

# History Curriculum Overview

## Our department's vision

Our History department's vision is to give pupils the knowledge and skills to be active global citizens, who can go on to live a life of choice and opportunity. This is achieved through a knowledge-rich curriculum that is sequenced in a way that allows pupils to see how the world they live in came to be.

## What knowledge have we selected in our curriculum and why?

In selecting and sequencing knowledge for our curriculum, we are guided by the national curriculum and led by our whole-school curriculum design principles. All of our pupils will see the ways in which the past has shaped the present and how this enables them to make sense of the world around them; their own lives in London, modern Britain, and current world affairs.

### 1. Knowledge-rich:

Knowledge in each unit is carefully planned and sequenced by the history lead through the medium of booklets. The history curriculum seeks to give pupils a solid foundation and broad overview in some of the most important periods, events and themes in British and world history. It is comprehensive but necessarily selective. The curriculum gives pupils a strong grounding in British and world history, taught chronologically from medieval Christendom to the present day. Whilst studying these periods, the units explore our key threshold concepts of: change and continuity; cause and consequence; chronology; significance; similarity and difference; and perspectives. Every unit has an accompanying knowledge organiser containing the relevant tier 3 vocabulary, as well as the core knowledge for each lesson. Every lesson begins with retrieval practice which strengthens the recall of knowledge covered in previous units and lessons. All history lessons include explicit vocabulary instruction and exposition through storytelling, so that new knowledge is strongly embedded in pupils' schema.

### 2. Backwards planned:

In our all-through sequencing of our curriculum, pupils learn history in chronological order. Knowledge is built upon as pupils progress through the school. This ensures key concepts

can be revisited but with added complexity. We have a strong focus on the disciplinary skills of an historian and ensure that these skills are built upon year-on-year.

### 3. Carefully resourced:

We continually improve the central resources on our drive each year; we adapt them to the learning needs of our groups, co-plan for mixed attainment groups and use our booklets to ensure every learning objective is delivered.

Each history topic has the following:

- **Core text:** with 'lean lessons' that give pupils the core story of the history they are learning through textbook-style prose and captivating narratives.
- **Slides/presentations:** with high-resolution images related to their lesson and with minimal writing to assist cognitive load.
- **Homework and Revision Booklet:** with a knowledge organiser of tier 3 vocabulary, timelines and weekly homework tasks.
- **Writing Booklet:** with sentence starters, model answers, essay plans and worked examples of extended writing, source analysis and interpretations.

In September 2025, we also launched our exciting non-fiction reading course for both Year 7 and Year 8. This strengthens, as well as supplements, the knowledge pupils gain as part of their timetabled lessons. This gives pupils the opportunity to learn about other historical eras that occurred during the same era they are learning about in lessons. For example, pupils read about the Ottoman Empire when studying the First World War and the French Revolution when studying the Age of Reform and the women's suffrage movement in Britain.

### 4. Aspirational, inclusive and diverse:

Aspiration in our curriculum is seen in our high expectations of pupils, the depth we expose our students to in lessons - stretch and challenge is not just an add-on to a worksheet, it is embedded in the rigour of our booklets. There is joy in history lessons and this is evident through the pace of lessons, the use of choral response, captivating narratives in 'lean lessons', and partner talk.

We support and ensure our curriculum is inclusive for pupils with a range of needs first and foremost through high quality teaching: this means explicit instruction, scaffolding, adapting teaching according to AFL (assessment for learning) to help more pupils learn, providing learners with worked examples and using diagrams to accompany explanations (dual coding). Our scaffolding is evident in our exposition, questioning and through the use of aids where appropriate. We differentiate by time, not task, by pitching high and scaffolding up. As a small school, we know our pupils and their needs very well, using the Graduated Approach

to trial in-lesson interventions with our SENCO. When it is necessary, pupils needing extra support will have the chance to catch-up or improve by attending compulsory homework catch-up sessions after school which runs twice a week in humanities.

