

# History at St Margaret's

We aim to provide a high-quality curriculum that inspires children to have a curiosity about the subject. We want to enable our children to understand and gain knowledge about the past, to make connections based on their knowledge, to analyse content and understand how it has influenced the world today. Children learn about local History that is relevant to them. We want children to develop a love for History by gaining knowledge and skills not only through engaging classroom experiences, but also through enriching fieldwork and educational visits.

## Our Curriculum

At St Margaret's, our curriculum is driven by the careful sequencing of knowledge and skills. This structured approach allows children to gradually build key information, develop conceptual understanding, and grow as confident historians. We use the Kapow History scheme as the foundation for our curriculum, adapting it to meet the specific needs of our school's context. Kapow promotes a strong focus on disciplinary approaches, encouraging critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the past, supported by a wide range of relevant carefully curated resources. Where necessary, we make further adaptations to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all learners. These adjustments are informed by ongoing monitoring, assessment, and, where applicable, individual support plans and EHCPs.

History is taught through carefully planned units across the academic year. Each unit is thoughtfully sequenced to help children develop a deep understanding of historical concepts, while also making meaningful connections with other subjects to enrich their learning. The structure and frequency of lessons within each unit may vary to best support the acquisition of knowledge and skills—for example, a unit might be delivered through a series of shorter lessons spread over several weeks, or through longer, more intensive sessions over a shorter period.

Retrieval activities are carefully planned as part of each lesson. Retrieval activities allow children to review key historical knowledge and skills previously covered. This can include; revision of previous topics, previous lessons or areas which require further support. Retrieval activities allow key content and knowledge to be embedded and historical skills to be continually developed.

## EYFS and 'Understanding the World'

In the Foundation Stage, children begin to explore History through the 'Understanding the World' area of the EYFS curriculum. Learning is rooted in their own interests and experiences, helping them make sense of the past in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way. At St Margaret's, we plan these experiences in line with the Early Learning Outcomes and Goals, ensuring that children build secure foundations for future historical learning. Through activities that encourage questioning, noticing changes over time, and discussing personal and family events, pupils develop curiosity and the early skills needed for historical thinking as they move through the school. For example, children compare and contrast old and new forms of transport—such as steam trains and modern electric trains—helping them recognise how things have changed over time and why these changes matter.

## **Sequencing: Our journey through History**

### **Key Stage 1**

In Key Stage 1, we have sequenced the learning to specifically develop pupils' conceptual understanding of the 'past' by first making it relevant to their own lives, then by looking at how life has changed over time in familiar contexts and finally by studying contexts which are likely to be new to them.

### **Year 1**

The 'How am I making history?' unit supports pupils to develop an understanding of chronology by looking at their own lives and beginning to build an awareness that timelines extend back before they were born. The second unit, 'How have toys changed?' extends this understanding of chronology further into the past (and future) using an object- the teddy bear- which will be familiar to all children to help them develop their concept of time. With a more secure grasp of this concept, pupils are able to look at a context that will be less familiar to them in our 'How have explorers changed the world?' unit, which will help them to begin developing an understanding of how the people and events of the past have shaped the world we live in today.

## Year 2

'How was school different in the past? the first unit in Year 2 gives pupils the chance to look at history through the familiar school context. The second and third units move onto less familiar contexts again, and in doing so, pupils begin to understand historical significance when considering how people and events of the past have impacted society as a whole.

## Key stage 2

The National curriculum states that pupils should 'know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day', and so our British History units across Key stage 2 are sequenced chronologically to allow pupils to understand this narrative. For world history, The Historical Association states that 'You don't have to teach topics in chronological order but need to relate the topics you teach to their chronological context', and our Primary timeline allows the teacher to place all units in their chronological context, and in relation to pupils' prior learning in History.

## Year 3

Year 3 begins with the British history unit 'Would you have preferred to have lived in the Stone Age, Iron Age or Bronze Age? We chose to place 'What was important to ancient Egyptians?' at the end of Year 3 as we felt that pupils needed sufficient understanding of the history of the UK before they could compare and make connections with other ancient civilisations. As Year 3 is a transition year from KS1, two units have been covered in Year 3 to ensure enough time and coverage is given to build foundational historical skills and to allow for a deeper exploration of topics.

## Year 4

Year 4 begins with the British History unit 'Why did the Romans invade and settle in Britain?' Following this is another British History Unit 'How hard was it to invade and settle in Britain.' Having these two units together allow children to delve deeper and make clearer connections around substantive concepts, the latter looking at more abstract concepts, such as power, invasion and settlement which are often challenging for children to understand. Finally, children develop a chronological understanding of significant events happening at the same time in other parts of the world by learning about the Maya civilisation.

## Year 5

The British History units 'Were the Vikings raiders, traders or something else?' and 'What was life like in Tudor England?' are taught first, allowing an opportunity to revisit and build on the children's understanding of the chronology of British history from Year 4. They then move on to comparing Britain to ancient Greece. Within this we focus on city, states and culture. This unit covers some challenging topics and so we have split this unit to allow further time for in depth development and understanding.

## Year 6

To begin, we conclude our learning on ancient Greece. In Year 6, learning focuses on democracy and philosophy, which builds upon prior learning and allows for cross curricular links in democracy. We then use the local history unit 'What can the census tell us about local areas? as an enquiry based unit. The final unit 'Unheard histories' acts as a transition unit and gives children the opportunity to direct their learning and apply historical skills.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
<b>Year 1</b>	How am I making History?	How have toys changed?	How have explorers changed the world?
<b>Year 2</b>	How was school different in the past?	How did we learn to fly?	What is a monarch?
<b>Year 3</b>	British history 1; Would you prefer to live in Stone age, Iron Age or Bronze Age?		What was important to Ancient Egyptians?
<b>Year 4</b>	British history 2: Why did Romans invade and settle in Britain?	British history 2: What changed in Britain after the Anglo-Saxon invasion?	How did the achievements of the Maya civilisation influence their society and beyond?
<b>Year 5</b>	British history; were the Vikings raiders, traders or something else?	British history 5; What was life like in Tudor England?	What is the legacy of the ancient Greek civilisation? Focus on City states and culture.
<b>Year 6</b>	What is the legacy of the ancient Greek civilisation? Focus on democracy and philosophy.	What can the census tell us about local areas?	Unheard histories: Who should go on the bank note?

### Monitoring and Assessment

Assessment is vital to ensure the curriculum continues to be ambitious by checking children's understanding and to facilitate adaptations in teaching to ensure all children make progress. For each unit, pupils are assessed against the expected targets in regards to knowledge. Assessment against key historical skills is carried out by the end of each academic year. Teaching staff use both informal methods, such as class discussions, lesson-based activities alongside more directed tasks, such as those provided through the Kapow scheme in order to make this judgment.

Monitoring is carried out regularly and can be seen in many different forms. We carry out pupil voice at least twice a year alongside analysis of children's work which includes various evidence sources.