

History at Old Park

History is led by our Curriculum Lead and our History support teachers.

Why do we teach History?

We believe that a well rounded History curriculum will allow children to gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past, how that looked locally as well as history in the wider world. We have carefully designed our History curriculum so that children gain this knowledge chronologically as they progress through the school. The school's own history, being built on the site of Hobb's Hole Colliery, is explored by Y5 in their British and Local history study of the Victorian era.

In addition to this, we recognise the important role that History plays in preparing our children with skills that they can use for life, raising their aspirations, understanding how to be a good and responsible citizen, understanding change and societal development providing a context in which to understand themselves and others.

Through our History curriculum, we strive to inspire pupils' curiosity about the past. We want the children, our historians, to be able to clearly explain how a range of sources can give us insight into how people around the world used to live.

As specified in the National Curriculum 2014, our curriculum aims to give children opportunities to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Through the teaching of History, we aim for children to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and the relationships between different groups, as well as understanding their own identity and the challenges of their time.

We believe that teaching History in this way is important in broadening children's horizons, challenging preconceived ideas and developing life skills in order to prepare them for high school and beyond.

How do we teach History?

History is taught in discrete units across the year so that children understand the term history and unique skills required to understand this subject. The curriculum plan supports our children to achieve depth in their learning through building on vocabulary, skills and knowledge taught previously and making links between units of study so that pupils develop knowledge of cause and effect.

The key knowledge and skills that children acquire and develop throughout each unit have been mapped to ensure progression between year groups throughout the school. Links between previously taught knowledge are made explicit on planning and staff build on previous knowledge and skills.

History (EYFS to Y6)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) follows the 'Statutory EYFS Framework' guidance which aims for all children in reception to have an understanding of Past and Present and begins the foundations of their Historical knowledge and understanding. Children will learn to talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and present, drawing on their experiences and what has been discussed and explored in class. The children also understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

EYFS initially learn about their immediate history, their family and location. This will be a starting block in EYFS and be built upon as they enter Key Stage 1. Once this is consolidated, they will gain a wider experience of global history. As a child moves through our school, their historical knowledge and understanding will deepen as it would have been built on the foundations laid in the previous years. The concepts that children explore are revisited in different units allowing children to apply new knowledge to the concept in order to prepare them for future learning and life.

KS1 history is not chronologically taught as it looks at themes such as greatest explorers and great inventions, local figures in history, a significant event or (The Great Fire of London) or change over time (HOW have holidays changed). Through these units we focus on developing an awareness of the past starting with My Family History, through KS1 units introduce historical vocabulary, begin to build an understanding of chronology by placing events on timelines and consider differences and similarities over time.

At the beginning of each new history unit, time lines, which include previous learning (in year and from previous years), are referred to. We have a visual timeline reminder of the Historical units covered in school on display across the length and height of a corridor. This supports the children's understanding of chronology through pictures and words, it is referred to in lessons and the children are interested in looking at and discussing it.

By the end of year 6, children will have a chronological understanding of British history from the Stone Age to the present day (taught across Y3 - 6). They are able to draw comparisons and make connections between different time periods and their own lives. Interlinked with this are studies of world history, such as the ancient civilisations of Greece and the Egyptians.

The school's own context is also considered, with opportunities for visits to places of historical interest and learning outside the classroom also identified and embedded into our practice. Visits to the local area and use of local sources, such as maps, adverts and newspaper articles of local collieries (Hobb's Hill Colliery previously on Old Park Rd with mines under the school site), in the Victorian era; the German Zeppelin bombing (in error) of Wednesbury and West Bromwich during World War 1 instead of Liverpool and the bombings in nearby West Bromwich during WW2. All of these details support contextualised learning, as well as the acquisition of key knowledge and systematic development of key skills. Other local studies are in our Local Heroes unit in Year 1.

