

Abbey Hulton Primary School



History Policy

Presented to Staff and Agreed:
Next Review:

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1 Aims and objectives

1.1 History at Abbey Hulton Primary School aims to stimulate children's interest and understanding in the past. Children learn about the life of people who have lived before them and the different time periods that goes back to ancient civilisations. We teach children a sense of chronology to improve their knowledge along with the critical skills they require when they leave Abbey Hulton Primary School. Lessons are taught with the aim that the children learn as much as they can about a subject focusing on key areas. These include learning about the topics: legacy, conflicts, downfall, law, significant person, religion and lifestyle. Thus they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today. We also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

1.2 The objectives of teaching history in our school are:
To immerse the children in an interest in the past to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
To enable children to learn about significant events in British history, the wider world and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
To develop a sense of chronology;
To know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education;
To understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture, and to study some aspects of European history;
To develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

2 Teaching and learning style

2.1 History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources. In each key stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history teaching, and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We accomplish this by using experiences which emerges the children in their learning about their topic. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways, and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', about information they are given.

2.2 We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of ability in history, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

Setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
Setting tasks of increasing difficulty
Grouping children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
Grouping children by mixed ability, so that the more able children can work with the less able in a collaborative way;
Using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

3 History curriculum planning

3.1 We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our curriculum planning in history, but we have adapted this to our local context, building on the successful units of work already in place. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

3.2 We carry out curriculum planning in history in two phases (long-term and a short term plan). The long-term plan maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage. The children study history topics in conjunction with other subjects, especially at Key Stage 1. Some topics have a particular historical focus, and in Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

3.3 We use the national scheme of work as the basis for our medium-term plans as well, which give details of each unit of work for each term. Alongside this we have used the FOCUS objectives to ensure we are teaching both the knowledge and the skills to progress.

3.4 The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson. These plans list the specific learning objectives and activities for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and an additional copy is kept in the ring binder in the staff work-room.

4 The Foundation Stage

4.1 In the area of learning, Knowledge and Understanding of the World, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to make sense of the world around them. At Abbey Hulton we strive to stimulate children's interest and curiosity through learning opportunities that are based on first hand experience in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. We aim to provide a balance in experiences from all aspects of this area of learning including opportunities to explore other cultures and religions. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is a strong emphasis on the use of language to develop a Sense of Time. Words such as "before", "after", "next", "then", "this morning", "this afternoon", "last night", "yesterday", etc are used on a regular daily basis as part of all ongoing activities. The Aspect to develop a "Sense of Time" is given a specific focus through the topics "Myself: Now and Then" and "Growing". Children in Nursery are largely concerned with the "Here and Now" and explore "Myself Now" through all of their senses. In Reception children study themselves and each other when they were babies and are introduced to the language "Now and Then". This concept is developed through the topic as children move on to explore the human life cycle and look at photographs of their teachers, parents and Grandparents when they were babies. Through the topic "Growing" children use language that relates to the passing of time as they watch seeds they have planted grow over time and they explore the life cycles of animals in Nursery and Frogs and Butterflies in Reception.

5 The contribution of history to teaching in other curriculum areas

5.1 English

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children develop oracy through discussing historical questions, or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports and letters, and through diary writing, e.g. writing the diary of a Victorian child. If it is possible we try and link English and History through books for example in Year 3 teaching the children about the Stone Age to Iron Age in History alongside reading and learning about the Stone Age Boy in English.

5.2 Mathematics

The teaching of history contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through activities such as creating time-lines and through sequencing events in their own lives. Children also learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

5.3 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions, such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognise and challenge stereotypes, and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures, and they start to develop tolerance and respect for others. Through this they are able to compare and contrast what life is like now and what it was like throughout the past.

5.4 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

In our teaching of History, we contribute where possible to the children's spiritual development, as in the Key Stage 1 unit of work, 'What are we remembering on Remembrance Day?' We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong, when studying topics such as child labour in Victorian Britain. Children learn about the role of the church in Tudor times, and they find out how British society has changed over time. The history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today. These topics can be reached through Votes for School where every week classes are given a question for them to debate furthering their questioning skills whilst learning about current affairs.

6 History and Computing

6.1 Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of History, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use computers as part of their History work in Key Stage 2. The children use computers in a variety of ways, such as word-processing, finding information on the Internet, using Purple Mash and presenting information through multi-media presentations, e.g. a presentation on the Greeks. They can also make creative use of the digital camera to record

photographic images and using green screens, especially if they have taken it on an educational visit relating to a History topic.

7 History and Inclusion

7.1 At our school we teach history to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. This accords with the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

7.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessments made by teachers against the National Curriculum's attainment targets and level descriptors allow us to consider each child's attainment and progress in relation to the levels expected. This helps ensure that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

7.3 We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning History. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

8 Assessment for learning

8.1 Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous historical event, whilst older pupils may produce a multi-media presentation based on their investigation, for example, the Greeks. Teachers will assess children's work by making judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

8.2 At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment, and records the children's levels, whether they are Working Towards, at Age Related Expectations or Greater Depth. We use these grades as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

9 Resources

9.1 There are sufficient resources for all History teaching units in the school. We keep these resources predominately in the classroom as well as resources kept in a central store. The library contains a good supply of topic books and there is software to support children's individual research.

9.2 Children are also taught through experiences that they listen to. They are then questioned on this once the experience is completed. This can either be used at the start of a topic or at the end to assess the children's learning.

9.3 At Abbey Hulton we are committed for children to experience primary resources in order to enhance the children's learning so that they can truly understand their history.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is the responsibility of the history subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The new subject leader will have specially-allocated time in which to fulfil this role by reviewing samples of children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject. He will report to the head teacher on progress in this subject at the end of each term. Assessments will be made through observations and monitoring of books.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.