



History

Progression Document 2026

In History, children begin in the EYFS through Understanding the World: Past and Present; People, Culture and Communities; and The Natural World. Nursery Sky, Nursery Ocean and Reception develop the language of time, memory, change, family and community through stories, photographs, objects, first-hand experiences and repeated observation. From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils build on these foundations to understand the past through chronology, enquiry, sources and evidence. The curriculum combines local history, British history and wider world history so that pupils develop secure knowledge, thoughtful interpretations and the confidence to communicate historically.

Whole-school long-term overview

Year group	Autumn unit and question	Spring unit and question	Summer unit and question
Nursery Sky	Me, My Family and Our Changing World Who is in my family and what can I notice changing?	Winter, Stories and Special Times What happened before and what is changing now?	Growing, Helping and Going Places How have I grown and how do living things and places change?
Nursery Ocean	Families, Communities and Celebrations What can photographs, objects and stories tell us?	Winter to Spring and Stories from Long Ago What changes over time and what can stories help us remember?	Growth, Work, Journeys and the Seaside What was the seaside like long ago?
Reception	My Story, Family Stories and Celebrations How have I changed and what was Christmas like long ago?	Explorers, Traditional Tales and Beatrix Potter What can people, stories and places tell us about long ago?	Caring for Earth and Seaside Then and Now How did people care for Earth, and were seaside holidays different?
Year 1	Toys Through Time changes within living memory; childhood and everyday life Key question: How have toys changed over time?	Significant People linked to Greater Manchester Alan Turing, Gracie Fields and Marcus Rashford in different periods Key question: How have three people linked to Greater Manchester made a difference?	Transport Through Time changes within living memory and beyond Key question: How has transport changed over time?
Year 2	The Great Fire of London events beyond living memory, cause, consequence and change Key question: How did the Great Fire of London change London?	Life in Victorian Times daily life, society and comparison Key question: What was life like in Victorian times?	Rosa Parks significant individual and civil rights Key question: Why is Rosa Parks a significant individual?
Year 3	Stone Age to Iron Age prehistoric Britain and chronological change Key question: How did life change from the Stone Age to the Iron Age?	Local Area Change Over Time local history, maps, photographs and field evidence Key question: How has our local area changed over time?	Roman Britain and Pompeii Roman invasion, resistance, Romanisation, impact on Britain and archaeological evidence Key question: How did the Roman Empire change Britain, and what can Pompeii tell us about Roman life?
Year 4	Rochdale's Explorers: Charles Royds and Emily Georgiana Kemp local history, exploration, travel and significant people Key question: Why are some Rochdale explorers remembered more than others?	Ancient Egypt and the Earliest Civilisations overview of the earliest civilisations and a depth study of Ancient Egypt Key question: Where and when did the earliest civilisations develop, and what did Ancient Egypt achieve?	Anglo-Saxons and Scots settlement, migration and early medieval Britain Key question: Who were the Anglo-Saxons and Scots?

Year group	Autumn unit and question	Spring unit and question	Summer unit and question
Year 5	The Suffragettes democracy, rights and social change Key question: Why were the Suffragettes significant?	Vikings and the Anglo-Saxon Struggle for England raids, settlement and the struggle for the Kingdom of England to Edward the Confessor Key question: How did Vikings and Anglo-Saxons struggle for control of England?	Industrial Rochdale local industrial history and social impact Key question: How did the Industrial Revolution affect Rochdale?
Year 6	World War II and Ancient Greece conflict, society, Ancient Greek life and achievements, democracy and western influence Key question: What can World War II and Ancient Greece teach us about conflict, society, democracy and legacy?	Early Islamic Civilisation non-European society, knowledge and achievement Key question: What was significant about the Early Islamic civilisation?	Rochdale Cotton and Fairness empire, trade, industry and ethical enquiry Key question: Where did Rochdale's cotton come from, and was it fair?

Progression strands

These strands show how children build historical knowledge and skill from EYFS, through Key Stage 1, to Lower and Upper Key Stage 2.

Chronological Understanding

Pupils build a secure sense of time by sequencing events, placing people and periods on timelines, and connecting local, British and world history. They move from simple before-and-after language to explaining duration, overlap, change and continuity across periods.

