



# *St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School*

## History Policy

This document provides a framework within which parents, staff and governors can work together to meet the needs of pupils.

The Mission for St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School,

'...to ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.'

Rooted in scripture

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full  
John 10:10

Therefore, the development and implementation of our History policy supports us in achieving our mission and in providing the appropriate provision for all the children in our care. At the beginning of every history unit the teacher will discuss the Gospel Values which are going to be focussed on in this unit. The teacher will refer to these values throughout the unit and ask the children to reflect on what it means for us at the end of the unit.

### **Rationale for History teaching**

History should be concerned with stimulating the children's interest and understanding about the lives 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.

### **Aims for the teaching of History at St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School**

At St Bernadette's our intention is to provide quality teaching and learning of history. By the end of their time with us, our children will know some people, places and events that have informed our locality. They will have a broad knowledge of regional, national and international history and well-developed historical thinking. Their ability to investigate, consider, reflect and review events of the past will have supported good historical understanding.

They will use their understanding of change and continuity, similarity and difference, cause and effect, chronology and significance to interpret events and developments. They will ask and answer challenging historical questions that make links between events, developments, peoples and periods in the past. They will know of and select from a range of historical

sources when using their own skills of research, analysis and evaluation. They will use historical terms accurately in their effective communication of ideas and judgements. They will select and apply their knowledge and skills from other subjects to draw conclusions and communicate their findings.

They will enjoy learning, regard history as important and want more challenges and success. They will have a mind-set that accepts that tentative conclusions are the norm. They will confidently carry out classroom tasks. They will have memories for life from visitors, visits and rich experiences. They will have a sense of social responsibility, respect for diversity and a willingness to engage with sensitive and controversial issues. They will feel prepared for the next stage of their history education. They will feel proud of themselves, their communities and their place.

### **Substantive Content**

This is the substance that pupils learn in each subject – the building blocks of factual content expressed through accounts (stories, descriptions, representations, reports, statistics, source material, commentaries, explanations and analyses) and the vocabulary (concepts, terms, technical language) that enable pupils to move about within their own knowledge, to read and to communicate. Thus, pupils gain the internal reference points that allow them to recognise the patterns, notice the contrasts, ask the questions and discuss the options that the disciplinary content will demand.

The substantive threads within our curriculum are:



These coherent links have been built within and across subjects so that nothing sits in isolation and enables pupils to draw on prior historical learning.

For the scope, coherence, rigour and sequencing to achieve its full benefit for pupils, the substantive content must be taught with 'high-leverage' activities, so that pupils think hard about the substance itself, so that they assimilate and retain material efficiently and so that they gain confidence from their fluency in foundational concepts, terms and reference

points. In this way vocabulary will become extremely secure, with the range of vocabulary that pupils recognise growing all the time and creating resonance as pupils' encounter it again and again, both consolidating that vocabulary and freeing up memory space for pupils to make sense of new material.

Knowledge is highly 'sticky'. The cumulative effect of being secure in rich stories, a detailed 'sense of place' and a profound 'sense of period' is that pupils' curiosity is ignited. Their hunger for yet more knowledge, as relationships, connections and relationships multiply, grows very naturally.

### Disciplinary Content

This is all that pupils learn about how knowledge is constantly renewed in the subject's ongoing development, outside of school, by its practitioners (historians, geographers, philosophers, theologians, artists). It teaches pupils that the sum of our knowledge is not fixed, that it is constantly being tested and renewed, that there are standards of truth for such renewal. This constant quest for better and better understandings of our world inspires both awe and humility in all of us.

#### In studying history as a discipline, pupils will:

- use the concepts of **continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance**, in order to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses;
- practise the methods of historical enquiry, **understand how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.**



### **The Role of the History Subject Leader is:**

- Taking the lead in the development, evaluation and amendment of schemes of work as and when necessary
- Acting as a consultant to colleagues on resources, visits, visitors, curriculum changes, classroom teaching and learning ideas
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work, pupils' views about the subject, displays and teachers' planning
- Writing School development plan
- 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 in-service training and prompting others about relevant training

### **History in EYFS**

History in the Foundation Stage is taught under the umbrella of 'Understanding of the World' from the EYFS. 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

## **Key Stage 2**

The National Curriculum Programme of Study at Key Stage 2 should continue to allow children to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and 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 should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

In planning to ensure the progression, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Pupils should be taught about:

- Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age
- The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots
- The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor
- A local history study
- A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- The achievements of the earliest civilizations – an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer; The Indus Valley; Ancient Egypt; The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China
- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- A non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300.

## **How does the study of history support literacy?**

As with all subjects in the curriculum, the humanities provide the powerful knowledge that, if thoroughly and securely taught, builds the wide and secure vocabulary acquisition that underpins literacy and all successful communication. We know that pupils only read with the speed necessary for fluency when they have adequate prototypes for abstract words and phrases, and when their densely structured schemata allow them to 'chunk' the incoming text for meaning. Vocabulary size is the outward sign of the inward acquisition of knowledge. Moreover, the types of account that form each subject's processes and products – its narratives, analyses, arguments – give pupils continuous, focused practice in reading and writing, both fiction and non-fiction. Pupils' reading and writing will always be richly grounded in stimulating content in which pupils will be increasingly secure, and always driven by a clear disciplinary purpose.

Every history lesson is therefore a lesson playing a central part in improving reading, even when a text is not actually being read! And the range of reading pupils do in these lessons will be extensive. Pupils' extended speaking and writing is likewise transformed by the richly diverse vocabulary and the secure, fascinating stories that have underpinned that vocabulary acquisition.

