



History Policy

Adopted: Spring 2023
Review: Spring 2026

1. Curriculum Statement - History

Intent

At Meadgate Primary School we aim to stimulate the pupils' interest for learning about the past and help them gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. We endeavour to develop our pupils' understanding about the life of people who lived before us and also how our own lives have changed over time. We teach children a sense of chronology so that they can better understand when historical events happened around the world and how these events have influenced life today. History complements Religious Education and PSHE as they also assist pupils in understanding other people's cultures. Through these subjects children can appreciate and understand their place in modern multicultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. We teach our pupils to investigate historical events and, by so doing, help them to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

Implementation

The history curriculum at Meadgate is informed by the national curriculum 2014. It is carefully planned and structured to ensure that current learning is linked to previous learning and driven by the skills needed to equip the pupils to learn. In line with the national curriculum 2014, the curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world which helps to stimulate pupils' curiosity to know more about the past
- Are encouraged to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement
- Begin 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.
- Develop a sense of chronology and to appreciate how things have changed over time for themselves, their families and the wider community
- Understand how events in the past have influenced life today
- Know about significant events and people in British history and in the local area
- Develop some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world
- Understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage

Cross curricular outcomes in history are often planned for, with strong links between the history curriculum and English lessons, which enables further contextual learning. The local area is also utilised to achieve the desired outcomes, with opportunities for learning outside the classroom through visits to local historical places, museums and visitors coming to school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) follows the 'Development Matters in the EYFS' guidance which aims for all children in reception to have an 'Understanding of the World; people and communities, the world and technology' by the end of the academic year.

Impact

Emphasis is placed on analytical thinking and questioning which helps pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world and are curious to know more about the past. Through this study pupils learn to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Outcomes in Topic and English books evidence a broad and balanced history curriculum and demonstrate the pupils' acquisition of identified key knowledge and skills.

2. Teaching and Learning

There are three key historical learning strands that the pupils will explore over the course of their education at Meadgate:

- Chronological understanding (including historical vocabulary and language)
- Knowledge and interpretation
- Historical enquiry

As pupils develop these skills in a range of contexts, so too will they develop the ability to be independent learners, using the key historical skills they have gained to analyse, question and compare sources of evidence to form their own judgements about the past. Learning from these strands helps children to foster an enthusiasm and sense of curiosity about the past, encouraging pupils in their first steps towards being life-long learners.

History teaching at Meadgate Primary focuses on engaging children with historical events in exciting and cross-curricular ways. Children are often taught about events which relate to their class topic at that time. For example, many classes have history themed topics such as 'Blast from the Past' in Year 6 which uses World War II as the stimulus for learning across the entire curriculum. At other times, history is tied in with the topic where possible. For example, in Year 1 the 'Once Upon a Time' topic is an opportunity for pupils to learn about kings, queens and castles. 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.

3. Assessment

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. Key historical knowledge is taught to enable and promote the development of children's historical enquiry skills. Assessment is supported by use of the following strategies:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group and in class during whole class teaching.
- Using differentiated, open-ended questions that require children to explain and unpick their understanding.
- Setting appropriate tasks and work that teachers assess and use to inform future planning as well as to make informal and formal judgements.
- Use of effective marking, to engage children with their learning and to provide opportunities for self-assessment.
- Book moderation to monitor children's work, to evaluate the range and balance of work and ensure that tasks are differentiated and promote children's learning and progress.
- Once a unit of work is completed, a summary judgement is made each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Attainment is recorded in subject tracking grids to provide the basis for assessing the progress of each child and to pass information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The reporting of children's progress in history occurs annually, with a written report to parents at the end of the academic year.

4. Planning and Resources

Existing history resources are mostly stored and organised into topic themes. We continue to gather resources for all history teaching units in the 2014 curriculum. We keep these in a central store, where there are resources for use in many of the areas covered. The library contains a good supply of history topic books to support children's individual research. Further books can be requested as part of the topic loans for each year group from the Essex Library Service. Children can also use ICT resources and educational software to support their learning and enquiry. In addition to this, class teachers are encouraged to create displays linked to their topic and many teachers have a topic area for the history schemes of work where books and other artefacts are displayed and easily accessible for children.

Planning is 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. In most cases we combine the historical study with work in other subject areas. The medium-term plan outlines the skills being covered each term/half term. The short-term plans are created by the individual class teachers to outline what they will teach in order for the pupils to acquire the skills.

5. EYFS

Early years explore historical themes and content through the Understanding of the World strand of the EYFS curriculum. This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and time. They are assessed according to the Development Matters Attainment targets.

6. KS1 and KS2

During Key Stage 1, children begin to develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They start to 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 demonstrate a growing confidence and accuracy when using commonplace historical vocabulary. Through literacy and drama, children become able to ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. Children start to use, and begin to evaluate, some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

Children are taught to identify changes within living memory, for example, by examining how toys have changed within living memory. Children also investigate events beyond living memory, to develop a growing sense of chronology and awareness of time and changes over time. As part of this focus children will study the Great Fire of London.

We will also study the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements; the specific individuals studied will link to and support cross curricular link; however we plan to study Roald Amundsen, Samuel Pepys, Sir Christopher Wren John Dunlop, Charles Macintosh and Blackbeard Anne Bonny.

Throughout 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. This sense of understanding of chronology will be

referred to throughout this Key Stage so that children become secure in their understanding of important historical events and eras, 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. Children will learn to select, organise, review and present relevant historical information. Children will begin to understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and that sources need to be carefully evaluated. Progression, through this Key stage, should allow pupils to understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

During this Key Stage, children are learning about the changes that happened in Britain, by carrying out a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066, which includes studies into the Tudors, the Victorians and World War I and II. They will learn about the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain. They will carry out an investigation of Britain's settlement by the Anglo-Saxons and Scots culminating in a study of the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor. They will also study non-European society that provides contrasts with British history, through the Native Americans and Aboriginal People. In addition, they will find out about local history through the study of inventors and the invention of radio and Marconi's influence on Chelmsford. They will study these periods of history in a broad chronological order, to help support children's understanding of chronology and trends over time.

7. Equal Opportunities

At Meadgate Primary School, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate positive attitudes towards others.

Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how greater depth and further challenge can be provided for and demonstrated by children who require further challenge.

8. Inclusion (eg EAL/SEN/PPG/Provision for HA)

All pupils are entitled to access the history curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs.

To ensure inclusion, teachers use a range of strategies in line with the school's inclusion planning key. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also well-adapted to ensure full accessibility, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different groups of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential.

9. Role of the Subject Leader

The coordinator's responsibilities are:

- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.
- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported, by SMT
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of history
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview
- To ensure that the history curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment
- To ensure that the history curriculum takes account of the school's context, promotes children's pride in the local area and provides access to positive role models from the local area to enhance the history curriculum
- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy

10. Parents (Including Homework)

At Meadgate Primary School we actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of history. Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children through topic based homework.