

RIVERSDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

History Policy

Date:

Review Date:

Signed: _____ (Governor)

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of history teaching here at Riversdale Primary 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 multi-cultural 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.

Our objectives in the teaching of history 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;
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history, and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- to develop a sense of chronology;
- to know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education;
- to understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture, and to study some aspects of European history;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children, the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation;
- to develop the cross-curricular use of history in other subjects;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of the history of any non-European country when children from that part of the world make up a significant proportion of the school's role.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on using enquiry skills to learn about 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. We focus on helping children to 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 that in all classes, children have a wide range of experiences and exposure in history, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children, reflecting their individual needs. We achieve this by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty;
- ensuring children work in mixed groups of different children each lesson;
- providing resources of different complexity;
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.
- using class assemblies to show their understanding of a topic and perform to parents/carers.
- going on trips to complement the History teaching in class.
- encourage children to research, do projects and enter competitions in the wider community.

HISTORY CURRICULUM PLANNING

History is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum. We have devised our own History mid-term plans, as part of our cross curricular planning focus. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge using Head, Heart and Hand approach and use of Riversdale values. The children are increasingly challenged as they move 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. Some topics have a particular

historical focus, and in Key Stage 2, we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We have devised our own cross curricular mid-term plans. These plans ensure that subjects are taught, wherever possible, in a cross curricular manner. Sometimes the focus is History, and sometimes Geography or another subject. Whichever the case, links are made with not only other foundation subjects, but also with issues relating to the environment, enterprise, etc.

The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although s/he and the subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the nursery and reception classes are 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 Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, discussing their own families, or discovering the meaning of vocabulary ('new' and 'old', for example) in relation to their own lives.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HISTORY TO TEACHING IN OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

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 the Literacy Hour 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 skills by composing reports and letters, and through using writing frames.

Mathematics:

The teaching of history contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through activities such as creating time lines and through sequencing events in their own lives. Children also learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) And Citizenship:

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. 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 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 they start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

In our teaching of history, we contribute, where possible, to the children's spiritual development, as in the Key Stage 1 unit of work, 'What are we remembering on Remembrance Day?' 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.

HISTORY AND ICT

Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of history, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their history work in Key Stage 2. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as word-processing, finding information on the Internet and presenting information through PowerPoint.

HISTORY AND INCLUSION

At our school, we teach history to all children, whatever their individual needs. This accords with the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, adaptive teaching strategies – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessments made by teachers against the National Curriculum's attainment targets and level descriptors allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress in relation to the levels expected. This helps to ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to history.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning history. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, e.g. a visit to an archaeological dig, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Children demonstrate their knowledge and skills in history in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous historical event, whilst older pupils may produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their investigation, for example, of voyages of discovery. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

At the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the learning objectives specific to that particular topic/unit of work, and records the children's attainment against these. We use these as a basis for assessing the attainment and progress of the child as well as the whole class, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

The history subject leader/s keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio.

RESOURCES

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We keep these resources in a central store, where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. Teachers may order resources from the Wandsworth Borough Resources Library to support the units of work – these may include books, maps, artefacts, DVDs and CD-ROMs.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The coordination and planning of the history curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader/s, who also:

support colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in history and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;

use specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work. Time can be allocated for observation of History lessons on demand to HT.

The quality of teaching and learning in history is monitored and evaluated by the headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.