

Nether Stowe School

History Department

Curriculum Statement



Departmental vision

In order to work towards the whole school vision of 'Be Respectful, Be Ambitious, Be Resilient' it is essential that pupils are given access to a wide range of rich historical knowledge which helps to broaden horizons and allows students to become active citizens within modern Britain. History lessons provide a unique opportunity for students to realise this vision 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. Students will therefore receive a learning experience which is stimulating and challenging, which helps to build individual resilience but also focuses on engagement and curiosity, as well as giving the opportunity to disseminate information from a wide range of sources 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 Arthur Terry Learning Partnership History curriculum. Throughout KS3, KS4 and KS5 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 students 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. Students are exposed to a large amount of historical content during their time at secondary school and regular knowledge retrieval practice through home learning activities helps this information to become more secure.

Year 7

It is widely recognised that students 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 students 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 students 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. Students 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 which are delivered by all teachers in lessons. Year 7 students also receive a careers based lesson where they explore how historical skills relate to a wide range of differing careers.

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 through re-teach opportunities or to move learning on to a greater depth.

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 students 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. Students also have an additional careers lesson which gives further information 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 and thorough the deployment of checking for understanding strategies in lessons, the curriculum can then be refined to meet the needs of the students within particular classes.

Year 11

Students 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 students during this year.

Year 12 and 13

Students continue their learning journey in History through the study of the AQA History A-Level course. One major aspect of the curriculum during the Sixth Form years is to get students to engage in debate which relates to historical interpretations. Students regularly engage in readership of a range of differing interpretations and are asked to apply their own knowledge in relation to whether or not they think the interpretation is accurate. There is also regular discussion and debate as to why historical interpretations often present differing viewpoints.

Another fundamental aspect of the Sixth Form study is building up independent study skills for students. Within lessons, students are given a range of potential strategies to try out and see which work for them. Students also complete a non examined assessment as part of the A-Level course where they select a topic of their choice.

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 students have the opportunity for repeated practice.

At Key Stage 4, students 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 students 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' delivered via the iPads 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 students 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.

Students are regularly set home learning tasks which link directly to knowledge organisers and key knowledge which has recently been delivered in the classroom with a particular emphasis on devising effective revision strategies which work for individuals.

Impact

Formal 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 students know whether what has been taught has been remembered. Following the completion of progress checks and milestones, students 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. Informal assessment takes place in all lessons through the use of intentional monitoring pathways where teaching staff assess the knowledge of students and decide whether or not elements of reteach are needed.

'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 students 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. Through the use of intentional monitoring pathways within lessons, teaching staff reflect on the work produced by students during Red Zones and other written tasks in order to potentially make adaptations 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.