were able to identify a range discussing, for example, the use of oral evidence. They recognised that sources from the distant past were less plentiful which affected our knowledge of some topics. They largely believed the present was preferable to most times in the past but qualified this by pointing out the greater problems today caused by technological misuse and environmental abuse. They also stressed that the past was not always different and there were some things that recurred. The pupils clearly understood how well they were doing through the assessment system. Overall their knowledge was good not just in recalling what they had learnt at school but also beyond the school gates. One pupil talked eloquently about the Cold War.

The discussion with parents and staff confirmed the status and appreciation of the history covered in the school several pointing out that the school made the past come alive.

THE HOWARD PRIMARY SCHOOL, ELFORD.

The visit to the school comprised discussions with key staff, visits to all classes and interviews with a small group of pupils.

An impressive variety of quality teaching and learning was observed. Classes were of mixed age. A small group of children in the first class were being introduced to relevant terminology such as “parents” and “grandparents”. Meanwhile a Year 1 and 2 class were looking at toys which they were categorising into *old* and *new* and then sequenced. The teacher used probing questions to establish the reasons for the sequencing. A video was then shown about toys after which the pupils were asked to reconsider their sequencing – replicating the way historians can reinterpret topics following new evidence.

Years 3 and 4 were covering aspects of World War I. There was plenty of recapping and constant reference to timelines. Pupils showed skill at making inferences and posing questions. Teacher skill was demonstrated especially in encouraging pupils to consider the use, reliability and distortion of sources. Many made reference to World War propaganda and what that meant. A wide range of evidence about Walter Tull was then distributed and pupils examined this discussing their meaning and significance. Pupils had to pose questions about him and what was significant. Quite mature discussions took place on why words that were used in sources at time were not acceptable today. Overall this lesson had clearly focused objectives and highly motivated and enthusiastic pupils,

Year 5 and 6 were on a field visit to the nearby National Arboretum and the assessor joined the class there. The activities were closely linked to earlier work and they were asked to refer back to this. The pupils were emotionally engaged, reflective and inquisitive. Pupils both posed and responded to targeted questions. Care was taken to engage with perceptions and depictions such as pointing out that the Jewish memorial focused on active participation rather than as victims. There was consideration of the importance and role of the more *hidden* in the war such as the GPO, merchant navy, animals, land army and Bevin Boys. Pupils considered how and why their contributions mattered.

The discussion with a group of pupils confirmed the popularity of history in the school including a clear understanding of why its study mattered, They were able to grasp the role of counterfactuals – seeing that things could have been different if factors had been different. They also demonstrated that historical sources were not always trustworthy. They also understood that living in the past could be difficult but equally recognised that history did not just demonstrate continual improvement. The idea that we cannot completely reconstruct the past was also discussed. The pupils seemed to have a very good ability with comparing and contrasting partly based on good recall. A discussion of the pupils' work demonstrated good organisation, clear objectives and a good awareness of how well they were doing in the subject.

ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY, COLTON

The visit to the school involved discussions with staff, visits to all classes and interviews with a small group of pupils.

The joint nursery/reception class were discussing terminology such as "old" and "new" and how these terms might be defined. They then examined images of a range of objects and focused on similarities and differences. Links were made with the concept of change, Some of the differences between objects were quite subtle.

Years 1 and 2 were also focused on the idea of change. The school itself was being used to illustrate change and the differences between the school in Victorian times and today. Good use was made of external and internal images of the school. Pupils detected a range of differences and the teacher skilfully reinforced terminology such as "past" and "present". This activity then led to sorting objects into categories. The work clearly showed progression from the nursery/reception class which had been focusing on similar objectives.

The Year 3 /4 class worked on Walter Tull's significance as part of the World War 1 enquiry. This topic had been observed at a previous school but it was noticeable that there were subtle differences in approach to suit the pupils whilst also adhering to the relevant objectives. On tables they went around looking at a range of sources – written and visual. They recorded what they could deduce from the sources and were expected to pose their own questions. Issues such as discrimination were shared and addressed. There was a constant linking back to work done earlier including a visit to the Regimental Museum. Pupil recall was good. The idea of significance was then addressed with the teacher modelling an example before pupils had to work on their own summary of Tull's significance. Throughout there were very high levels of motivation.

The Year 5/ 6 class was being taught by an HLTA who had a degree in history. Throughout in the schools, support staff were being used effectively in history lessons. The concept of significance was again being targeted with pupils having to research, select and justify one significant event for each

year of World War II. They were expected to use a wide range of resources with simultaneous access to contemporary films, a range of books and pre-selected websites. There was some interesting debate. One pupil, for example, was debating whether rationing was more significant than military matters as it ultimately affected more people. There was a regular exchange of ideas between pupils and teacher. There was even some discussion on how change can influence impact.

Before speaking to a group of pupils about their history there was a brief opportunity to see the display produced by the school in the parish church. It illustrated well the school's close links with the community. Another tangible example of this was a display of local artefacts given by the Colton History Society. Throughout the visit the resources available for history were extensive and display was prominent.

