

Upton Westlea Primary School

History Policy



“Inspire, Learn, Succeed”

Approved by staff: January 2024

Signed: K Carruthers

Approved by Governors: January 2024

Signed: L Dalton

Review Date: January 2026

“The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.”

Theodore Roosevelt

1. Introduction

At Upton Westlea we stimulate children’s interests and understanding about the events and lives people lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology and through this, they develop a sense of identity and the cultural understanding based on historical heritage. This leads them to value their own and other people’s cultures in modern multicultural Britain. Concepts are threaded through the curriculum to develop cognitive learning. The concepts are: Culture and Homes and People of the past.

In our school, history makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. 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 doing so develop the skills of enquiry, analysis interpretation and problem solving.

2. Intent

Our intentions of the teaching of History at Upton Westlea are:

- to give the children a high quality history education which will help them gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain’s past and that of the wider world.
- to inspire pupils’ curiosity to know more about the past.
- to equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement.
- to help pupils to understand the complexity of people’s lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.
- to know and understand ‘history’ as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people’s lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- to know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind.
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as ‘empire’, ‘civilisation’, ‘parliament’ and ‘peasantry’.
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses.

- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.
- gain historical perspective by planning their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short and long term timescales.

3. Implementation

The history teaching at Upton Westlea, focuses on enabling children to use historical skills and to think as historians. Concepts are threaded through the curriculum to develop cognitive learning. The concepts are: Culture and homes and people of the past.

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 encourage visitors to come into school and talk about their experiences of events in the past.

We recognise the value and importance of stories in history teaching and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. 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.

We recognise the fact that in classes there are children of widely different abilities 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.

Educational visits are an opportunity for the teachers to plan for additional history learning outside the classroom. At Upton Westlea, the children have had many opportunities to experience history on educational visits. The children have explored local museums and had visitors into school to share history learning and have hands on experiences.

As a school we have decided that no schemes of work will be used for foundation subjects and a bespoke curriculum has been designed to reflect the needs of our children and make use of our local area. A curriculum overview has been drawn up to ensure all areas in the history national curriculum framework are taught.

Our curriculum planning is in three phases: There is a curriculum overview, long-term plans which show prior learning, essential knowledge and skills plus sticky facts. Teachers then use this to form short-term/ lesson plans. Our curriculum overview maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage.

Copies of the overview and the long-term plans are on staff share and on the school website. Short-term/lesson plans are kept by the teacher. The class teacher annotates these plans and keeps them in a planning file. These are reviewed when the book scrutiny is carried out but can be discussed with the history subject leader, on an informal basis, at any time.

We aim to teach History in a cross-curricular approach where possible, linking History topics in other subject areas.

English - History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading; writing and Spoken English. Some of the texts that we use are historical in nature. Children develop speaking and listening skills, through discussing historical questions or presenting the

findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports and letters and from using writing frames.

Mathematics - History teaching contributes to the teaching of Mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through doing activities such as timelines. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

Computing - Children use Computing in history to enhance their skills and data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet. Children have the opportunity to use the iPad to record and use photographic images.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In our nursery and reception classes we teach history through our topic work during the year. As nursery & reception are part of the EYFS, we relate the development of the children's historical knowledge and understanding of the world to the objectives set out in Development Matters and 'Past & Present' aspect of the Early Learning Goals. These underpin the curriculum planning for children aged birth to five. This learning forms the foundations for later work in history. These early experiences include beginning to make sense of their own life-story and their own families history, as well as using pictures, stories, artefacts and accounts from the past.

4. Impact

Within history, we strive to create a supportive and collaborative ethos for learning by providing investigative and enquiry based learning opportunities. Emphasis is placed on investigative learning opportunities to help children gain a coherent knowledge of understanding of each unit of work covered throughout the school.

Our history curriculum is high quality, well thought out and is planned to demonstrate progression. We focus on progression of knowledge and skills and discreet vocabulary progression also form part of the units of work.

How we measure this impact:

- Work is marked and next steps are given where required. Individual judgements are made and teachers record the progress made by children against the learning objectives for their lessons.
- The history subject leader keeps samples of the children's work in a portfolio. Class teachers keep the children's history work in the topic book.
- At the end of a unit of work, the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in history will be measured using formative and summative teacher assessment. Attainment and progress will be measured and recorded against assessment objectives for each year group which has been developed with a whole-school progression. This method of recording also enables the teacher to make an annual assessment of progress for each child, as part of the child's annual report to parents and carers. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of each year.
- Lesson observations, planning and book scrutinies will take place.
- Any developments will be identified, and results will be incorporated into the history action plan shared with staff and school governors.

5. Health and Safety

There is a separate subject risk assessment (if required) which is completed by the subject leader to assess any risks and ensure measures are put in place to when needed to ensure the safety of our pupils and staff.

6. Inclusion and Equality Statement

Upton Westlea Primary School is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.

At Upton Westlea Primary School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristic:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.