

Aims and objectives

The aim of history teaching here at Baynards School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. Thus they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school history makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

The aims of history in our school are to:

- foster in children an interest in the past and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- enable children to know about significant events in British history and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- develop a sense of chronology;
- know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education;
- understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture and to study some aspects of European history;
- have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

Teaching and learning style

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources. In each key stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognize 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.

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 classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

History curriculum planning

We use the national scheme of work for history as the basis for our curriculum planning in history. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage. The children study history topics in conjunction with other subjects in a class curriculum approach. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study. Because we have some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum, but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives of each lesson.

Foundation Stage

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. We relate historical aspects of the children's work to the Early Years Goals set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage which underpin the curriculum for children 0 to 5.

History makes a significant contribution to the development of each child's Knowledge and Understanding of the World under the heading 'Time'. We provide activities such as examining photos of themselves at birth and looking for change over time, using stories that introduce sense of time and people from the past, comparing artefacts from different times e.g. Teddies, and making the most opportunities to value children's histories from their own and other cultures.

The contribution of history to other subjects

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 Literacy are historical in nature. Children develop oracy 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.

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 time-lines. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form, and analyse.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT in history teaching where appropriate and we meet the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their work in history at Key Stage 2. Children use ICT in history to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet. Children have the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images and they communicate with other children in other schools and countries by using e-mail.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) 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 such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognize and challenge stereotypes and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

When teaching history, we contribute to the children's spiritual development where possible. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong, when studying topics such as child labour in Victorian Britain. Children learn about the role of the church in Tudor times and they find out how British society has changed over time. 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.

Teaching history to children with special needs

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 (IEPs).

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe them during each history lesson. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. The

subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in the history subject file. Reporting to parents occurs annually with a written report and through parents evening.

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. The library contains a good supply of topic books and software to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the history co-ordinator. The work of the history co-ordinator also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.