The representative group of pupils talked freely about their love of history. They recognised the distinctiveness of the subject but talked favourably about how there were effective links with other subjects. They referred, for example, about how diaries, letters and biographies were relevant to both history and English. Overall they demonstrated a good grasp of the types of sources available to history and how some need to be treated tentatively. They also proved competent at recalling features of past units. They had considered views on the purpose of history suggesting that it could explain the world but also act as a storehouse both for misfortunes and things to celebrate. They were able to provide some examples of aspects to admire such as the achievements of Josiah Wedgwood. At the same time, all the pupils understood the challenges of living in the past drawing attention to aspects such as health and cleanliness. Particularly impressive was understanding demonstrated by some that history needed to be looked at from different sides meaning that historical judgements were often tentative. One pupil then joined the group to share some work she had been doing on the torn emotions of a Jewish girl fleeing Nazi Germany.

The school has just received a glowing outstanding Ofsted assessment in which history was applauded. This half day in the school certainly corroborated the findings. The fact that the headteacher of this school is also the MAT's strategic lead for history adds to the status and quality of history in St Mary's.

ANSON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, GREAT HAYWOOD.

Four classes were observed on this half-day visit, pupil work was looked at, discussions took place with a sizeable and representative group of pupils and conversations took place with teaching staff and the history champion for the school.

As elsewhere, the nursery/reception class were looking at families, relationships and sequences. There was a lively interchange and pupils expressed many ideas related to their own development. The teacher used the opportunity to make the pupils think about time measurements such as "a long time ago" and "a little time ago". They considered what they can do now and what they could not do before starting school. This led to an introduction to timelines.

Years 1 and 2 were also looking at the idea of families but in the context of coats of arms. They were already quite knowledgeable about the theme but additional context was provided. New words were introduced and discussed such as knights, armour and tournament as well as why coats of arms existed. There was some grasp of the idea of symbolism. As in all classes, the timeline was a natural part of discussions with pupils locating the medieval period and some thought was given to the idea of duration. One pupil was able to relate tournaments to the period around the Black Death using his own knowledge. Similarity and difference was constantly alluded to with pupils understanding that the same term meant different things in different contexts. For example, they saw the difference between a medieval jousting tournament and a modern football tournament.

The emphasis on the Year 3 and 4 class was empathy/perspective and anachronism linked to the World War I enquiry. The dominant task related to a discussion on what to send to a family member or soldier at the Front by way of a gift box. They had earlier gained some broader contextual understanding of the challenges at the Front. The teacher asked some probing questions about practicalities, what might be possible, what might not be appropriate and why such objects might be sent. Pupils understood the idea of morale and also why some things might be seen as essential and acceptable at the time but not today such as cigarettes. They also realised that sending some objects might be of mixed value such as soap.

Year 5 and 6 were engaged in research on World War II. The particularly successful part of the lesson was the focus on impact. Pupils generally understood that a person's impact was different to what they did but rather was concerned with the difference they made. Some understood issues in more sophisticated ways; for example, recognising delayed and longer term impact that could not be anticipated at the time such as Chamberlain's appeasement. There was also discussion that impact could be negative such as Mussolini being an impediment at times to Hitler. Discussions with some pupils revealed a good understanding of terminology although some were using terms such as fascism and communism without a secure grasp.

A representative group of pupils clearly all enjoyed history and could express clear views about its value. Some recognised that history does not only teach us about mistakes but can also inspire. They were also able to consider how people felt living through historical times such as the experiences of evacuees. The comparison with Ukraine was made. They could recall many topics covered and when asked what would they most like to be an eyewitness to, they drew both on topics covered in the recent past and in a couple of cases to topics they knew about but had not covered. A strong feature of this group's discussion was their understanding that history was about people and their significance and there was an interesting discussion as to why Tutankhamun was significant when he died so young. Some appreciated that there is a chance element to significance such as the sources that have been discovered.

Final Comments:

All four schools deserve the same grading of "gold" as they all displayed a common understanding of effective history, had good strategies to deliver it and yet adapted it to suit the needs, interests and aptitudes of the individual schools.

There were many strengths but particular standout features included:

- The ability to deliver teaching and learning effectively integrating knowledge and conceptual understanding
- The development of chronological understanding
- The focus on comparison, contrast, links and connections
- The organisation and management of history across the four schools
- A balanced curriculum with good enquiries, valid objectives and especially diversity and local history
- Links with other subject areas especially English
- The range of experiences available to pupils of all ages.

This visit was a demanding but such a rewarding one having to cover four schools in two days. It was rewarding partly because of the quality seen but also the organisation and planning across all four

schools for the QM assessment. It was a most pleasurable experience and thanks to all those who facilitated this process. The schools are happy to allow the Historical Association to make use of some of their practices as case studies for HA resources., something that is likely to happen.

Award made? Yes Level: Gold	Date of Award: 23/11/2023	Renewal Date 23/11/2026
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