History Policy

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Author: Kirstin Wright

INTRODUCTION

The History National Curriculum states that:

A high-quality history education 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.

At Senacre Wood Primary, we aim to deliver a history curriculum that is accessible to all and that will maximise the outcomes for every child so that they know more, remember more and understand more.

INTENT

At Senacre Wood Primary, we follow the aims of the National Curriculum 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.*

Through an enquiry approach, our History Curriculum intends to:

- Support pupils with developing their understanding of the chronology of significant time periods and societies in Britain and the wider world.
- Develop pupils' enjoyment and interest in history and encourage them to be curious and want to know more; this includes supporting pupils to devise and answer historically valid questions of their own.
- Support pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change and the diversity of societies. Then to use this to knowledge to discover connections between the History they learn and the wider community today.
- Help pupils to understand historical significance including how human achievements have influenced society and how historical events relate to modern day life.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to retrieve, and build on prior learning, so that they are able to recognise similarities and differences within and across historical time periods linked with substantive knowledge.
- Introduce pupils to historical vocabulary and provide them with opportunities to use and apply this.

- To understand the nature of evidence by emphasising the process of enquiry and by developing the range of skills required to interpret primary and secondary source materials. This includes distinguishing between historical facts and the interpretation of those facts.

IMPLEMENTATION

PLANNING

A blocked curriculum approach has been implemented to support pupils with developing a secure understanding of substantive knowledge as well as enabling the progression in disciplinary skills and concepts. Progression of these can be found in History:

- Big Question Overview
- Substantive Knowledge Overview
- Disciplinary knowledge skills progression
- Vocabulary progression document

In EYFS and KS1, children will focus on the world around them and their living memory of History before moving to events that go beyond living history. In Year 1, once pupils have moved beyond living history, enquiries are taught in chronological order. Within Year 2 (with the exception of the Great Fire of London) historical enquiries provide opportunities for pupils to build on their understanding of significance, continuity and change and similarities and differences linked with a themed enquiry covering more than one time period (air travel and castles).

In KS2, History is taught in two separate chronological strands: British History and Ancient Civilisations (World History). In Year 3, the two strands are not separated to maintain the exposure needed to support the development of chronology. In Year 4, exploring the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings leads on from the study of Roman Britain at the end of Year 3. Ancient Egyptians at the end of Year 4 gives the children their first taste of the ancients. This enquiry links to Year 5's curriculum, which begins with Ancient Greece. In Year 6, The Maya Civilisation is taught, and pupils make comparisons with the Ancient Greeks. By using this approach, it ensures a focus on how ideas are linked and built upon through time and, more than one history enquiry a year, means that skills can be revisited in a cyclical fashion.

Within each enquiry, lessons are planned carefully to ensure progression. Teachers produce a medium-term overview which includes:

- National Curriculum links.
- Links to school based Substantive and Disciplinary knowledge.
- Key vocabulary
- Pupil Offer
- Weekly lesson overview- this includes links with school based Substantive knowledge and Disciplinary skills as well as opportunities for organisation and communication.
- Famous Historians

Throughout an enquiry, opportunities for retrieval are carefully planned so that lessons develop long-term memory. At the end of the enquiry, pupils complete an activity which enables them to draw on all of their knowledge, from the enquiry, so that they are able to answer the big question.

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LESSONS, ENVIRONMENT AND ENQUIRY BOOKS

Each enquiry includes a book cover which includes the big question, key vocabulary as well as detailing substantive and disciplinary skills which will be covered. Where appropriate, key information is also provided to aid pupils' retrieval and retention of key facts.

A rich learning environment supports our curriculum. History displays, and a range of high quality texts, support children's learning in every classroom. History working walls are used to aid pupils' retrieval as they reflect the learning journey. Working walls include the big question, key information, vocabulary, historical sources and examples of pupils work. To further enhance pupils' experience and class displays, we have a wide and varied range of resources and artefacts to support teaching and learning; these are stored in a central area.

MARKING AND FEEDBACK

All children are entitled to regular feedback on their learning to enable them to become reflective learners and make progress. All teachers will mark work and give feedback as an essential part of the assessment process. This could be in a written or verbal form as appropriate.

ASSESSMENT

Key historical skills, concepts and knowledge are mapped through statements describing the expectations for pupils in each Year group. Teachers use the school assessment framework to regularly assess pupils' learning against specific criteria. Assessment in history is an ongoing process. Teachers will make informal judgements about pupil's progress and attainment as they observe them throughout lessons and mark their work. Retrieval opportunities should be used in every lesson to consolidate understanding, address misconceptions and assess progress. These may include informal recaps, quizzes, speaking like an expert or games. At the end of each enquiry, pupils are provided with a retrieval activity in which they are expected to draw on all of their knowledge to answer the enquiry big question.

HISTORY IN EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework covers history in the following ways:

Understanding the World – People and Communities

ELG: Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of their family members.

Skills progression: Pupils verbalise events within living memory and memories or accounts of those close to them. They can answer questions about basic past and present events and some will be able to transfer this knowledge to their drawing and writing.

The World

ELG: Look closely at similarities, differences, pattern and change.

Skills progression: Pupils identify differences and changes between past and present photographs of themselves, others or objects. In relation to the world and seasonal changes, and changes to our school environment, they can discuss changes over time to landscapes.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION OF ALL LEARNERS

All children have equal access to the history curriculum and its associated activities. We recognise that, although the learning objectives are statutory, some objectives may take longer to achieve than others, depending on children's varying abilities. Where appropriate, work will be adapted to meet pupils' needs and, if appropriate, extra support given. Pupils that are more able, will be given suitably challenging activities.

IMPACT

We believe that our history curriculum is broad and balanced, has clear intent and there is a strong rationale for content selection. We measure the impact of our History curriculum in a variety of ways. We use pupil voice to establish pupils' understanding of key concepts, vocabulary and skills as a historian to analyse sources, interpret information and discuss significance of historical content. Pupils' responses to the big question also provides evidence of knowledge gained throughout the enquiry.

ROLE OF THE HISTORY SUBJECT LEADER

- Ensure the subject is monitored, in line with the Action plan. Following monitoring, outcomes are shared, with colleagues, in a timely manner and areas for improvement are swiftly and effectively acted upon.
- Lead in the development of history and raise standards throughout the school.
- Ensure pupils' voice is valued and responded to.
- Provide teachers with support in the teaching of history including identifying and supporting the training needs of colleagues.
- Monitor and maintain high quality resources.
- Keep up to date with new developments in the area of history.

OFSTED

Under the latest Ofsted framework, history education should demonstrate:

Quality of Education: A well-structured and sequenced curriculum that builds progressively on knowledge and skills, allowing pupils to make connections and understand historical concepts.

Behaviour and Attitudes: High standards of behaviour in classrooms, with pupils showing resilience and engagement in their learning.

Personal Development: The curriculum should contribute to pupils' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development, encouraging them to understand and appreciate diversity in history.

Leadership and Management: Strong leadership and effective governance, ensuring the history curriculum is a priority for high-quality teaching and learning throughout the school.

By adhering to these expectations, our school will maintain a history curriculum that not only meets statutory requirements but also enriches the educational experience of all pupils.

Our most recent Ofsted report (December 2024) states:

- "Pupils learn well through the school's carefully crafted curriculum."
- "Deliberate strategies prompt pupils to regularly recall their previous learning."
- "For example, pupils can link their knowledge from different periods in history with a secure sense of chronology."
- "The breadth of pupils' learning prepares them well for their next schools."