Early Years Foundation Stage		
Nursery Sky: talk about familiar routines and recent experiences using now/next and simple past/present language. Nursery Ocean: sequence familiar events using before/after; notice seasonal and personal change. Reception: order events from personal and family experience; use past, present, long ago and timeline; compare then and now.		
Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Begin with personal chronology and familiar events, use simple time language, sequence objects and events, and identify changes within living memory and familiar local history.	Place periods and civilisations on timelines, use dates and century language, and describe links between periods.	Use chronology confidently to compare periods, explain long-term change, legacy, causation and connections across local, national and global history.

Historical Knowledge and Interpretation

Pupils develop knowledge of significant people, societies, events and achievements. They learn that history can be interpreted in different ways and that explanations should be supported by evidence.

Early Years Foundation Stage		
Nursery Sky: recognise special people, familiar places and simple changes in self and nature. Nursery Ocean: describe similarities, differences and change in families, communities, celebrations and the local environment. Reception: explain what is similar or different between past and present; learn about explorers, Beatrix Potter, celebrations, care for Earth and seaside holidays.		
Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Recall key facts about familiar changes and significant individuals, explaining why they matter.	Describe the features of past societies and explain causes, consequences, similarities and differences.	Analyse significance, legacy, viewpoints and ethical questions, building balanced interpretations from evidence.

Historical Enquiry

Historical enquiry is built into each unit so pupils learn to ask questions, investigate evidence and construct supported answers. Pupils move from answering simple questions to developing reasoned arguments.

Early Years Foundation Stage		
Nursery Sky: look closely, notice and answer simple questions about photographs, objects, stories and the natural world. Nursery Ocean: ask simple questions, revisit observations and use first-hand experiences to find out about change. Reception: ask and answer historical questions, compare clues, make simple inferences and give a reason for an idea.		
Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Ask and answer questions using stories, objects, pictures, maps and discussion.	Frame historically valid questions, select relevant evidence and organise findings.	Plan and pursue enquiries, weigh evidence, address different perspectives and present substantiated conclusions.

Sources, Evidence and Communication

Pupils learn that sources help historians find out about the past and that precise vocabulary helps them communicate their thinking. They progress from noticing details in artefacts and photographs to evaluating usefulness, reliability and perspective.

Early Years Foundation Stage		
Nursery Sky: explore family photographs, familiar objects, stories and seasonal observations; communicate through talk, play and pictures. Nursery Ocean: use photographs, objects, maps, oral stories and repeated observations as clues; describe what they show. Reception: compare photographs, artefacts, postcards, maps, stories and accounts; select evidence and communicate findings through talk, drawing, role play and early writing.		
Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Use artefacts, photographs, maps, stories and oral accounts to identify clues and describe the past using simple time words.	Use a wider range of sources to infer information and explain ideas using terms such as chronology, evidence, cause and consequence.	Compare primary and secondary sources, consider provenance, bias and reliability, and present conclusions using precise historical vocabulary.

Vocabulary progression

Vocabulary should be modelled explicitly during each unit and revisited when pupils discuss decisions, record evidence and evaluate outcomes.

Strand	Early Years Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Chronology	Sky: now, next, today, before Ocean: before, after, then, old, new Reception: past, present, long ago, timeline, order	past, present, old, new, before, after, then, now, timeline	BC, AD, century, decade, period, era, sequence, duration, ancient, medieval	chronological framework, overlap, legacy, turning point, long-term change, continuity
Historical enquiry	Sky: same, different, change, grow Ocean: remember, compare, change Reception: continuity, cause, consequence, significance	question, find out, clue, ask, answer, wonder	enquiry, investigate, evidence, infer, compare, explain, justify	substantiated conclusion, hypothesis, argument, evaluate, ethical enquiry, significance
Sources and evidence	Sky: look, notice, wonder, question Ocean: ask, find out, compare, clue Reception: enquiry, reason, infer, conclude	artefact, photograph, map, story, memory, evidence	primary source, secondary source, written source, oral history, archaeology, reliability	provenance, bias, perspective, usefulness, limitation, interpretation, corroborate
People and society	Sky: photograph, object, story Ocean: photograph, map, memory, observation Reception: source, artefact, evidence, account, postcard	home, school, family, travel, famous, significant	settlement, invasion, empire, civilisation, monarch, peasant, society, belief	democracy, rights, suffrage, migration, trade, industry, empire, community, identity
Change and significance	Sky: family, home, special, job Ocean: community, celebration, tradition, journey Reception: generation, explorer, childhood, environment, holiday	change, same, different, important, remember	cause, consequence, continuity, achievement, impact, legacy	turning point, social change, economic impact, fairness, representation, global connection