

History Curriculum Overview

INTENT

At Nanstallon Primary School, our history curriculum helps pupils make sense of the world by understanding how people and places have changed over time, and how the past shapes life today.

Pupils build secure chronological knowledge, explore local and British history alongside wider world civilisations, and learn to think like historians by asking questions, using evidence, and weighing different interpretations.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils should:

- Understand changes within living memory, know about events beyond living memory that are nationally or globally significant,
- Learn about the lives of significant individuals, including those who have contributed to national achievements.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should:

- Understand a coherent chronological narrative of Britain from the earliest times to the present day, alongside a broader knowledge of world history,
- Use historical enquiry skills to select, evaluate and interpret sources.

Our curriculum is designed so that pupils:

- Develop a strong sense of chronology, including secure sequencing of events, periods and civilisations
- Gain knowledge of key substantive concepts such as invasion, settlement, civilisation, empire, monarchy, trade, belief, conflict, achievement, and social change
- Learn the disciplinary knowledge of a historian, including evidence, interpretation, significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change, and similarity and difference
- Make meaningful connections with our local context in Cornwall, strengthening identity and belonging through local history and heritage
- Access ambitious content through inclusive teaching, carefully chosen vocabulary, and structured support so that every pupil can succeed

IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum structure and sequencing

History is planned within a two-year mixed age cycle across the school so that content is revisited, connected, and built upon without repetition.

Units are shaped by clear big questions and progression questions, and knowledge is sequenced so pupils can build secure mental models over time.

Key Stage 1 mixed age cycle planning includes:

- Grace Darling
- Pirates
- Toys through time
- Elizabeth I
- A street through time
- Brunel and Trevithick
- Guy Fawkes & The Great Fire of London
- Queen Victoria
- Space travel

Lower Key Stage 2 history units include:

- Stone Age to Iron Age
- Anglo Saxons and Vikings
- Cornwall in the past with a focus on mining
- Ancient Egypt

Upper Key Stage 2 history units include:

- Roman invasion and settlement
- World War II
- Ancient Greece
- The Mayan civilisation

Two-year mixed age cycle A and B plan

Key Stage 1 Cycle A

Term 4 Coasts and lighthouses, Grace Darling

Term 5 Pirates, toys, Elizabeth I, a street through time

Key Stage 1 Cycle B

Term 3 Transport, Brunel and Trevithick

Term 4 Guy Fawkes and the Great Fire of London

Term 5 Queen Victoria

Term 6 Space travel

Lower Key Stage 2 Cycle A

Term 2 Stone Age to Iron Age

Term 4 Anglo Saxons and Vikings

Lower Key Stage 2 Cycle B

Term 2 Cornwall in the past, mining

Term 6 Ancient Egypt

Upper Key Stage 2 Cycle A

Term 2 Roman invasion and settlement

Term 6 Mayan civilisation

Upper Key Stage 2 Cycle B

Term 2 World War II

Term 6 Ancient Greece

Teaching and Learning Approach

Pupils learn history through structured enquiry. Each unit begins with what pupils already know and a clear timeline position, then develops knowledge through stories, artefacts, images, maps, texts, and first-hand experiences where possible.

Vocabulary is taught explicitly and revisited regularly, including both topic vocabulary and disciplinary vocabulary such as source, evidence, inference, interpretation, chronology, legacy, and significance.

Across the school, pupils routinely:

- Use timelines and sequencing activities to secure chronological understanding
- Ask and refine historical questions linked to the unit big question
- Study sources, including objects, images, written accounts and buildings, and consider what they can and cannot tell us
- Compare past and present, and explore similarity and difference between societies and periods
- Explain cause and consequence, and identify patterns of continuity and change

Assessment and Evidence

Assessment is built into teaching through checks for understanding, retrieval practice, vocabulary tasks, structured discussions, and end of unit outcomes. Teachers use these to identify what has been learned securely and what needs revisiting. Evidence of learning is captured through pupils' written work, annotated timelines, oral explanations, enquiry outcomes, and end of unit tasks that require pupils to apply knowledge and historical thinking.

Inclusion and Accessibility

History is taught inclusively so all pupils can access ambitious content. Teaching includes clear scaffolds, carefully selected texts, pre teaching of vocabulary, visuals and models, and alternative ways to show understanding such as oral explanation, drama, diagram and labelled work. Tasks are adapted while keeping the same core historical ideas and key knowledge.

Simplified Progression of Skills and Knowledge

Early Years and Year 1 foundations

Talk about past and present in their own lives

Use simple time language such as before, after, yesterday, long ago

Listen to and retell stories from the past, noticing differences from today

Key Stage 1

- Sequence events and objects within a simple timeline
- Know about significant individuals and events, and explain why they mattered
- Recognise similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods
- Use simple sources, ask questions about them, and explain what they show

Lower Key Stage 2

- Develop a clearer chronological framework using periods such as Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, and early medieval Britain
- Use a range of sources and begin to evaluate reliability and usefulness in simple terms
- Explain cause and consequence using historical examples
- Describe continuity and change across a period, including changes in settlement, technology and society
- Build local history knowledge and connect it to wider historical themes

Upper Key Stage 2

- Secure a coherent narrative across multiple periods and make links between them
- Use historical enquiry to select evidence, justify conclusions, and consider different interpretations
- Discuss significance and legacy, including how and why the past is represented in different ways
- Compare civilisations and societies, exploring diversity, belief, power, achievement and conflict
- Use increasingly precise historical vocabulary and more complex explanations

IMPACT

The impact of our history curriculum is that pupils leave Nanstallon Primary School with a secure chronological understanding, a growing body of knowledge about local, British and world history, and the ability to think critically about evidence and interpretation.

Pupils will be able to:

- Explain key knowledge from each studied unit and use it to answer historical questions
- Place learning within an increasingly secure timeline and connect periods and themes
- Use sources to make informed inferences, recognising that sources can be partial or interpreted in different ways

- Use historical concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance to form clear explanations
- Speak confidently using appropriate historical vocabulary

These outcomes prepare pupils well for Key Stage 3 history by ensuring they know important content, can reason with evidence, and understand how the past is constructed and debated.