Diversity can be seen clearly across the curriculum. We want our students to be exposed to a wide range of stories, perspectives and experiences in their history lessons. We also believe that for pupils to truly get the essence of the time period they are studying, they need to view each era in context and with differing perspectives. For example, a study of religion in the Middle Ages cannot be done by solely looking at Christianity in England. Instead, there must be reference to the Crusades and the Holy Land in the Middle East. Likewise, a sound understanding of the First World War in the trenches of France and Belgium would be incomplete without first understanding the origins of the war in the Balkans and German statehood from 1871. Whilst history teachers need to make tough decisions when it comes to curriculum choices, we also have to acknowledge that 'history comes from history', meaning that not all events can be studied properly if they are done in isolation.

#### **5. Rigorously assessed:**

We systematically assess pupils in lessons by teaching responsively through a range of AFL strategies; through low-stakes assessments; and in formal assessments at the end of every half-term after which we deliver whole-class feedback. Our 'Do Nows' are a means of retrieval practice used to recap previously taught topics and are planned meticulously, considering spacing and interleaving of practice. Our low-stakes assessments are a key way of seeking and, via WCF, closing gaps in knowledge. Formal assessments provide robust student data that can be used formatively to re-teach content identified in QLAs through WCF (whole class feedback) and summatively to consider the snapshot of attainment and progress at that time.

#### **6. Regularly evaluated and reflected upon.**

We use structures such as subject management, department meeting time and pupil progress meetings after formal assessments to frequently reflect on our curriculum. We consider its design, its resourcing, its implementation and its impact; making changes immediately or logging them for the next academic year. Constant reflection on our implementation takes place through our instructional coaching system, in which every teacher receives a weekly action step to improve their implementation of the curriculum.

## Curriculum Maps

| Primary Curriculum Map |                                                       |                        |                       |                   |               |                           |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Year                   | Autumn 1                                              | Autumn 2               | Spring 1              | Spring 2          | Summer 1      | Summer 2                  |
| 1                      | Changes in Living Memory                              | Significant Events     |                       | Dinosaurs         |               |                           |
| 2                      |                                                       | Prehistoric Britain    |                       | Ancient Egypt     |               |                           |
| 3                      |                                                       | Shang Dynasty          | Ancient Greece        |                   | Roman Britain |                           |
| 4                      |                                                       |                        | Anglo-Saxons          | Medieval Monarchs | Benin Kingdom |                           |
| 5                      | Transatlantic Slave Trade                             |                        | Industrial Revolution |                   |               |                           |
| 6                      | What were the Social Effects of the Second World War? | The History of Feltham |                       |                   |               | The Civil Rights Movement |

## Secondary Curriculum Map

| Year | Cycle 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Cycle 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Cycle 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7    | The Middle Ages                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Early Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|      | <b>Christendom &amp; the Golden Age of Islam; The Norman Conquest; The Crusades</b><br><br>Assessment: How did religion shape the medieval world?                                                                                                   | <b>The Mongol and Mali Empires</b><br><br>How did the Mongols and the Malians expand their empires?<br><br><b>Plantagenet England and the Hundred Years War</b><br><br>Assessment: How secure was the power of the Plantagenet monarchs?                                                          | <b>The Black Death</b><br><br>How important was religion during the Black Death?<br><br><b>The Renaissance; The Tudors</b><br><br>Assessment: What changes were there to religion and sovereignty in Early Modern Europe?                                                                                                                |
| 8    | Early Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|      | <b>The English Civil War and Restoration; Glorious Revolution</b><br><br>How was British sovereignty transformed in the Stuart era?<br><br><b>The British Empire</b><br><br>Assessment: How far did colonial rule differ across the British Empire? | <b>The Transatlantic Slave Trade</b><br><br><b>Assessment: Who was responsible for abolishing the transatlantic slave trade?</b><br><br><b>The Industrial Revolution and the Age of Reform; the French Revolution</b><br><br>Assessment: How much change was there to life in Industrial Britain? | <b>Women's Suffrage</b><br><br>Did the Suffragettes help or hinder the women's suffrage movement?<br><br><b>The First World War</b><br><br>Assessment: What caused the outbreak of the Great War and how did it become a World War?<br><br><b>The Russian Revolution</b><br><br>Why did Russia become the World's first Communist State? |
| 9    | Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|      | <b>The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany</b><br><br>Assessment: How similar were the Soviet and Nazi states?<br><br><b>The Second World War</b><br><br>What caused the outbreak of the Second World War?                                                | <b>The Holocaust</b><br><br>Assessment: How and why did the Holocaust happen?<br><br><b>Decolonisation and Independence Movements</b><br><br>What were the consequences of British decolonisation?                                                                                                | <b>Modern Britain</b><br><br>Assessment: To what extent did British society improve between 1945 and 2008?<br><br><b>The Cold War in Asia</b><br><br>Why was US intervention in proxy warfare so significant during the Cold War?                                                                                                        |

