

The British School History Policy

Reviewed February 2026

Introduction:

A high-quality history education provides the foundations for stimulating children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. History has shaped our present and children will be encouraged to value local, national and world history and gain a secure understanding of the historical process of inquiry.

INTENT

Aims and Objectives

The history curriculum at British, aims to give a solid foundation and broad overview of some key important periods in local, British and world history. We aim to inspire pupils' curiosity about the past and to develop their understanding of key events. Children will ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Through the teaching of History we endeavour to teach pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, including those of the present; the process of change; and the diversity of societies and beliefs, whilst celebrating these differences.

We encourage our pupils to 'think like a historian' by examining artefacts and sources from the time and guiding them to think critically about what we might be able to learn from the evidence. Woven through our planning is a recognition of diversity - we teach the pupils that people from all backgrounds, ethnicities and religions have had an impact on the world and we hope that children see themselves in our curriculum.

Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Diversity:

At The British School, we create an inclusive culture of achievement, high standards and high expectations. Children of all ethnic and cultural groups, races, genders, sexual orientation and abilities, have equal access to the History Curriculum. We therefore aim to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs have an entitlement to develop to their full potential in history. There are opportunities for researching and drawing information from other cultures and an appreciation of historic achievements of different cultures, is taught.

The teaching is made relevant to pupils' own experiences and abilities and our broad and balanced curriculum takes full account of children's varying ages, abilities, personalities and where possible, their wishes.

The planning and teaching of history will incorporate the following principles of inclusion:

- The setting of suitable learning objectives and challenges for children of different abilities and aptitudes in each year group and key stage
- Catering for pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- Adapting work through activities and expected outcomes
- Using adults to support all ability groups

IMPLEMENTATION

Approach

At The British School, history is taught as a weekly lesson (with additional lessons where appropriate) in terms 1, 3 and 5, i.e. half-termly topics. The rationale behind this, is that children learn better when immersed in a topic, and experience in-depth, extended learning over a shorter period. Geography is taught during the alternate terms for the same reasons.

We focus on both substantive knowledge (facts) and disciplinary knowledge (skills). We endeavour to enable children to think as historians and thus place emphasis on incorporating the following historical skills and concepts into teaching and learning:

- Constructing the past,
- Chronology
- Analysing sources of evidence
- Cause and effect
- Continuity and change
- Significance and interpretation
- Historical vocabulary

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.

Experiential knowledge is developed through a number of means, including visits, visitors and handling artefacts. Children make visits to our local heritage centre (and other sites of historical significance) to witness the wealth of history on our doorstep. In addition, we invite visitors with relevant historical knowledge or connections to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. 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.

Knowledge organisers support children to see the historical unit as a whole and these and vocabulary strips in UKS2, give them the autonomy to revisit core knowledge. Each KS2 child has and is encouraged to make regular reference to their "KS2 timeline" This helps them make sense of chronology and concurrence.

Historical Golden Threads

We have identified a set of key historical concepts: 'Golden Threads' that children will repeatedly revisit throughout their time at the British School from Year 1 upwards. Our golden threads are Empire, People and Society, Trade and Industry and Religious Beliefs.

By having the topics centred around these concepts, pupils are able to make links between their learning from one topic and year group to another, as well as use this knowledge to make connections with the present day and their own lives.

History Curriculum Planning

At the British school, we are using planning and resources from "Key Stage History".

<https://www.keystagehistory.co.uk/>

Keystage history offers high quality creative planning and teaching ideas with fully resourced history lessons and assessment opportunities. Teachers are also able, if desired, to supplement their content from History Rocks, Mr T History and other reputable sites such as Twinkl, TES and Classroom Secrets.

Rolling topic content programmes are detailed below:

History	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
KS1 Year A	THE GREAT FIRE of LONDON		FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND MARY SEACOLE		LOCAL STUDY - HISTORY ON MY DOORSTEP!	

	<i>How did the Fire of London change the lives of Londoners at the time and in the future?</i>		<i>How did the lives of Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale impact others at the time and in the future?</i>		<i>What do historical clues in our locality tell us about our town in the past?</i>
KS1 Year B	SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN THE WIDER WORLD: SCOTT AND THE ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS; AND ARMSTRONG AND THE MOON LANDINGS <i>How did Scott and Armstrong impact people in the world?</i>		THREE QUEENS <i>How have three famous Queens of England impacted the lives of people living at the time</i>		TOYS OVER TIME <i>What can toys tell us about the lives of children in the past?</i>
LKS2 Year A	STONE AGE TO BRONZE AGE TO IRON AGE <i>How did people's lives and land use change from the Stone Age to The Iron Age?</i>		THE ANCIENTS: IN-DEPTH STUDY OF ONE CIVILISATION: THE EGYPTIANS <i>How did the Egyptian people benefit from living in in this civilisation?</i>		LOCAL STUDY – JENNER, TYNDALE & PITTMAN HISTORY OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL <i>How did the work of Jenner, Tyndale and Pittman impact people at the time and in the future.</i> <i>How can the History of our local area help us to understand the wider history of Britain?</i>
LKS2 Year B	WHY DID BRITAIN GO TO WAR? WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE A CHILD IN WWII? <i>How did the lives of British children change due to the Second World War?</i>		ANCIENT GREEKS <i>How did the Greek Civilisation impact the world? What did the ancient Greeks teach us?</i>		THE ROMANS AND ROMAN BRITAIN (BOUDICCA) <i>How did the lives of Britons change during the era of the Roman rule of Britain?</i>
UKS2 Year A	ROMANS OUT; ANGLO SAXONS IN <i>Empire and People – Anglo Saxon era: how dark were the Dark Ages?</i>		BLACK AND BRITISH <i>How have Black people in Britain's lives changed over time?</i>		CENSUS DATA <i>What can we uncover about the lives of everyday people in Gloucestershire?</i>
UKS2 Year B	THE VIKINGS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR ENGLAND <i>How were the lives of Britons changed when the Vikings arrived?</i>		THE VICTORIANS <i>Victorian England – how spiffing was it to be a Victorian child?</i>		GOLDEN AGE OF ISLAM <i>How did the Golden Age of Islam impact the world? How does this compare with the impact of the Vikings?</i>