## **Recording of History**

At the start of each history lesson the children will be given an enquiry question instead of a learning objective. Enquiry questions are a curricular tool to organise content. They should not be confused with the term 'enquiry', which is used to describe pedagogical approaches (such as 'enquiry learning'). Using enquiry questions does not imply any preference of pedagogical approach.

Pupils are also more likely to remember content that they have engaged with analytically. In history terms, this would seem to suggest that the approaches to develop pupils' disciplinary knowledge suggested above are also likely to secure pupils' substantive knowledge of the past. Recalling previously taught content (retrieval practice) and revisiting content in lessons (spaced practice) have also been shown to be effective in securing pupils' knowledge over time. The use of regular low-stakes testing will improve pupils' retention of knowledge in history. Each year group teacher, with the help of the subject leader, have produced Knowledge Organisers which include key vocabulary, key knowledge and a timeline for the unit they are teaching. Pupils will also be able to review previous knowledge organisers to help them build upon previous learning.

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, annotated photographs, and scribed work. Structure strips are used to help scaffold their responses and especially useful for those with learning needs.

## **How does the study of history, geography and religion directly foster moral values, attitudes and the disposition to challenge and improve our world?**

History uniquely offer the development of values, attitudes and dispositions, with some substantive threads within our curriculum: **civilisations, society, migration, justice and equality and local history.**

Given that they uniquely address the study of humans in society through time and their interaction with the planet, history provides distinctive contributions to pupils' overall education. If scope, rigour, coherence and sequencing are properly configured, these subjects foster the knowledge, skills and dispositions for pupils to:

- thrive through informed curiosity about the world;
- view human challenges, quests and achievements through the lens of the long traditions that have shaped them;
- think critically about how to change the world for the common good;
- gain the language and concepts to notice, analyse and question how power works in society, and how inequality or suffering arises;
- understand and value the diverse experiences and contributions of others who may be very different from themselves;
- enrich their own sense of identity as they look across time, space and culture and see many positive versions of themselves;
- understand the power of learned communities working collaboratively to seek truth in their claims about the world;
- gain the concepts which give them the tools for precise thought and rigorous argument with which to describe, explain and change the world;
- build strong standards of truth about the conditions under which valid claims can be made about the world, society, culture and belief, on multiple scales;
- appreciate and participate in the arts – music, art and literature – through richly diverse artistic outputs within the many sources studied, properly understood in their cultural, temporal and geographical contexts and providing richly informed stimulus for pupils' own creativity.

### **Assessment**

Children's progress should be monitored through observation and by using enquiry questions and moderation of work.

At the end of each unit the teacher submits evaluations in History and grade children as Ontrack or Working Towards the expected standard based on an assessment task. These pieces of work will be moderated by all staff.

This enables the subject leader to have a full understanding of the standards in History throughout the school and the information needed to support further subject development.

## **Marking**

Whole class feedback to pupils should be provided on their attainment against the lesson enquiry question. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the school feedback policy and Metacognition questions.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The History subject leader will monitor history books and medium-term planning to ensure that the knowledge and skills are being effectively taught and match the needs and abilities of the pupils.

Pupil interviews are vital in assessing whether pupils know and remember more. A school Governor from the Standards and Effectiveness Committee will run these interviews at least once a year with the subject leader. The subject leader will interview pupils in the first half of the autumn term and then once in the Spring and Summer terms.

Lessons ideally will also be monitored to help promote quality of learning and standards of achievement in history.

Findings from this monitoring and evaluation will inform the subject leader's action plan and the School Development Plan.

## **Inclusion**

All pupils are entitled to a broad history curriculum. Any adaptations made to support pupils' learning in history usually should not be to the overall curriculum content but rather to how the content is taught. In the case of pupils with the most complex learning needs, there may be occasions when it is appropriate to modify the curriculum. However, this will be the exception.

Ensuring that all pupils otherwise encounter the same content is particularly important given the role that hinterland information (background content in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding) has in facilitating learning in history. This suggests that significantly reducing content or complexity for some pupils might in fact limit their access to content or limit their ability to learn. It is likely that pupils will benefit most from support that combines extra attention to securing the most generative knowledge (enables further learning) while ensuring that all pupils are able to learn about events and periods in a rich context and through meaningful examples.



### **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 which avoid stereo-typing, and bias, towards race, gender, role or disability
- We deal with such issues clearly and sensitively when they arise

### **Ambition for All**

At our school we teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. We use a range of strategies to support pupils. A few of these, particularly relevant to History are:

- Pre-teaching or earlier encounters with concepts
- Teacher intervention to address gaps or misconceptions.
- The use of appropriate vocabulary at varying levels of difficulty during lessons
- Modified text passages as expected in other curriculum areas
- Different levels of written or oral questions for pupils investigating photographic or other visual material
- Careful use of support for pupils with English as an additional language

### **Deeper learning**

- Teachers to provide teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to think creatively, explore and develop ideas, and try different approaches. Pupils should be encouraged to set their own questions, offer ideas, suggest solutions or explanations, and reflect on what they have heard, seen or done in order to clarify their thoughts.
- Greater independence in working, e.g. a pupil to be able to carry out their own simple historical enquiry.
- Provide real-life research and presentation opportunities, for example carrying out interviews with local people and collating the results.
- Avoid giving able pupils additional writing tasks and encourage them instead to communicate their understanding in a variety of ways, giving them responsibility for choosing and evaluating the most appropriate method.

The quality and effectiveness of the History curriculum will be monitored and evaluated through regular reports to the Governors' Standards and Effectiveness Committee, and a vigorous programmed of whole school self-evaluation. The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Signed:	.....	(History Subject Leader)
	.....	(Headteacher)
	.....	(Governor)
Date:	...../...../.....	

