



History at Ashmole Primary School

'At Ashmole Primary School we believe that we can all learn from the past to make it a better future.'

Intent

At Ashmole Primary School, history is brought to life, enabling children to explore like detectives and work like historians making them curious and passionate learners. Pupils will experience a rich curriculum, learning about key historical events in Britain's past and how they shaped our present, as well as learning about historical civilisations and periods across the world. Learning about inspirational people and those who have served their communities throughout history form an integral part of our history curriculum.

The study of history involves engaging pupils by beginning each unit of work with a KWL board where they are able to explain prior knowledge and ask questions that they would like to find the answers to in the up and coming topic. This enables them to better understand their lives today and for a future as more informed and enlightened citizens in line with our values curriculum. Through the study of history, pupils develop a wide range of critical thinking skills and the ability to distinguish between fact and subjectivity when it comes to studying sources of information and making judgements about the past. We have established a school curriculum plan for history as an entitlement for all pupils that is:

- Aspirational in terms of instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success through providing them with the opportunities to excel in terms of their acquisition of long lasting knowledge and understanding and mastery of core historical skills. Such high aspirations are clearly identifiable in the progressive and increasingly challenging objectives of the scheme of work of each enquiry, which define clearly what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do;
- Logical, and broad and balanced in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance and the demands of the National Curriculum. We have ensured that content includes representative investigations of British history spanning the period from the Stone Age to the Norman invasion of 1066 as well as enquiries focusing on the achievements of ancient civilizations such as the Maya, Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece;
- Relevant in terms of the careful consideration that has been given to the selection of historical enquiries that extend the knowledge and understanding of pupils beyond 1066 e.g. evaluating the significance of the Battle of Britain;
- A coherent narrative of British and World History so pupils gain a chronological understanding of the historical eras and events they are studying;

- Progressively more challenging from Years 1 through 6 both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and also the critical thinking skills we support them to utilise to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge.
These anticipated outcomes in knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition are detailed in the objectives of the detailed scheme of work for each enquiry;
- Built upon and has continuity with the provision for history established in the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- Inclusive in terms of delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils irrespective of specific learning needs or disabilities and differentiating where necessary through, for example, in class support, providing different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes

Implementation

At Ashmole Primary School, we implement an 'enquiry-led, skills based' approach to learning and teaching in history which develops our pupils as young, knowledgeable historians. Through enquiry, our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, the use of specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. History lessons are brought to life through memorable experiences including WOW days, going on trips, multi-sensory activities and inviting visitors to Ashmole. We structure learning in history through KWL board led enquiries about relevant historical topics, places and themes. Our curriculum is therefore 'knowledge rich' rather than 'content heavy' as we recognise that if we attempt to teach historical topics, places, themes and issues in their entirety we restrict opportunities for pupils to master and apply critical thinking skills and achieve more challenging subject outcomes.

We adopt a policy of immersive learning in history that provides sufficient time and space for our pupils not only to acquire new knowledge and subject vocabulary but also to develop subject concepts and understand the significance of what they have learned. Key historical terms are taught in context and displayed in the KS1 corridor. As children progress through their learning, they revisit the key vocabulary, deepening their understanding of the historical terminology within different history projects. Our learning and teaching in history is interactive and practical allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and in groups of various sizes both inside and outside of the classroom. Wherever possible we provide our pupils with historical evidence including narratives, paintings, photographs, artefacts, and data in the form of censuses and films to analyse and from which to reach conclusions and make judgements. We provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work. Prior learning is revisited to enable children to make links to previous learning. Only in this way, will knowledge become embedded and we ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next.

Each historical enquiry has clear objectives and anticipated outcomes. They are carefully structured through the use of mini questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer the question posed at the beginning of the investigation.

Our learning and teaching in history also recognises the importance of the local area with a number of our investigations involving observation, recording, presentation, interpretation and the evaluation of historical information outside of the classroom e.g significant people, places and events locally. The curriculum has been carefully planned to enable children to build upon their historical knowledge year on year.

Impact

Each history lesson has a clear objective and set outcomes for pupils in terms of knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition. Lessons are differentiated to ensure that all children are challenged. We ensure that when assessing pupils, evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources to inform the process, including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day-to-day observations, practical activities such as artwork and role play drama, the gathering, presentation and communication of information and writing responses. The outcomes of each lesson and KWL boards and end of unit assessments serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. Outcomes are used to build an emerging picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do.

At the end of each year, we make a summative judgement about the achievement of each pupil. At this point teachers decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning outcomes, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the age-related expectation. These decisions are based on the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms, which allows an informed and holistic judgement of attainment to be made. Achievement against the learning objectives for history at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.