

***Sherwood Primary  
School***

**Policy for  
History**

***JULY 2015***

# History Policy

## 1 Aims and Objectives

1.1 The aim of history teaching here at Sherwood Primary School is to provide a high-quality history education which will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

1.2 Through use of the national curriculum for history, combined with the Lancashire Scheme of Work, we aim to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

## **2 Teaching and learning style**

- 2.1 History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources. We encourage educational visits and we welcome visitors into the school to talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', about information they are given.
- 2.2 We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of widely-different abilities in history and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
  - Setting tasks of increasing difficulty. Not all children complete all tasks;
  - Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
  - Providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child;
  - Using teaching assistants to support children individually or in groups.

## **3 History curriculum planning**

- 3.1 We use the National Curriculum (2013) in combination with the Lancashire Scheme of Work for History, as the basis of our curriculum planning. This ensures that the appropriate objectives in the National Curriculum are covered.
- 3.2 The whole-school long-term plan maps out the topics studied in every term.
- 3.3 Our medium term plans give details of each unit of work, including learning objectives, possible teaching activities, and learning outcomes.
- 3.4 Our short term plans are annotated with dates and teaching notes. These plans are reviewed weekly by the headteacher.
- 3.5 We have planned topics in history so that they build upon prior learning. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge.

## **4 Foundation Stage**

- 4.1 We teach history in the Foundation Unit as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate the history side of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, looking at

pictures of famous people in history or discovering the meaning of new and old in relation to their own lives.

## 5 Key Stage 1

### 5.1

Pupils should develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods. They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching about the people, events and changes outlined below, teachers are often introducing pupils to historical periods that they will study more fully at key stages 2 and 3.

Pupils should be taught about:

- changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life
- events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally [for example, the Great Fire of London, the first aeroplane flight or events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries]
- the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods [for example, Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, William Caxton and Tim Berners-Lee, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and LS Lowry, Rosa Parks and Emily Davison, Mary Seacole and/or Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell]
- significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

## 6 Key Stage 2

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, teachers should combine overview

and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Pupils should be taught about:

- changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age
- the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots
- the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor
- a local history study
- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- the achievements of the earliest civilizations - an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer; The Indus Valley; Ancient Egypt; The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China
- Ancient Greece - a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history - one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300.

## **7 The contribution of history to other subjects**

### **7.1 English**

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the Literacy hour are historical in nature. Children develop their speaking and listening skills through discussing historical questions or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports and letters and through using writing frames.

### **7.2 Mathematics**

History teaching contributes to the teaching of mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through doing activities such as timelines. Children learn to interpret information presented in a graphical or diagrammatic form.

### **7.3 Information and communication technology**

We use ICT in history teaching where appropriate. Children use ICT to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using CD Roms and the internet. A variety of interactive teaching resources are used with the interactive whiteboards in each classroom, for example, CD Roms, E-Big books and DVD packs.

#### **7.4 Personal, social and health education and citizenship**

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

#### **7.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

When teaching history, we contribute to the children's spiritual development where possible, for example, 'What are we remembering on Remembrance Day?' We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong. The history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

### **8 Teaching history to children with special needs**

8.1 We teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans.

### **9 Assessment and recording**

9.1 We assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe them during lessons; by marking work and commenting as necessary. At the end of a unit of work teachers make a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. We use these judgements as the basis for assessing the progress of each child and we pass on this information to the next teacher at the end of the school year. Samples of children's work are collected for monitoring purposes and added to the portfolio which is kept in the History Subject Leader's file.

### **10 Resources**

10.1 There are resources for all history topics in the school. We keep these resources in topic boxes in the classrooms or resource areas of the year group studying that topic. In order to continuously replenish resources and build up a quality collection of historical artefacts, teachers are asked towards the end of the school year which resources they would like for the following year. These are usually ordered by the history subject leader at the end of the school year.

### **11 Monitoring and reviewing**

11.1 The history subject leader is responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, for being informed of current developments and for providing a strategic lead and direction for history in school. The subject leader gives the Headteacher an annual report of the strengths and weaknesses in history and indicates areas for further improvement.

Approval date: June 2015

Review date: June 2018

Signed (Headteacher):

Signed (On behalf of the Governing Body):