



Departmental vision

In order to work towards the whole school vision of aspiring to excellence, it is essential that pupils are given access to a wide range of historical knowledge which helps to broaden their horizons and gives them the opportunity to make sense of the world in which they live. History lessons provide a unique opportunity to achieve this purpose by giving the students the chance to grapple with historically rigorous concepts and debate in order to stretch their thinking, develop their literacy and reading skills which in turn helps prepare them for the world of work. Pupils should therefore receive a learning experience which is stimulating and challenging which focuses on engagement and curiosity as well as giving them the opportunity to disseminate information in relation to its reliability and usefulness.

Intention

1. **Teaching the right knowledge**
2. **Development of schemata**
3. **Spaced practice** [signposting and re-teaching of key content at regular intervals].
4. **Retrieval practice** [regular low stakes quizzing. Students retrieve this content from memory.]
5. **The application of knowledge** [application of key content in varying contexts].

Year 7 currently follow the new ATLP History curriculum which was introduced at the beginning of the academic year 2019-20. Throughout KS3 and KS4 we aim to include the 'best of what History has to offer' with the intention of making all lessons stimulating and engaging, as well as taking into consideration the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is vital throughout the curriculum that pupils are given the opportunity to practice new skills and recall key historical information before moving onto the next unit of study. We also take the opportunity across all key stages to use low stakes testing. Pupils are exposed to a large amount of historical content during their time at secondary school and regular knowledge retrieval practice helps this information to become more secure.

Year 7

It is widely recognised that pupils arriving in year 7 at secondary schools have come from a wide catchment area which encompasses many different primary schools. Some of these schools would have delivered a wider history content compared to others, and pupils arrive having different starting points in relation to key content covered as well as understanding relating to historical key concepts. The scheme of work for Year 7 aims to introduce students to a rigorous study of History addressing content covered in the KS3 History National Curriculum. We also make pupils aware of the wide range of historical sources which exist so that they can learn from the past as well as imparting key historical information which has played a significant part in understanding Britain's past and how we have arrived where we are today. Pupils throughout Year 7 are also introduced to historical reading and writing skills using approaches such as PEE (point, evidence, explanation) in order to provide the foundations for a greater depth of historical writing further up the school. More able students are stretched through a range of 'thinking harder' strategies.

Year 8

The units of work in year 8 contain the same key concepts introduced during year 7, but focus on different knowledge based content which is taken from the KS3 History National Curriculum. By addressing the same key concepts covered in year 7, this offers opportunities to consolidate prior learning if needed or to move learning on to a greater depth. Year 8 students also receive a careers based lesson where they explore potential careers which relate to the study of History.

Year 9

The units of work studied throughout year 8 build further upon the key concepts taken from the KS3 History National Curriculum and explore key historical themes such as religion and power further. All pupils in KS3 take History in year 9 to help them make an informed choice when it comes to their option choices as well as helping to broaden their cultural capital. Teachers also give further information to pupils in relation to how a potential GCSE in History could help them in relation to the key skills needed for further academic study in Sixth Form or other providers.

Year 10

In year 10 we cover unit choices from the AQA History GCSE. We adopt a 'knowledge engaged' curriculum approach where students are given regular opportunities to apply their knowledge to exam style questions. From these assessment opportunities, the curriculum can then be refined to meet the needs of the pupils within particular classes.

Year 11

Pupils sit a trial examination towards the end of Y10. Class teachers then analyse the responses to the question papers and adapt the curriculum to include elements of re-teaching. Final units of content are also delivered to pupils during this year.

Implementation

Within History there are key skills which need to be mastered before applying these to more enquiry based work. To gain proficiency in relation to these skills, it is essential that our pupils have the opportunity for repeated practice.

At Key Stage 4, pupils are regularly exposed to exam style questions and teachers use live modelling and examples of 'What a good one looks like' to enable students to see the key ingredients of good answers. Across this Key Stage, it is expected that pupils will build up familiarity with the wide range of exam questions which are present within a history GCSE paper.

Teachers will also on a regular basis use low stakes testing through 'Fact checks' in order to check the understanding of the pupils which they teach. Analysis of these results may mean that the sequence of lessons may vary from group to group but all pupils within an academic year will be working on the same unit at the same time. The key learning points have been positioned within the scheme of work so that there is a common understanding of the learning that precedes and follows what is currently being delivered within the classroom.

Pupils are regularly set home learning tasks which link directly to knowledge organisers with a particular emphasis on devising effective revision strategies which work for individuals.

Impact

Assessment takes place on a regular basis across the department in relation to a whole school policy of progress checks and milestones. Progress checks assess learning which has recently been undertaken within the classroom, whilst Milestones assess both new learning and prior learning so that teachers and pupils know whether what has been taught has been remembered. Following the completion of progress checks and milestones, pupils will upgrade their work in green pen allowing them to act on the feedback provided by their teachers. Common misconceptions are also revisited as a class at this point. Assessment evidence also allows teachers to decide on whether or not any key content needs to be covered again in class, perhaps using a different approach to ensure that all pupils have understood the key information or concept which has been delivered.

‘Do Now’ activities are often used as retrieval practice and to assess the impact of home learning. In History DNAs are varied but usually are based on two separate templates. In some lessons a ‘Bronze, Silver and Gold’ approach is used where the Bronze question tests knowledge from the previous lesson, Silver from a topic which has been looked at during the previous half term, and the Gold activity looks over work completed in the previous academic year. If it is evident that common knowledge has not been retained, the teacher can then arrange a time to re-deliver the information in a different way so that this gap in key content can be addressed.

‘Red Zone’ activities are used regularly across all year groups in order to give the pupils the opportunity to complete independent practice and this also gives teachers the opportunity to assess whether or not the learning over the most recent lessons has had the desired impact with the class. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on the work produced by students during Red Zone tasks in order to potentially make changes to future lessons which are delivered to further increase the impact of the learning taking place.

Within lessons, teachers regularly use questioning in order to assess the impact of the learning upon the class. This allows for another opportunity for pupils to check the understanding of pupils and to allow lessons to be reflected on or altered in the future to further improve the learning experience.