At GCSE, pupils follow the Edexcel course. This is subject to change in light of proposed changes as a result of the Curriculum and Assessment Review.

| GCSE and A Level Secondary Curriculum Map |                                                                     |                                          |                         |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Year                                      | Cycle 1                                                             | Cycle 2                                  | Cycle 3                 |
| 10                                        | Medicine through Britain,<br>c.1250 - present                       | Early Elizabethan England                | Weimar and Nazi Germany |
| 11                                        | Weimar and Nazi Germany<br>Superpower Relations and<br>the Cold War | Superpower Relations and<br>the Cold War | Revision                |
| 12                                        |                                                                     |                                          |                         |
| 13                                        |                                                                     |                                          |                         |

## Why do we teach what we do in the order we have chosen?

### Substantive Knowledge

It is essential for our pupils to journey through the past in chronological order, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9. This broad sweep of history, done in chronological order, enables them to grasp a real sense of the past and each of its distinct time periods such as the Middle Ages, the Early Modern era, and the Modern era.

This prevents pupils making anachronistic or ahistorical assumptions about the past such as there being few advancements in the Middle Ages or that the 20th century was when life suddenly got better. In adopting a clear chronological order, we are also more adequately prepared in the teaching of second-order concepts such as cause and consequence, similarity and difference, and change and continuity. A curriculum without a clear chronological order will prevent pupils from engaging with these concepts because it is impossible to see what aspects of life changed or continued without a solid grounding in the two time periods being compared. Similarly, if attention is not given to dates and chronology, then a pupil will not be able to write analytical essays about the consequences of an event if they cannot identify what came before or after the event in question. Finally, this prepares them for GCSE thematic studies which expect pupils to have fluency in their ability to show change and continuity or similarity or difference across multiple time periods.

Key concepts such as power, authority, trade, imperialism, warfare and religion are revisited over multiple topics across the five different year groups. This develops pupils' schema by embedding concepts in their long-term memory and by building knowledge in a cumulative manner with increasing complexity. Power is first introduced in Year 7 Cycle 1 through

kingship and the role of the medieval Church in Christendom. Pupils then spend Cycle 2 learning about how power in medieval England was contested and limited. A year later in Year 8 Cycle 2 and 3, pupils will see how power became more distributed in lessons on the Age of Reform and the women's suffrage movement. Our teaching of imperialism further demonstrates this sequential learning: Year 7 learn about empires and caliphates in Asia and Africa before the British Empire in Year 8 - by the time they reach this topic in Year 8, they already have the ability to recall key features of empire-building and what made Britain's empire different to those that came before it. Year 8 pupils define empires as a collection of colonies, but will then use this prerequisite knowledge to expand their understanding of empires by learning about protectorates and decolonisation in Year 9. Of course, pupils would require lots of examples of colonisation before learning about decolonisation.

