



# Riversdale Primary School

"A nurturing, ambitious and values led school."

# History Policy

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

Review Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2028



## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) 'National curriculum in England: history programmes of study'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage'

## **INTENT**

The history curriculum at Riversdale aims to ignite curiosity in pupils about the past, helping them build a strong understanding of chronology, key historical events, influential figures, and periods. We aim for pupils to grasp how historical events have shaped the present world and to develop a sense of identity within a broader global context.

Our inclusive curriculum includes key themes such as migration, conservation, civil rights, and legacy/heritage, which are explored across both British and world history. These themes help support pupils in understanding their place in history, fostering a vision of where we have come from, where we are going, and how we can collectively move forward as a community.

We are committed to offering challenging and engaging lessons that promote deep thinking and encourage creative communication. By engaging with these themes and historical concepts like cause and consequence, change and continuity, and historical significance, pupils will develop critical thinking, questioning, source analysis, and evidence-based reasoning skills, which will support all pupils in reaching their full potential in history.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The history curriculum at Riversdale is based on the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stages 1 and 2, as well as Development Matters in EYFS. At Riversdale we view history as more than simply knowing facts and dates, we view it as an important aspect of understanding the world around us. In Early Years, children develop a foundational understanding of history within living memory, through discussions around significant people both in our lives and in a local, national or global context. This is taught through themes such as 'Me and My Community' and children are immersed in key texts that initiate pupil engagement and interest in the study of these. Through this, they are also introduced to key historical vocabulary that is built on throughout Key Stage 1 and 2.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, children learn through enquiry questions such as "How did Florence Nightingale change nursing?" and "Why were the Pharaohs important to Egyptian society?". This provides pupils with a tangible answer by the end of each lesson, giving a context to the learning which builds over time to answer a larger question around a topic or theme. We encourage children to become historians, who explore and question the past in an exciting way, applying a range of historical skills such as using sources of evidence, historical interpretation and identifying cause and consequence. For each unit of learning, children revisit previously taught knowledge in order to retrieve and embed so enabling new knowledge to be effectively built. Based on this, teachers adapt their teaching to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

Our teachers make learning memorable and fun through drama and role play, reading stories and writing opportunities. When relevant, pupils are given opportunities to go on educational visits to local sites of historical importance or museums, where students can handle artefacts first hand and experience specialist teaching by historians or curators.

## **CURRICULUM PROGRESSION**

At Riversdale Primary School we believe in the importance of all children developing a deep understanding of history and in embedding the substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills into their long-term memory. As such, the progression of history has been carefully mapped, with a consideration to connected subject matter and opportunities to revisit specific concepts over time. For example, in Year 3, Autumn 1, children will study the stone age, bronze age and iron age, whilst exploring the concept of chronology and how one time period progressed into the next. This is expanded on in Year 4 where pupils identify that various time periods took place simultaneously in different regions of the world.

Based on the National Curriculum, senior and subject leaders have constructed a curriculum progression map which identifies how the history specific knowledge and skills develop over a pupils' time at the school. This progression ensures that pupils build increasingly rich schemata, revisiting and deepening their understanding of key concepts as they move through the primary years. Each year group's objectives are linked, growing in complexity and independence to foster mastery and ensure alignment with National Curriculum expectations.

To ensure comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum for History, the curriculum progression map specifies when and where each concept is introduced and revisited across the academic year and in each year group. This provides a clear long-term plan, allowing staff to ensure all National Curriculum expectations are met while offering opportunities for revisiting and reinforcing key skills and knowledge. Teachers use this map to plan lessons and projects that allow pupils to apply and deepen their understanding, while also providing opportunities for adaptive teaching and assessment.

## DISCIPLINARY SKILLS

The seven disciplinary concepts are introduced in a way that builds complexity as pupils advance through the school. These concepts underpin pupils' understanding of how historians work and how we study the past, and they are revisited regularly to ensure secure progression.

### **Chronology**

Pupils begin by sequencing events from their own lives and placing simple historical events in order. As they progress, they learn to locate periods on a timeline, understand the passing of centuries, and begin to see overlaps and connections between different historical periods. By upper key stage 2, pupils develop a chronologically secure knowledge of local, national and world history, using terms such as BCE/CE accurately, and placing events and developments into wider historical contexts.

