

# BARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS CENTRE.



## History Policy

DATE: March 2010

TO BE REVIEWED: March 2013



# History Policy

## Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning of History at Barton Primary School. It was reviewed in 2010 and will be reviewed again in 2013.

## Aims and objectives

The aim of history teaching here at Barton Primary School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity, and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. 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. 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 so doing, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

The objectives of teaching history in our school are:

- to foster in children an interest in the past, and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history, 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 have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to encourage an increasing sense of the children's own identity in time and their own development over time;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children the skills of historical enquiry through studying historical evidence and artefacts, asking questions, problem solving, investigation, analysis and evaluation.
- to develop the ability to communicate and present historical knowledge in oral, written and visual forms including the use of ICT.

## **Teaching and learning style**

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 encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. 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 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 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, some children not completing all tasks;
- grouping children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

## **History curriculum planning**

We use the national scheme of work [QCA] 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.

We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term and medium-term which includes short-term planning). 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.

We use the national scheme of work [QCA] as the basis for our medium-term plans as well, which give details of each unit of work for each term. The history subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. Because we have

some mixed-age classes, we carry out the medium-term planning on a two-year rotation cycle. By so doing, we ensure that children have complete coverage of the National Curriculum, but do not have to repeat topics.

The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson (short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans.

## The Foundation Stage

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. The reception class works with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework; we relate the history side of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELG) which underpin the curriculum planning for children in the Foundation Stage. History makes a significant contribution to the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through activities such as looking at pictures of famous people in history, exploring historical artefacts, visits or discovering the meaning of vocabulary ('new' and 'old', for example) in relation to their own lives.

### **Strategies for the teaching and learning of history**

In key stages 1 and 2, a cross-curricular approach has been adopted. The history curriculum has where possible, been integrated into topics and links have been made to other subjects in order to enhance enjoyment and understanding but contextualising what is being learnt. This often means that history is taught in chunks, not necessarily in weekly set amounts of time.

Where it has not been possible to integrate History within the topics, it is taught as a discrete subject, in order to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, as outlined by the QCA. The curriculum is taught within a two-year cycle across each key stage. Within the Reception it is taught in the context of the Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals, which underpins the curriculum planning for Foundation Stage children.

A variety of teaching and learning styles are employed; whole class, group work, working in pairs or independently, according to the nature of the enquiry being pursued. The emphasis is placed on learning through first-hand experience, where possible.

Opportunities to undertake school trips are also provided, subject to risk assessments. These compliment the learning that is taking place within the environment of the school. Children may also be encouraged to research knowledge, through various means, including books, CD Roms and the Internet, in order to enhance and aid their understanding of what is being learned.

Children are provided with the opportunity to engage in communicating and recording ideas and findings in a variety of ways, including the use of ICT. Ideas and findings may be presented in various ways, including graphs, charts, maps, diagrams, and writing, but also verbally and through discussions, debates and presentations.

Quality first teaching informs and focuses our approach in terms of the varying needs and levels of attainment present within our class groupings. We share learning objectives with the children in Key Stage 1 and 2, in order to focus their attention on what is being learned.

We recognise that there is a wide range of historical ability within our classes and we endeavour to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children, by matching the approach and challenge of the task to the ability of the individual child. We achieve this by the following means, as required by the occasion;

- Eliciting current knowledge through concept mapping and discussion
- Setting tasks which are open-ended
- Matching the task resources to the ability of the child
- Grouping children by ability
- Providing additional adult support to individuals or groups through the use of classroom assistants
- Providing peer support through mixed ability pairing
- Displaying suitable vocabulary
- Setting appropriate targets for individual children

## **History and inclusion**

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.

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.

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, a visit to an archaeological dig, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

### **Assessment for learning**

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways. We assess children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe them during each history lesson. 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.

At the end of a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of the children in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment, recording the above average and below average achievers. We use this information 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.

### **Resources**

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We keep these resources centrally and each year group teacher has their own resources and equipment in the classroom for teaching the appropriate units of work. The library contains a good supply of topic books and software is available to support children's individual research. In addition, Carisbrooke Castle Museum, the School Library Service and The Teachers' Centre is able to supply a range of resources and artefacts for various topics and visits, visitors and activities are arranged whenever possible to enhance teaching and learning.

### **Monitoring and review**

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is supported by the history subject leader. The subject leader is available to support colleagues in their teaching of history. She aims to be informed about current developments in the subject, and to provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader prepares and reviews the subject action plans which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

**Signed:**

**Date:**