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. Our progression steps evidence this.

Medium and short term planning identifies learning objectives, learning outcomes within each unit of work, history activities, assessment opportunities, questioning, the vocabulary to be taught and used, differentiation and how resources should be used. Teachers' planning takes into account that the school places a high emphasis on the development of pupils' historical concepts and skills in history (Constructing the past, Sequencing the past (chronology), Change and development / continuity and change, Cause and effect, Significance and interpretation, Planning and carrying out a historical enquiry, Using sources as evidence, Vocabulary). In each lesson, one or more of these disciplinary skills are taught alongside the substantive knowledge. The Golden Threads are also drawn out, as appropriate.

Differentiation is organised by expectation, support, resources and outcome.

Lesson objectives are given in the form of an historical question, which pupils will be able to find answers for by the end of the lesson. The question is shared with pupils and is recorded in their books as their title. Pupils must know and understand what they are learning.

A variety of strategies, including questioning, discussion, practical and written work, marking and feedback are used to assess progress. This information is used to assess individuals and adapt next steps planning accordingly.

At The British School, we encourage teachers to create displays relevant to current history topics being taught. This could include relevant time-lines and vocabulary, unit inquiry questions prompts, pictures, and examples of children's work.

The Subject lead is also developing a whole school history board, where the Golden Threads and disciplinary skills are illustrated.

History in the foundation Stage

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the history side of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, looking at pictures of famous people in history or discovering the meaning of new and old in relation to their own lives.

SEND Policy

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:

- sending home any resources necessary to 'pre-teach' children prior to the start of a topic;
- 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;
- sometimes 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.

At The British School we recognise the need to cater for children with special educational needs. Work is differentiated to assist children's learning in terms of:

- Learning outcomes.
- Tasks.
- Teaching methods.
- Support.
- Resources.

Tasks can be broken down into small steps, giving children achievable goals. Activities should reinforce children's understanding of the subject. The abler children will be given open-ended tasks and opportunities for further research and more challenging study.

Leadership:

The work of the history subject leader 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. The history subject leader identifies staff development needs and, where appropriate, these are built into the school's staff development programme (e.g. staff meetings and inset).

The subject leader attends CPD events and is a member of online groups. She is also built links with the Head of History at the local secondary school.

The subject leader is expected to keep the curriculum under review. The subject leader keeps the governors informed about developments in history (link governor). The subject leader is responsible for evaluating the overall impact of the history curriculum.

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We boast a wide range of topic boxes, containing replica artefacts and a variety of information. The library contains a good supply of topic books. We have access to the internet. All this supports children's individual research and learning. Where additional resources are needed the subject leader may use the subject budget to boost resources. We also have links with the Wotton Heritage centre and the local secondary school, who have been supportive.

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 a variety of written responses. Children are exposed to historical topic vocabulary and actively encouraged to use it.
- **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 activities such as timelines. KS2 Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.
- **Geography**
Our pupils' grasp of locational geography is enhanced by using maps to identify where civilisations and peoples originated from/resided/invaded. For example,

children track the spread of the Roman Empire; note the location of Anglo Saxon burial remains in East Anglia and locate Islamic countries.

- **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.

- **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 gender inequalities. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognise 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 and what is right and wrong. For example, we look at child labour in Victorian Britain crime and punishment over time. Children learn about the role of the church in Anglo Saxon Britain; and they find out how British society has changed over time. The history curriculum enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

- **British Values**

When teaching history, we aim to include all vital learning about British Values. This includes teaching the children about democracy and ensuring that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes (such as a school council, whose members are voted for by the pupils).

IMPACT

Monitoring the impact of our curriculum

- Teacher assessment takes place during each lesson and at the end of each unit, when a summative activity is undertaken. KS1 assessments are conducted orally or in simple written form.
- Marking of certain pieces of independent written work, with feedback provided.
- Reports of pupils' progress and attainment are made verbally during parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms. A written report is provided during th (ine summer term, where progress and attainment in history are detailed.
- Pupil voice (interviewing the pupils about their learning)
- Retrieval tasks at the beginning of each lesson
- Lesson review – children are asked to answer the lesson's inquiry question.

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is the responsibility of the class teacher in conjunction with the history subject leader and the Head teacher / Assistant Head. This is done in line with the moderation and monitoring programme.

To be reviewed February 2027