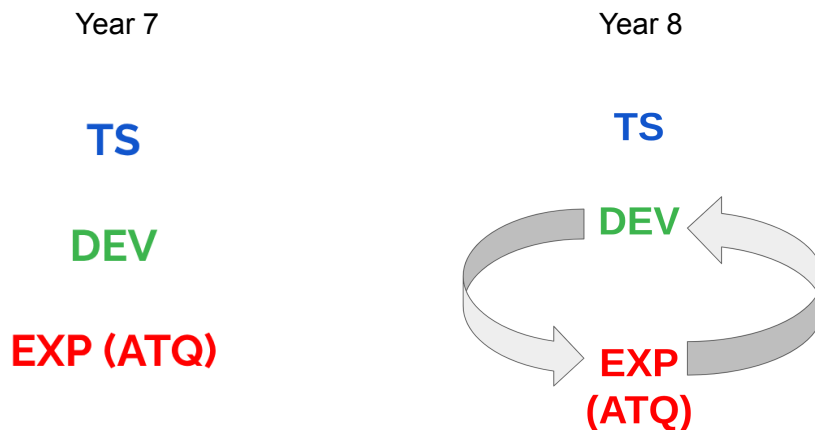
| Example of vocabulary being taught sequentially in history |                               |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Word                                                       | Empire                        |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |
| Year                                                       | 7                             | 8                                                                                 | 9                                                                                 |
| Definition                                                 | A collection of lands.        | A collection of colonies ruled by a foreign ruler or state as part of its empire. | A collection of colonies ruled by a foreign ruler or state as part of its empire. |
| Examples                                                   | The Mongols captured Baghdad. | The British had crown colonies and penal colonies.                                | British decolonisation and partitions in India and Palestine.                     |

As well as revisiting tier 2 and 3 concepts, we also revisit places. Doing this regularly again supports pupils' schema as they have a layered understanding of significant places, yet it also has the added benefit of avoiding singular narratives and perspectives which aligns with our department's vision of seeing how the world came to be.

| Location       | Iraq (and Mesopotamia)                                                                                                                                                |                                                                         |                                                              |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year           | 7                                                                                                                                                                     | 8                                                                       | 9                                                            |
| Topic / lesson | <p>Cycle 1 - Baghdad's pivotal role in the Golden Age of Islam and centre of the Abbasid caliphate.</p> <p>Cycle 2 - The Siege of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258.</p> | Cycle 3 - Iraq during the Arab Revolt in 1916 and British rule in Iraq. | Cycle 3 - US and British invasions of Iraq in 1991 and 2003. |

## Disciplinary Knowledge and Skills

**Essay writing and paragraph structure:** Pupils in Year 7 spend a whole year mastering the key components of writing paragraphs before moving onto more complex analytical ways of writing in Year 8. In Year 8, pupils are taught to weave analysis throughout their paragraphs rather than as a summary at the end of a very long paragraph or essay. They also learn how to craft counter arguments and weigh up evidence, only after perfecting the key components of paragraph writing in Year 7. Our writing booklet resources also provide pupils with phrases and structures that allows 'the linguistic to release the conceptual'. Pupils will differentiate between the speed and types of causes such as categorising them as long-term, short-term, trigger, tipping point etc. This makes their tackling of the second-order concept, such as causes, more analytical rather than formulaic and unsophisticated.



**Sources and interpretations:** Pupils in Year 7 do not spend lengthy amounts of time analysing sources. Firstly, our Year 7 cohorts come from many different primary schools with differing levels of reading abilities which means we should be prioritising good reading and writing skills before source work. Secondly, we believe that young pupils should be building a knowledge-rich schema that allows them to later analyse sources in their contexts, rather than trying to mimic the role of a professional historian who already has vast amounts of knowledge that assists them with inferring from sources. Pupils are still able to define sources and interpretations and can explain why historians use them, but we do not use sources and interpretations as entry points in a new topic or period of history. In Year 8, pupils begin to make inferences from sources before evaluating the usefulness of sources at the end of Cycle 3. By Year 9, pupils will be confident in their analysis of sources and can then use this knowledge to understand how historians reach different arguments. Year 9 is also when we teach how the past has been interpreted based on the time in which historians are writing. This prepares pupils for their GCSE course which requires them to explain why historians reach different arguments and how far they agree with them.

| Year                              | 7                                                | 8                                                               | 9                                                                    | 10                                                                                                               | 11       |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Disciplinary skills and knowledge | Define and recognise sources and interpretations | Inferring from sources and evaluating the usefulness of sources | Explaining why interpretations differ and evaluating interpretations | Sources in Paper 1 - Medicine in Britain<br><br>Sources and interpretations in Paper 3 - Weimar and Nazi Germany | Revision |