



St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy

History Policy

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Aims of the Policy

At St. George's Catholic Academy, we are committed to high quality teaching and learning in History to raise standards of achievement for all children. All staff and governors have been consulted in developing this policy, which summarises expectations and common working practices. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice in History to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the school and supports its vision.

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At St. George's Catholic Academy, we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community, diocese and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit, all should work closely together to support the process of learning within History. Working in partnership, we aim to:

- provide a Christ-centred, supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements; to enable them to 'grow in faith and have faith in growing'.
- ensure children can develop competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging History curriculum;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a History curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.

History Curriculum – Statement of Intent

At St. George's, we want our children to gain a coherent understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. We desire a language rich curriculum that will inspire our children so that they are curious to know more about the past. Our children should gain historical knowledge and an understanding of chronology while asking perceptive questions, thinking critically and supporting their opinions using sources of evidence. They should develop an understanding of how lives have changed, of diverse societies and the challenges humanity has faced over the course of history.

Curriculum Intent Model

1. Curriculum drivers shape the breadth of our History curriculum. They derive from an exploration of the backgrounds of our students, our beliefs about high quality education, and our values. They are used to ensure we give our students appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.
2. Cultural capital gives our students the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.
3. Curriculum breadth is shaped by our [curriculum drivers](#), [cultural capital](#), [subject topics](#) and our ambition for students to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.
4. Our History curriculum distinguishes between the different topics and 'threshold concepts'. History topics being the specific aspects of History that are studied.
5. Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, students return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.
6. The threshold concepts in History are: *Investigate and interpret the past*, *Build an overview of world history*, *Understand chronology* and *Communicate historically*.
7. For each of the threshold concepts three Milestones, each of which includes the procedural and Knowledge categories in each subject, give students a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.
8. Knowledge organisers help students to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema.
9. Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if students are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for students to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding they must first master the basics, which takes time.
10. Within each Milestone, students gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep. The goal

for students is to display sustained mastery at the 'advancing' stage of understanding by the end of each milestone and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the 'deep' stage.

11. As part of our progression model, we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who argue to direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the reversal effect.

Implementation: Planning and Teaching of History

12. Our curriculum design in History is narrative based, and tells the story of British and World history, chronologically. We have built in retrieval sessions from earlier lessons (both in year and from previous years) into all lessons, in order to maintain and embed learning and giving children the opportunity to apply their prior knowledge.
13. We also understand that learning is invisible in the short-term and that sustained mastery takes time.
14. Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the History curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned.
15. The planning and teaching of History is organised into a series of *cycles* in each Key Stage. Cohesion has been developed between the cycles, helping the children gain a sense of different historical themes and build a sense of chronology over the two Key Stages. Children study a range of topics: From ancient civilisations in Britain and across the World, through significant periods in British history, and to main events in Britain and the World from both the distant past to more recent times. In EYFS and in the early stages of Key Stage 1, children look at their own personal history and that of their family to bring them to an understanding of what 'history' is.
16. A number of Knowledge Categories are identified for each of the cycles. These are taken from this list: *Main Events, Settlements, Beliefs, Food and Farming, Location, Culture and Pastimes, Conflict, Travel and Exploration, Society, and Artefacts.*
17. Vocabulary is specifically identified in the planning for each of the *cycles*. Tier Two vocabulary is that which drives the learning in History and helps determine the kind of tasks the children undertake. Basic tasks may be driven by words such as, *observe, identify, describe* or *use*. More advanced or deep tasks may be driven by words such as, *seek out, analyse, compare, select*. Tier Three vocabulary used in each Cycle is that which is specific to that aspect of the topic. For instance, when learning about Viking exploration, words such as *longship* or place names, such as, *Newfoundland* and *Greenland* are specific to

the topic being studied at that time.

18 The topics taught in History across the school can be found in the History section of our website under 'Knowledge Maps'.

Impact

Because learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term.

We use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practice. This means we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long run.

We assess understanding of the composite knowledge away from the learning, using revisits, recording these results on INSIGHT, then make a 1-4 judgement (as per our assessment policy and Trust Assessment framework) using our assessment matrix, which also takes into account evidence in books and contributions in lessons.

We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

History - Subject Leader

The Subject leader has a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and quality assuring History knowledge organisers, resources and History plans throughout the school;
- supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of History knowledge organisers, resources and History plans and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in History and advising the Senior Leadership Team on action needed; taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for History;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through research and continuing professional development.

Organisation

The learning environment in History will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning.

Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc);
- one to one teaching;
- conferencing;
- collaborative and active learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- resources available to study history;
- labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school;
- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all History equipment and resources.

Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought provoking and stimulating displays to include knowledge organisers and helpful resources that document the learning journey through History in the class, including timelines relevant to the current topics and across previous topics. This ensures the further building of a sense of chronology.

Differentiation

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- challenge;
- mastery;
- content;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- teacher/adult support.

Tasks will be differentiated through scaffolding. All children will access the same learning, with support for some. Teachers will adapt their pedagogical content approach based on the progression through the cognitive domains (see below).

Basic	Advancing	Deep
Acquiring knowledge.	Applying knowledge.	Reasoning with knowledge.
Knowledge is explicit and unconnected.	Knowledge is explicit and connected.	Knowledge is connected and tacit.
Relying on working memory.	Drawing on long-term memory, freeing working memory to consider application.	Relies on long-term memory, freeing working memory to be inventive.
Procedures processed one at a time with conscious effort.	Procedures being automatic.	Automatic recall of procedures.
Understands only in the context in which the materials are presented.	Sees underlying concepts between familiar contexts.	Uses conceptual understanding in unfamiliar situations.
New information does not readily stick. Schemas are limited.	New information is linked to prior knowledge. Schemas are strong.	Readily assimilates new information into rapidly expanding schemas.
Struggles to search for problem solutions. Relies on means-end analysis.	Combines searching for problem solutions with means-end analysis.	Draws on a vast store of problem solutions.
Requires explicit instructions and models.	Uses models effectively.	Prefers discovery approaches to learning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Termly assessments are made of pupils' work in History in order to establish the level of attainment and progress and to inform future planning. Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in relation to knowledge retention of key composites away from the learning; determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. We assess understanding of the composite knowledge away from the learning, using revisits, recording these results on INSIGHT, then make a 1-4 judgement (as per our assessment policy and Trust Assessment framework) using our assessment matrix, which also takes into account evidence in books and contributions in lessons.

All results from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning. (See Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy)