

History at St Mary's



**‘We are not makers of history.
We are made by history.’**

Martin Luther King Jr.



Subject content

Key stage 1

Pupils should develop an 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. They 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 stages 2 and 3.

Pupils should be taught about:

- Changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life.
- Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally [for example, the Great Fire of London, the first aeroplane flight or events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries].
- The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods [for example, Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, William Caxton and Tim Berners-Lee, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and LS Lowry, Rosa Parks and Emily Davison, Mary Seacole and/or Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell].
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

Key stage 2



Pupils should continue 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. They 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 described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, 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

Golden Threads

Pupils' progress in history is underpinned by key forms of knowledge that enable pupils' learning. An example of this is the use of 'golden threads'.

These are planned, systematic encounters with key concepts which are highlighted alongside explicit teaching of substantive and disciplinary knowledge in specific and varied contexts. Understanding of these key concepts throughout the periods of history taught allow children to see development over time. A sound understanding of key concepts is particularly important to pupils' understanding of new material as it allows them to see patterns and trends more clearly.

St Mary's Golden Threads

Civilisation and society	Empire and Invasion	Significant People
Kings, Queens & Castles (Year 1) x 3 Remembrance (Year 1) Great Fire of London (Year 2) Stone Age to Iron Age (Year 3) x 6 Ancient Egypt (Year 3) x 5 Romans (Year 3) x 4 Anglo Saxons (Year 4) x 4 Vikings (Year 4) x 2 Ancient Greece (Year 5) x 7 Local History Study – Mining (Year 5) x 2 WWII (Year 6) Early Islamic Civilisation (Year 6) x 3	Nurses from History (Year 2) Ancient Egypt (Year 3) Romans (Year 3) x 7 Anglo Saxons (Year 4) Vikings (Year 4) x 3 Ancient Greece (Year 5) x 2 WWII (Year 6) x 5	Kings, Queens & Castles (Year 1) Great Fire of London (Year 2) Nurses from History (Year 2) x 2 Ancient Egypt (Year 3) Romans (Year 3) x 3 Anglo Saxons (Year 4) Vikings (Year 4) Local History Study – Mining (Year 5) WWII (Year 6) X 2 Early Islamic Civilisation (Year 6) x 4

Disciplinary Knowledge



As pupils progress on their learning journey, they will develop disciplinary knowledge to help them understand how to be historians, as well as substantive knowledge. See below where this can be seen in each year group.

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Sources and Evidence (Historical Enquiry)	All about me Remembrance Pirates, Journeys and Exploration	Remembrance Kings, Queens & Castles	The Great Fire of London Nurses from History	Stone Age to Iron Age Ancient Egypt Romans	Anglo-Saxons Vikings	Ancient Greece Local History (Mining)	WWII Early Islamic Civilisation
Historical Interpretations	Chinese New Year Pirates, Journeys and Exploration	Remembrance Kings, Queens & Castles	The Great Fire of London Nurses from History		Anglo-Saxons	Ancient Greece Local History (Mining)	WWII Early Islamic Civilisation
Historical Significance	Pirates, Journeys and Exploration Traditional Tales	Kings, Queens & Castles	The Great Fire of London Nurses from History	Stone Age to Iron Age Ancient Egypt Romans	Anglo-Saxons Vikings	Ancient Greece Local History (Mining)	WWII
Cause and Consequence	All about me Real Life Super Heroes		Nurses from History	Romans	Anglo-Saxons Vikings	Ancient Greece Local History (Mining)	WWII
Change and Continuity		Kings, Queens & Castles	The Great Fire of London	Stone Age to Iron Age Ancient Egypt Romans	Anglo-Saxons	Ancient Greece Local History (Mining)	WWII Early Islamic Civilisation
Similarity and Difference	All about me Remembrance	Remembrance Kings, Queens & Castles	The Great Fire of London Nurses from History	Stone Age to Iron Age Ancient Egypt Romans	Anglo-Saxons Vikings	Ancient Greece	WWII

Disciplinary Knowledge



As pupils progress on their learning journey, they will develop disciplinary knowledge to help them understand how to be historians, as well as substantive knowledge.

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2
Sources and Evidence (Historical Enquiry)	To comment on images of familiar situations in the past.	To look at simple artefacts and pictures to ask questions about the past.	To look at a source (such as photographs from Great Fire of London) to find answers to questions about the past. To choose and select evidence (from a selection provided) and say how it can be used to find out about the past.
Historical Interpretations	To use stories or accounts to distinguish between fact and fiction. To look at more than two versions of the same event or story in history and identify differences.	To start to compare two versions of a past event (Remembrance). To explain that there are different types of sources that can be used to help represent the past.	To look at more than two versions of the same event or story in history and identify differences. (Nurses from History).
Historical Significance	To understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.	To recognise why certain individuals e.g. Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria are significant in history (achievements and impact)	To identify why certain people/events are significant in the wider context of history e.g. Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole
Cause and Consequence	To talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society	To recognise some causes to historical events. To identify consequences to historical events.	To understand that there are reasons why people in the past acted as they did. To identify causes and consequences from the past.
Change and Continuity		To recognise some similarities and differences between the past and the present.	To identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.
Similarity and Difference	To know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.	To recognise some similarities and differences between individuals e.g. within the life and times of Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria.	To identify similarities and differences between societies e.g. the time of Crimean War.

	Year 3	Year 4
Sources and Evidence (Historical Enquiry)	<p>To gather more detail from sources such as maps to build up a clearer picture of the past.</p> <p>To suggest sources of evidence to help answer questions to present findings.</p>	<p>To devise my own questions to find answers about the past.</p> <p>To begin to undertake my own research.</p> <p>To compare different accounts of an event and explain why they may differ.</p>
Historical Interpretations	<p>To look at more than two versions of the same event or story in history and identify differences.</p>	<p>To find and analyse a wide range of evidence about the past. To investigate different accounts of historical events and be able to explain some of the reasons why the accounts may be different.</p>
Historical Significance	<p>To find out why advancements in the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages were significant to the development of Britain.</p> <p>To identify why our interpretations of Stone Age to Iron Age is difficult due to limited primary sources or written evidence.</p> <p>Why was Howard Carter's discovery significant to what we know about Ancient Egypt now.</p>	<p>To explain the significance of the Vikings on influencing English language and vocabulary used today—focus on place names.</p>
Cause and Consequence	<p>To find out about the cause of an event. To identify key consequences over a period of time and be able to give reasons for those changes. E.g. Why did Caesar invade twice? (Romans)</p>	<p>To explain how people and events in the past have influenced life today.</p> <p>Discuss opposition faced by Anglo-Saxons, what caused the Battle of Hastings?</p>
Change and Continuity	<p>To find out about the lives of everyday people compared to our lives today.</p>	<p>To explain how people and events in the past have influenced life today.</p>
Similarity and Difference	<p>To find similarities and differences between places e.g. Britain and the rest of the Roman Empire</p> <p>To compare similarities and differences between the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age.</p>	<p>To explain similarities and differences between an aspect of society e.g. the religious beliefs of Anglo-Saxons and the native Britons.</p> <p>To describe connections and contrasts between aspects of history, people, events and artefacts studied.</p>

	Year 5	Year 6
Sources and Evidence (Historical Enquiry)	<p>To recognise when I am using primary and secondary sources of information to investigate the past.</p> <p>To use a wide range of different evidence to collect evidence about the past, such as ceramics, pictures, documents, printed sources, posters, online material, pictures, photographs, artefacts, historic statues, figures, sculptures, historic sites.</p>	<p>To use sources of information to form testable hypothesis about the past.</p> <p>To locate and analyse relevant information to justify claims about the past.</p> <p>To investigate my own lines of enquiry by posing historically valid questions to answer.</p>
Historical Interpretations	<p>To use a range of evidence to offer some clear reasons for different interpretations of events, linking this to factual understanding about the past.</p> <p>To consider different ways of checking the accuracy of interpretations of the past. To start to understand the difference between primary and secondary evidence and the impact of this on reliability.</p>	<p>To show an awareness of the concept of propaganda.</p> <p>To know that people in the past represent events or ideas in a way that may be to persuade others (bias).</p> <p>To begin to evaluate the usefulness of different sources</p>
Historical Significance	<p>To describe the significance of the Ancient Greek language and it's influence on the English vocabulary today.</p> <p>Significance of coal mining during industrial revolution.</p>	<p>To evaluate the achievements of the WW2 as a turning point in British history in the context of then and now.</p>
Cause and Consequence	<p>To identify and note connections, contrasts and trends over time in the everyday lives of people. To use appropriate historical terms such as culture, religious, social, economic and political when describing the past.</p>	<p>To examine causes and results of great events and the impact these had on people. To describe the key features of the past, including attitudes, beliefs and the everyday lives of men, women and children.</p>
Change and Continuity	<p>To describe connections and contrasts between aspects of history, people, events and artefacts studied.</p>	<p>To use appropriate historical terms such as culture, religious, social, economic and political when describing the past</p>
Similarity and Difference	<p>To describe connections and contrasts between aspects of history, people, events and artefacts e.g. within Ancient Greece</p>	<p>To examine and explain diverse experiences and ideas, beliefs, attitudes of men, women, children e.g. within the period of the Second World War.</p>

Adapting Primary History Teaching to meet the needs of all learners.

Use Multisensory Teaching Methods

Engage more than one sense to support learning:

- Visual: Use images, timelines, artefacts, video clips, and maps.
- Auditory: Include storytelling, songs, and historical re-enactments.
- Kinaesthetic: Offer role-play, handling artefacts, and model-building (e.g. castles, pyramids).

Simplify and Scaffold Language

History often uses complex vocabulary and abstract concepts:

- Use clear, concise language.
- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts using visual aids (Widgit)
- Provide sentence starters, word banks, and guided writing frames. (all WALTs include learning objective along side key vocabulary for each lesson).

Differentiate Tasks and Outcomes

Adjust the level of difficulty:

- Provide alternative formats (e.g. matching tasks, sorting activities, comic strips).
- Allow oral responses or typed work instead of written essays.
- Vary expectations—some may describe events, others explain or evaluate.

Encourage Peer Support

- Use mixed-ability pairings or group work.
- Encourage peer tutoring, discussion, and shared tasks to build social and cognitive skills.

Adapting Primary History Teaching to meet the needs of all learners—Examples