Links to local history:

<https://www.westbromwichhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WestBromwichBombing1940.pdf>

<http://www.historywebsite.co.uk/articles/Wednesbury/EarlyIndustries.htm>

<https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/nostalgia/day-zeppelin-rained-death-black-10857088>

Cross curricular outcomes in history are specifically planned for and these are indicated on the school's progression mapping. Planning is informed by and aligned with the National Curriculum. Staff have access to support materials from the Rising Stars scheme and resources which were initially used as a resource base. However, teachers' lesson design is not limited by the scheme. Teachers have worked hard to adapt, re-order and re-write planning to make it appropriate, suitable and relevant to our learners in our locality.

Enquiry Question

Each unit starts with an enquiry question, this forms the vital part of the units learning journey. The journey includes the coverage of key knowledge. The children reflect on their learning session by session revisiting the enquiry question recording their findings on a knowledge recorder on the front page). All new learning, where appropriate will link and revisit prior knowledge.

Retention

Knowledge retention in all areas of the Old Park curriculum is supported by embedded retrieval practice. Regular high challenge, low threat retrieval quizzes support the retention of key information and consolidates understanding of specific history skills. Learning is reviewed regularly, after a period of forgetting, so that teachers can check whether information has been retained. The history curriculum is designed to ensure appropriate diversity in the significant figures that children learn about such as Sister Dora, Cyrill Regis and Tutankahmun. Teachers utilise other avenues such as online research, National College and support from the Curriculum and History leader to develop their own knowledge and understanding. Teachers also have access to further guidance from the History Association, of which the school is a member.

Teachers cater for the varying needs of all learners, differentiating activities where necessary and as appropriate, and ensuring an appropriate level of challenge. History leaders regularly monitor to ensure that units are effectively planned and delivered to reflect a sound understanding of the key identified knowledge for all children.

Our children have real life experiences and learn about History in an active and creative way. Before the pandemic visits and trips formed a fundamental part of our curriculum and we are beginning to return to these activities in 21/22 and beyond.

Links to Geography and other subject areas are also explored. The opportunities to apply learning are carefully designed through the planning process such as map work locating London during The Great Fire of London unit in year 2.

Assessment

Our retrieval quizzes support teachers to understand what has been understood and retained over time. Quizzes are tracked and the outcomes provide information that informs teachers about what knowledge has been retained. Quiz outcomes inform leaders of the school about the impact of retrieval and these identify where unit delivery may be further enhanced.

Lesson by lesson and at the end of each unit, based on books, discussions (recorded on teaching slides), questions and responses to activities our teachers gain a clear understanding of the children's progress in relation to both knowledge gained and the key historical skills taught through each unit. This teacher knowledge and the quiz outcomes mean that teachers know their children and are able to formulate individual end of year assessments.

Does our History curriculum influence our children?

Children enjoy talking about their history learning, they love exploring historical events, eras and sources. Emphasis is placed on analytical thinking and questioning and the children demonstrate a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. Our children are curious to know more about the past. They have understanding of History on a local level and a more personal smaller scale. Children enjoy developing their enquiry skills and use them to pursue their own interests within a unit and raise questions. Through this study pupils ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Children retain prior-learning and make connections between what they have previously learned and what they are currently learning, developing their cause and effect skills. Outcomes in books evidence a broad and balanced history curriculum and demonstrate the children's acquisition of identified key knowledge.

Covid impact

During 20/21 (in school and remotely) the curriculum was reduced to three lessons per unit across

20/21. This enabled teachers to utilise gained time to focus on basic skills in Reading, writing and Maths. Therefore, there are some gaps in learning from this period. However, across the year, teachers sought to ensure that the National Curriculum History objectives were covered during the reduced units in each year group. Those that were in school or accessing our remote learning programme would have covered the learning set, unfortunately, when completing remote learning some children and their parents chose to focus on and complete Maths and English sessions over other wider curriculum subjects. Our retrieval sessions, quizzes and recaps will support in identifying and supporting knowledge gaps for those specific children.