### **Using Sources for Enquiry**

Early work with sources focuses on handling artefacts, photographs and simple stories from the past, asking basic questions to find out more. Pupils then learn to use a wider range of primary and secondary sources, making careful observations and beginning to question reliability. In upper key stage 2, they critically evaluate sources, compare different types of evidence, and consider the strengths and limitations of each when forming historical conclusions.

### **Historical Interpretation**

In the early years, pupils explore how the past can be shown in different ways through stories, images, and role-play. As they move up the school, they begin to understand that historical accounts can differ and that historians might interpret events differently depending on their evidence or perspective. By the end of primary school, pupils can analyse a range of interpretations, identify potential bias, and suggest reasons for differing accounts.

### **Cause and Consequence**

At first, pupils recognise simple reasons why people in the past acted as they did or why events happened. Later, they identify short- and long-term causes of major events and link them to their consequences. By upper key stage 2, pupils can explain complex chains of cause and effect, understanding how one event may have multiple causes and far-reaching consequences.

### **Change and Continuity**

Pupils begin by recognising simple changes and similarities in everyday life over time. This develops into an ability to describe changes and continuities within and across historical periods. By the end of primary school, pupils explain why some aspects of life have changed while others have stayed the same, making connections between developments in different societies and time periods.

### **Similarity and Difference**

Young pupils make simple comparisons between their own lives and the lives of people in the past. Over time, they explore social, cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity in Britain and the wider world, recognising key differences and similarities between groups. By upper key stage 2, pupils can explain these similarities and differences using evidence, and place them within a broader historical context.

## **Historical Significance**

At first, pupils learn about 'special' people and events, discussing why they are remembered. This develops into recognising which individuals, discoveries or events had a significant impact on the past. By the end of primary school, pupils can explain the significance of key events and people in shaping societies, both in Britain and across the world, using evidence to support their reasoning.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

Each year group studies three history units across the school year (apart from Year 6, who undertake two longer depth studies), following the progression of substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills outlined in the school's History Progression document. To ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of historical concepts, each unit is planned around an overarching historical enquiry question that encourages pupils to think critically, investigate evidence, and form their own interpretations of the past.

Within each unit, pupils will be taught and apply the school's identified disciplinary concepts:

- Chronology
- Using Sources for Enquiry
- Historical Interpretation
- Cause and Consequence
- Change and Continuity
- Similarity and Difference
- Historical Significance

Teachers plan sequences of lessons that build knowledge step-by-step, enabling pupils to revisit and deepen their understanding of these concepts over time. Substantive content is drawn from local, national, and world history and is taught in line with the National Curriculum requirements for each key stage.

To support teachers in ensuring curriculum coverage and progression, Teacher Knowledge Organisers are provided for each unit. These outline:

- The substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills to be taught in each lesson.
- Appropriate retrieval questions to support pupils in securing knowledge in their long-term memory.
- Opportunities for formative assessment to check understanding and address misconceptions.

At the start of each unit, pupils are provided with a Pupil Knowledge Organiser that:

- Summarises prior learning that will be built upon.
- Lists the sequence of lessons so pupils know what they are studying and when.
- Identifies the most significant knowledge and concepts for the unit.
- Includes visual references (maps, timelines, images of artefacts or historical figures) to provide additional context.
- Defines the subject-specific vocabulary pupils are expected to learn and use accurately.

Knowledge Organisers are referred to throughout the unit to reinforce key knowledge, ensure accurate use of historical vocabulary, and support pupils in making connections across different periods and themes in history.

## **LESSON STRUCTURE**

History is taught through discrete meaningful lessons that take place fortnightly. We structure the timetable in such a way as to ensure pupils are building on knowledge and skills throughout the year, rather than in blocks, and use retrieval practices to move knowledge from pupils' working memory to their long-term memory. Occasionally units of learning may have a cross curricular link if this is genuine and does not detract from the core History knowledge and skills.

