



## History Policy

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To be reviewed – June 2025

## Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of History in The Acorn Federation.

## Definition

“A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain’s past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils’ curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps 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.”

National Curriculum 2014

## Aims

Our Curriculum follows the National Curriculum for History, which aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of these islands 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.
- 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; human achievements.
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as ‘empire’, ‘civilisation’, and ‘parliament’.
- 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 placing 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.

## Teaching Objectives

In The Acorn Federation, we fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum for History through a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.

Our curriculum has been reviewed to ensure that children:

- Make progress in history by deepening their substantive knowledge of people, places and events and ideas of the past.
- Broaden their knowledge of events happening in different countries.
- Improve their “line of sight” of the chronology of history in Britain and the wider world.
- Have several encounters with transferable substantive concepts such as “empire” and “trade” to help them make links between topics.
- Examine and analyse the past through disciplinary concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance.

## EYFS

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning is linked to the Early Learning Goals, in particular: Understanding the World (People and Communities)

Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

Understanding the World (The World)

Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another.

## Key Stage 1

Pupils develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They 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 use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They ask and answer questions, choosing parts of stories and other sources to support their understanding of key features of events. They understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented. They are introduced to substantive concepts, such as 'invasion' and 'agriculture' which they will encounter again in Key Stage 2.

The knowledge of chronology, historical vocabulary and sources of evidence developed in Key Stage 1 builds the foundations for the wider range of periods covered in Key Stages 2 and 3.

In Key Stage 1, over a 2-year cycle, pupils are taught about:

- changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these are 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) or events commemorated through anniversaries.
- the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. We have also used some of these to compare aspects of life in different periods
- significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

## Key Stage 2

Pupils continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history through people, places and events. They notice similarities and differences in and over time periods and develop the appropriate use of historical terms and vocabulary. They regularly answer and ask historically valid questions about change and continuity, similarity and difference, historical enquiry, sources and evidence and historical interpretation. They make informed responses that involve choosing and organising relevant historical information. They build a greater understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Coverage of the curriculum and progression in knowledge is achieved through the teaching of British, local and world history as follows:

Over a 4-year cycle, pupils are taught about:

- changes in Britain from the Stone Age through the Bronze 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 (Derbyshire)
- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066 (e.g. Crime and Punishment)
- the achievements of the earliest civilizations – an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of these (Ancient Egypt)
- 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 (Mayan civilization).
- a significant turning point in British history (The Battle of Britain).

## **Planning**

We use the National Curriculum as the basis for all our planning. Our History Progression document identifies the knowledge outcomes expected for each year group across the 2- or 4-year cycle. The Subject Leader follows this document when planning each unit. Short-term lesson plans identify learning objectives and success criteria, also the activities and resources to enable children to meet these. The plans support or challenge individual children as appropriate. We ensure that there are opportunities for all children, including SEND, to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit.

Key Stage 1 follows a 2-year cycle of topics and Key Stage 2 follows a 4-year cycle. Substantive knowledge (of topics and chronology), and also knowledge of our 11 substantive concepts help us to make links between historical contexts and periods.

In order for children to know more and remember more in each area of history studied, prior learning is always considered in the lesson sequence and opportunities for revision of facts and historical understanding are built into lessons.

Planning also makes provision for disciplinary knowledge, i.e. learning how historians construct knowledge about the past. The second-order concepts of causation, change and continuity, historical significance, similarity and difference, sources and evidence and historical interpretations of the past are built into units where appropriate.

## **Assessment**

Learning Outcomes are specified in the History Knowledge Progression document which contains the knowledge and learning expected for each year group. This is designed to ensure coverage and progression. Assessment Grids using these criteria are completed by teachers at the end of each unit of work to determine whether children have met the outcomes for that unit. Subject Leaders will use this information to inform future planning. Sources of assessment might include: written work, discussions, questioning, photographs or observations of pupils.

## **Monitoring**

The monitoring of History teaching, pupil books and pupil voice across the Federation will be carried out by the Subject Leader in consultation with teachers and the head-teacher.

## **Equality/Diversity**

The Acorn Federation is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve. We want to give each child the opportunity to achieve their potential in learning - this includes SEND pupils, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, looked after children and those subject to safeguarding, pupils from different ethnic groups and those where English is a second language. Lesson plans are adapted to support the needs of all children. In order to create a creative and enriching learning experience for all pupils, we set individual education plans with personalised targets to enable children to meet learning expectations.

We set high expectations and expect every child to succeed. We want all children to reach their full potential, recognising their personal strengths and celebrating the personal achievements of themselves and others, both within the school and its wider community.

### **Subject Leader's role**

The role of the Subject Leader is to:

- Lead curriculum development and ensure the implementation of the History Curriculum, ensuring progression in learning across the school.
- Support colleagues where necessary, e.g. in subject knowledge or assessment.
- Monitor History progress and activity and advise the Head Teacher of any action needed.
- Purchase and distribute History resources.
- Keep up to date with developments in History and communicate information to colleagues as appropriate.

The Subject Leader will review this policy on a 3-yearly basis.