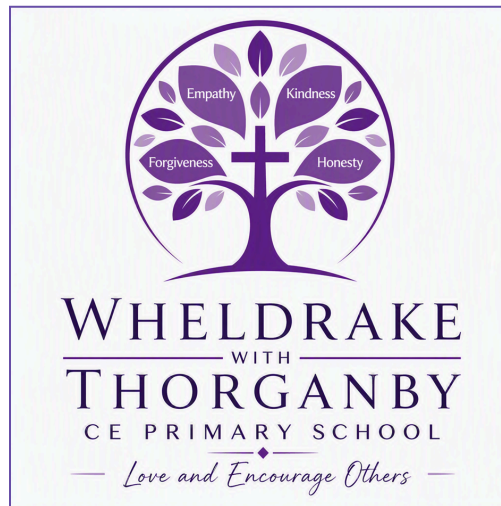


Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary School

History Policy



Deuteronomy 32:7 - Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

Intent

Our aim at Wheldrake with Thorganby Primary School is to instill a love of history and curiosity about the past in all children through an ambitious, rich, and broad curriculum. We teach the substantive knowledge and skills that enable pupils to appreciate how significant people, places and events have shaped the world today.

Through historical enquiry, pupils learn to ask perceptive questions, critically analyse evidence, weigh contrasting arguments and understand how interpretations of the past are constructed. A strong sense of chronology is embedded across the school, creating a coherent roadmap that is revisited and expanded year-on-year so historical periods are understood in the context of prior learning.

Our curriculum celebrates York's rich local history, helping children connect their immediate heritage to broader national and global themes. We ensure key historical vocabulary is systematically taught and built upon, empowering all children, including those with SEND and disadvantaged background, to understand the complexity of human societies, diversity, and change over time.

Implementation

In the EYFS, history is embedded within the '*Understanding the World*' area of learning, specifically focusing on the '*Past and Present*' educational programme. Children begin developing early chronological awareness, vocabulary and historical curiosity by exploring their own lives, family traditions and significant figures from the past.

Across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, history is taught through a discrete, carefully sequenced curriculum fully aligned with National Curriculum guidance. Topics are mapped logically across all year groups to ensure chronological progression and to systematically build upon core substantive concepts (such as *monarchy, invasion, trade, power* and *settlement*) alongside key disciplinary skills (including *historical enquiry, evaluating primary and secondary evidence, cause and consequence* and *historical interpretation*).

Learning is broken down into small, cumulative steps supported by a whole-school progression map that outlines the specific knowledge, skills and vocabulary taught each year. Prior learning is explicitly revisited at the start of new units to strengthen long-term memory, help pupils accurately place new historical periods on a coherent timeline and build connections across different eras. Tier 2 and Tier 3 historical terms are explicitly taught, modelled by staff and embedded into classroom displays and word banks to support rich historical discussion.

Pedagogy incorporates evidence-based strategies, such as regular retrieval practice, spaced learning, and structured enquiry, to ensure core knowledge is retained in long-term memory. Teachers adapt tasks and apply targeted scaffolding (such as visual prompts, structured writing frames and concrete artefacts) to ensure all learners, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, access the same high level of ambition without narrowing the curriculum.

We enrich classroom learning through purposeful, knowledge-led experiences including visits to local museums and heritage sites across York, hands-on interactions with primary artifacts and visitors. These opportunities allow pupils to apply their enquiry skills and think like historians. Cross-curricular links with English, art, geography, design and technology and computing are made where they meaningfully deepen historical understanding.

Assessment

Assessment in history is an ongoing, responsive process integrated directly into the planning, teaching and learning cycle. We prioritise formative assessment to ensure pupils build long-term, memorable knowledge. Continuous formative assessment is used during lessons to check understanding, identify misconceptions and adapt responsive teaching. Key strategies include: Low-stakes quizzes, timeline re-ordering and starter activities which test both *fingertip knowledge* (topic-specific vocabulary, key dates and core facts) and *generative knowledge* (connecting prior learning to new contexts). Targeted questioning and class discussion is used to check grasp of substantive concepts (e.g., *monarchy, empire, trade, invasion*) and disciplinary concepts (e.g. *cause and consequence, continuity and change, historical significance, interpretation*). Live verbal feedback during lessons addresses misconceptions immediately, ensuring gaps in understanding are resolved before moving forward.

Summative assessment evaluates how securely pupils retain core historical knowledge over time and whether curriculum intent is being met. At the end of each history topic, pupils complete an extended enquiry question or synthesis task (e.g., written account, structured debate, or visual presentation) to demonstrate their chronological understanding, substantive knowledge and disciplinary thinking.

Pupils are assessed systematically against the core objectives established in our curriculum progression document. Our progression document clearly defines expectations for each year group. This tool enables teachers to build systematically on what has been taught previously, ensuring clear narrative continuity across Key Stages. It also ensures all knowledge and disciplinary skills taught are transferable and secure across all areas of historical study.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

At Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary School, we are committed to providing an ambitious and fully inclusive history curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, disadvantaged background and EAL. We ensure that every child accesses the same high-quality core knowledge and disciplinary skills rather than a reduced or diluted curriculum.

Teachers employ evidence-based adaptive teaching strategies to remove barriers to learning and manage cognitive load. Scaffolding is planned and adjusted during lessons to support independence. This includes the use of visual timelines, dual-coded resources, pre-taught vocabulary, structured writing frames and concrete artifacts alongside formal written tasks.

Targeted adult support is deployed flexibly to build confidence, facilitate enquiry and encourage high-level discussion without creating dependence. Multi-sensory approaches such as historical role-play, video media and artefact handling are used purposefully to deepen conceptual understanding and ensure all children can demonstrate their learning effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To monitor and evaluate the quality and implementation of history education across the school, the subject leader facilitates time for staff to co-plan and discuss medium and long-term curriculum maps, ensuring coherent progression of substantive knowledge, disciplinary skills and subject-specific vocabulary. The lead teacher collects, analyses and moderates pupil work and assessments, verifying standards and consistency across year groups. Resource audits periodically review topic resources, historical artefacts and secondary sources to ensure high-quality learning across all key stages. They work collaboratively with the SENCo to audit provision, ensuring scaffolded access and seamless progression for pupils with SEND.

Impact

The impact of our history curriculum is evident in pupils' historical knowledge, disciplinary thinking and passion for the subject. Children talk enthusiastically and articulately about history, demonstrating strong retention of prior learning and using subject-specific terminology with confidence. Books reflect an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum where clear knowledge and skill outcomes are evident. Work demonstrates high expectations for all learners, supported by effective scaffolding rather than lowered expectations. Pupils formulate perceptive questions, weigh evidence, analyse historical interpretations and construct reasoned arguments. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils hold a coherent, chronological understanding of Britain's past and the wider world. They leave equipped with the foundational tools to think critically like historians and continue their learning successfully in secondary education.