All children are taught by their class teacher, in dedicated lessons that take place fortnightly (alternating with geography). We structure the timetable in such a way as to ensure pupils are building on knowledge and skills throughout the year, rather than in blocks, and use retrieval practices to move knowledge from pupils' working memory to their long-term memory. To ensure that pupils can distinguish between geography and history each week,

the school has implemented a colour coded system and incorporated clear lesson symbols, thus providing pupils with a clear visual prompt.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 will follow the school's lesson structure, which has been developed in reference to Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction:

- Retrieval (daily, weekly and monthly review),
- New Learning (in small steps)
- Modelling (including asking questions),
- Guided Practice (including checking student understanding and additional scaffolds that meet need),
- Independent Practice (providing enough challenge/support to obtain at least 80% success rate).

Pupils are given the opportunity to work as a class, as part of a group or as an individual. The choice of class organisation will be determined by the learning task or activity, the nature of the theme and the resources being used.

## ASSESSMENT

To ensure that pupils are progressing in their history learning, assessment is integrated throughout the curriculum. Teachers use both formative and summative assessment methods to monitor pupils' understanding and skills development. Formative assessments, such as questioning, discussion, and observational notes, help track individual progress and inform future lesson planning. Summative assessments, including end-of-unit knowledge checks and evaluations of enquiry outcomes, ensure that pupils are meeting the expected learning objectives by the end of each academic year. The curriculum also emphasises self-assessment and reflection, encouraging pupils to evaluate their learning and identify areas for improvement.

## THE EARLY YEARS AND FOUNDATION STAGE

In EYFS, history is taught as part of Understanding the World through a combination of play-based exploration, continuous provision and adult-led sessions. Children learn about family and personal history, recognising how their lives are connected to those of people around them. They are introduced to significant events in ways that are meaningful and age-appropriate (e.g., through story), encouraging them to talk about similarities, differences and changes over time where applicable.

The provision is designed to build early chronological understanding and develop historical vocabulary (such as old and new, before and after, now and then etc.), laying firm foundations for progression into Key Stage 1. Curriculum concepts such as heritage and migration are introduced where appropriate, helping children to begin making connections between past and present.

## INCLUSION

The school is committed to ensuring pupils of all backgrounds and abilities can access the history curriculum. The subject leader will review the content of the history curriculum and any relevant assessment or teaching practices, and make sure any necessary reasonable adjustments are arranged, so that all pupils can access the learning.

- Tasks are adapted to ensure pupils of all abilities are challenged.
- Reasonable adjustments are made by the class teacher and history subject leader in collaboration with the SENCo and other relevant members of staff.
- The SENCo will review reasonable adjustments on a termly basis to ensure they remain suitable for pupils.
- All pupils are given access to the full range of history activities, including educational visits and fieldwork, with risk assessments carried out to ensure they are safe and accessible.
- Reasonable adjustments are carried out in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, SEND Policy and EAL Policy.

## **IMPACT**

- Each pupil's performance in history will be assessed by the teacher against the progression documentation expectations.

- Pupil progress will be reported to parents through the end of year report and orally during the parent-consultation evenings where parents specifically ask.
- Children are given opportunities to self-assess their own achievement and progress throughout the year.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Governors**

- Ensuring a broad and balanced history curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's history curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

### **Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)**

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's history curriculum is implemented consistently.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to the history curriculum.
- Ensuring all pupils are appropriately supported.
- Appointing a member of staff to lead on the school's approach to teaching history.

### **History Subject Leader**

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for history.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of history, providing support for staff where necessary.  
Organising the sourcing and deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all history resources.
- Advising on the contribution of history to other curriculum areas.
- Keeping up to date with developments in history education and sharing these with staff. This may include leading staff meetings, providing training, and working alongside colleagues to develop good practice.
- Monitoring and evaluating progress in history and liaising with senior management on any action necessary.  
Liaising with appropriate bodies (e.g., other primary schools, secondary schools, governors, the LA) concerning matters relating to history.

### **Teacher**

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Liaising with the history subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Ensuring that all relevant statutory content is covered within the school year.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class in history and reporting this annually to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of history to the history subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Undertaking any training necessary to teach history effectively.

## **MONITORING & REVIEW**

This policy is monitored and reviewed by the history subject leader.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.