

History Curriculum Rationale

“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.” The National Curriculum 2013

INTENT



Alignment to National Curriculum

The history curriculum at St Thomas of Canterbury follows the National Curriculum as a basis for its content and framework. The generic key historical concepts of **continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance** run through the curriculum. Children will develop their chronological knowledge and knowledge and understanding of our country and the wider world, as outlined in the N.C. Rising Stars and ARK materials are used to support the delivery of our History Curriculum.



End Points

Through their mastery of our history curriculum, children will develop coherent knowledge and understanding of key aspects of Britain’s past and that of the wider world and will provide a foundation of knowledge that will help them understand how the world came to be how it is today. Children moving on to secondary school will have learnt to think critically, evaluate evidence and develop perspective and judgement; all key skills needed to become a good citizen of the world.



Sequencing

Units of work begins with a geographical activity to orientate children to the place before learning about its history. Knowledge learnt in Foundation Stage KS1 provide a foundation for concepts taught in KS2. Y1 history centre around aspects closer in time to children’s own experiences. Y2 history begins to look at more abstract ideas which are further away from a child’s own experiences. KS2 units are, on the whole, sequenced chronologically, with the earliest periods of British history covered in Y3. This is to help children develop their chronological understanding.



Addressing Social Disadvantage

Young (2008) says that knowledge is crucial for social justice. All children have a right to know and remember the powerful knowledge and key vocabulary identified in our curriculum. To this end, we use knowledge organisers to capture this and are committed to ensuring all children master it. Retrieval practice is key to achieving this goal and is incorporated into our day-to-day teaching.



Local Context

Our local area is utilised to support the teaching of history. The local history unit at KS2 explores the impact of WW1 and 2 on Sheffield. Sheffield and the surrounding area has a wealth of local museums which are used to support the teaching of history and to enable children to see first-hand evidence of the past.

IMPLEMENTATION



Pedagogical Approaches

In history, teachers will ensure children have substantive knowledge which may be shared via direct instruction. Children will then apply their knowledge and skills through a historical enquiry approach to teaching & learning. Guided, independent and retrieval practice, as described by Rosenshine and rooted in cognitive science, are used, where appropriate, to ensure children remember the key substantive knowledge and are able to use this in activities that require deeper thinking.



Teachers’ Expert Knowledge

The demonstration of good subject and curriculum knowledge is a requirement in the DfE teaching standards. To this end, it is expected that teachers whose curriculum knowledge is not sufficiently developed will take steps to address this gap (e.g. through reading or using the support materials supplied by Rising Stars/Ark). It is essential that teachers have the required level of expert knowledge so that explanations are clear and accurate, and children’s misconceptions are anticipated and addressed as they arise.



Promoting Discussion and Understanding

Discussion (both pupil to pupil and pupil to teacher) has an important role in the development of historical ideas. Effective questioning by the teacher is key to allow pupils to practise new knowledge and to help them make links between new material and prior learning (Rosenshine). Essentially, through these opportunities for talk, key vocabulary, and so core knowledge, is truly mastered. (See also pupils’ work)



Knowing More and Remembering More

Knowledge organisers set out the powerful knowledge, core vocabulary and big ideas that all children are expected to master. A first lesson for each unit of work is used to review the ‘smaller’ ideas mastered in previous units, ready for their development in the new one. Opportunities for retrieval practice are included in history lessons to ensure knowledge is transferred into long-term memory. Retrieval activities may require children to remember learning from the previous lesson, previous topic or even previous year to ensure the retrieval strength of powerful knowledge is high.



Teacher Assessment

Formative assessment is essential in the implementation of the history curriculum to ensure that all children are developing the declarative and procedural knowledge needed. Effective questioning, as outlined in Rosenshine’s principles, plays a fundamental role in checking for understanding and ensuring misconceptions are quickly addressed. Success criteria are used to aid both self, peer and teacher assessment.

IMPACT



Approach to Assessment

The five strategies of formative assessment (Wiliam 2011) are used in geography to support and promote deep learning. Specific recall activities like quizzes, are used to enable teachers and children to monitor the depth of understanding of core procedural and declarative knowledge and the strength of its retrieval.



Performance Data

Data for history is generated using retrieval quizzes and is collected by the teacher on a master copy of the knowledge organiser.



Pupils’ Work

Pupils’ work, in written and photographic forms, is used to secure and demonstrate children’s learning. It informs teacher assessment, both formative and summative, and is used by subject leaders as part of the monitoring process. Children will have opportunities to ‘work like a historian’ by: using historical vocabulary in their speech and writing; looking at and evaluating sources of evidence; constructing arguments.



Talking to Pupils

The subject leader talks to pupils about their learning as part of the monitoring process. Children’s books and knowledge organisers are used to guide discussion and provide the subject leader with the information required to measure how much of the powerful knowledge and core vocabulary has been remembered and understood.

Links / References

The National Curriculum for History
David Didau – Learning Spy (References to Young)
Rosenshine’s Principles for Instruction
Dylan Wiliam – Embedded Formative Assessment