Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School

History Policy

Date: July 2025

Signed:

Nicola O'Connell – Headteacher

Jane Bisseker – Chair of Governors

Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the history taught and learnt in our school. It has been adopted by the staff of Holtsmere End Infants and Nursery School. This policy outlines the guiding principles by which this school will implement history in the National Curriculum. Our History policy and teaching celebrates History as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Rationale for History teaching

History should be concerned with stimulating the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We aim for the children to develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach the children to investigate these past events and, by so doing, develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem solving.

History aims:

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School we aim:

- To promote an interest in the past
- To develop an understanding of events over time and in a chronological structure
- To learn about the roles that individuals and events have played in shaping modern society
- To develop an ability to investigate and interpret different versions of past events
- To learn to study historical evidence and to ask and answer questions about the past
- To develop the ability to communicate historical knowledge and understanding using a variety of techniques
- To encourage children to understand other people, their beliefs, thoughts, values and experiences
- To develop an awareness of the world around them
- To develop a knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world

Attitude and skills

We also seek to encourage children to develop the following skills:

- Empathy
- Interpretation of secondary and primary sources
- Historical enquiry
- Communicating history dramatically, verbally and narratively
- Research

The Role of the History Co-ordinator is:

- Taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendment of curriculum planning as and when necessary.
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on resources, visits, visitors and curriculum changes, classroom teaching and learning ideas.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, pupils' views about the subject, displays and teachers' planning.
- Auditing resources and ordering resources when needed.
- Keeping up to date with developments in history and disseminating information to the rest of the teaching staff.
- Leading staff meetings as appropriate.
- Attending relevant training and prompting others about relevant training.

Foundation Stage

History in the Foundation Stage is taught under the umbrella of 'Understanding the World' from the EYFS curriculum. The children are supported in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that helps

them to make sense of the world. The pupils are encouraged to talk about their families and past and present events in their lives. They are beginning to gain knowledge and understanding of the world through:

- Photographs
- Listening to stories and memories of older people
- Role play activities
- Discussing events in the past and their own personal lives
- Sequencing events to gain a sense of time

Key Stage 1

The National Curriculum Programme of Study at Key Stage 1 focuses on developing children's awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should 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. Children should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching about the people, events and changes outlined below, teachers are often introducing pupils to historical periods that they will study more fully at Key Stage 2.
Pupils should be taught about:

- Changes within living memory
- Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally
- The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality

Recording of History

Pupils are encouraged to record their work using a variety of methods and therefore communicate their findings to others. These may include written or verbal reports, charts, collages, models, pictures and role-play activities. Examples of children's work will be retained to provide evidence of on-going history, including photographic evidence of displays, presentations, visiting speakers and historical visits.

Planning

The history curriculum is planned across the whole Key Stage to ensure that all National Curriculum objectives are covered and given opportunities for consolidation. As we understand that there are many different history abilities in each class, we ensure that each unit of work has sufficient differentiation to allow all children to work at their level of challenge. Planning is monitored regularly.

Enhancements

To ensure that each historically based topic has meaning and relevance we ensure that we include activities such as a trip, visit, themed day and/or a visit from a specialist company i.e. 'History off the Page'. We always try to make the topic 'come to life' as we recognise that children learn successfully when they have some first-hand experience.

Cross Curricular links in History

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 which are used in English lessons are historical in nature. Children develop orally 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.

Computing

We use computing in history teaching where appropriate. Children use computing in history to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet. Each teacher ensures it is used as a teaching tool where appropriate, and provides opportunities for children to also use it.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

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. They learn how to recognise and challenge stereotypes. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

British Values

History is a topic where you can actively promote British Values in a meaningful way. Children have the opportunity to learn about British Values in the past and consider whether these are different to nowadays. Children will start to think about why these differences occur.

Assessment

Children's progress should be monitored through observation and by using planning and learning objectives. Formative assessment takes place in each lesson ensuring that gaps in skills acquisition do not form and widen. Children's understanding is assessed through regular posing of 4 or 5 'key questions' and revisiting of history work in 'floor books. The History Co-ordinator and SLT analyses the assessment data using SONAR. This is monitored on a termly basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation

History will be monitored throughout the school by the History Co-ordinator who will be responsible for gathering samples of curriculum work. The History Co-ordinator will also monitor history books and planning to ensure that the curriculum is being effectively taught and match the needs and abilities of the pupils. Lessons ideally will also be monitored to help promote quality of learning and standards of achievement in history.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

- We plan our classroom activities to challenge and involve all pupils appropriately, according to age and capability, ethnic diversity, gender and language background.
- We are aware of different learning styles and the need to allow pupils to be able to work in their preferred learning styles for some of the time.
- We use materials for teaching that avoid stereotyping, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability.

- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise.

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