



Kilburn Junior School

History Policy



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EMBARK
FEDERATION



KILBURN JUNIOR SCHOOL
Embark Federation

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Kilburn Junior School: History Policy

“Studying history will sometimes make you feel uncomfortable. Studying history will sometimes make you feel deeply upset. Studying history will sometimes make you feel extremely angry. If Studying history always makes you feel proud and happy, you probably aren’t studying history.”

-Anonymous

1. RATIONALE

1.1 At Kilburn Junior School, we believe that History is an essential part of the school’s curriculum. A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain’s past and that of the wider world. Pupils are taught to consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, how these societies organised their politics, and what beliefs and cultures influenced people’s actions.

1.2 As they do this, they will develop their empathy and admiration for other cultures by realising that a diverse group of people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds have been an integral part of the make up of modern Britain. They will develop a sense of the diversity of human experience, and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society.

1.3 In history, pupils find evidence, think critically about its validity and reach their own conclusions. They make value judgements about the actions of groups of people in the past and use this to see how modern Britons have arrived at our shared set of British Values. To do this they need to be able to research, sift through evidence, and argue for their point of view—skills that are prized in adult life.

1.4 Our History curriculum 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.

1.5 This policy follows the guidance of the National Curriculum for History (2014) which outlines the scope and aims of the government in teaching and learning across Key Stage 2.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The national curriculum for history (2013) 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; achievements and follies of mankind

- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as ‘empire’, ‘civilisation’, ‘parliament’ and ‘peasantry’
- 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.

2.2 In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined in the Subject Knowledge Planners and the skills ladder, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

3. SPOKEN LANGUAGE

3.1 Throughout the History curriculum, we will ensure that children gain a wide vocabulary and understand more difficult substantive, conceptual ideas which reoccur throughout history: discrimination, empire, tax, trade and invasion for example. They are crucial components of pupils’ comprehension of new material because they are abstract ideas, and therefore difficult to grasp, but are also found very commonly in history.

3.2 At Kilburn Junior School, we will aim to secure these by using appropriately challenging vocabulary in lessons, explicitly teaching these concepts, using them regularly in context and, sometimes, by assessing pupils’ knowledge of identified concepts.

4. PLANNING AND TEACHING

4.1 At Kilburn Junior School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in history lessons to impart the skills and knowledge set out in our History curriculum. It is important to us however, that the outcomes for this subject are closely related to our desired outcomes from our underlying Global Citizenship goals, in particular, the values of this curriculum through which we teach history.

4.2 We believe in whole-class teaching methods and combine these with enquiry-based research activities.

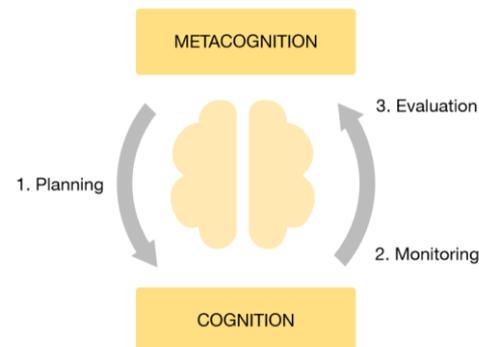
We believe children learn best when:

- They have access to, and are able to handle artefacts
- They go on visits to museums and places of interest
- They have access to secondary sources such as books and photographs
- Visitors talk about personal experiences of the past
- They listen to and interact with stories from the past
- They undertake fieldwork by interviewing family and older friends about changes in their own and other people’s lives
- They use drama and dance to act out historical events
- They are shown, or use independently, resources from the internet and videos
- They are able to use non-fiction books for research

- They are provided with opportunities to work independently or collaboratively, to ask as well as answer historical questions.

4.3 As with any other subject, we recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies which are differentiated by task, expected outcome and/or support from peers or adults.

4.4 Our teaching aims to support **metacognition** and **self-regulated learning** in school by encouraging children to reflect on their learning in collaborative groups so that learners can support each other and make their thinking explicit through discussion. The work that children undertake is designed to support metacognition by encouraging them to monitor and evaluate their thinking, applying newly learned historical knowledge, concepts and key skills in other applications and areas of our curriculum.



4.5 The teaching and learning that takes place in geography is underpinned by the **Embark Teaching and Learning Strategy group**. Further details can be found in the ***Kilburn Junior School Teaching and Learning Strategy Guide***.

4.6 Critical thinking is a very important skills in life and in learning history! Learning history isn't about memorizing a sequence of names and dates. To actually understand history, you have to be part detective and part judge. Without critical thinking, history is a very one-sided story that may or may not have a bearing on the reality of the past.

4.7 **Navigating the "Bias Minefield"**: Every historical document was written by someone with a perspective, an agenda, or a blind spot. Critical thinking allows you to practice "**sourcing**": asking who wrote this, why they wrote it, and what they stood to gain.

- The "Winner's" Perspective: You learn to look for the "silences" in history—the voices of the marginalized or defeated that were left out of the official record.
- Corroboration: You learn not to take one person's word for it. Just like a crime scene, you look for multiple witnesses to see where stories align and where they clash.

4.8 **Distinguishing Cause from Correlation**: It's easy to say "Event A happened, then Event B happened, so A caused B." Critical thinking stops you from making that leap too quickly. It helps you analyze complex causal chains. For example, did the sinking of the *Lusitania* cause the U.S. to enter WWI? A critical thinker would argue it was a *catalyst*, but the "cause" involved a much deeper web of economics, unrestricted submarine warfare, and the Zimmerman Telegram.

4.9 **Understanding Context (Avoiding "Presentism")**: One of the hardest parts of history is **contextualization**. It's the ability to understand the past on its own terms rather than judging historical figures solely by modern moral standards. Critical thinking helps you bridge the gap between "What were they thinking?" and "Why did that make sense to them at the time?"

4.10 **Identifying misinformation and disinformation**: We live in an era of misinformation. The same skills used to analyze a 19th-century political cartoon are the ones you need to analyze a viral tweet or a biased news report today.

- **Evidence Evaluation**: Is this claim backed by primary sources?
- **Logical Fallacies**: Is the argument attacking a person (ad hominem) or oversimplifying a complex issue (straw man)?

Key Historical Skills

SKILL	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHY IT MATTERS
Sourcing	Checking the author's background.	Identifies potential bias or intent.
Contextualization	Looking at the "big picture" of the era.	Prevents judging the past by today's rules.
Corroboration	Comparing different accounts of one event.	Finds the most reliable version of the truth.
Close Reading	Looking at the specific language used.	Reveals subtext and hidden meanings.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1. Assessment should be used not only to track pupils' learning but also to provide teachers at Kilburn Junior School with information about what pupils do and do not know. This information allows teachers to adapt their teaching so it builds on pupils' existing knowledge, addresses their weaknesses, and focuses on the next steps that they need in order to make progress.

5.2. Teachers knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses is used to inform their planning of future lessons and the focus of targeted support. In order to achieve this, teachers use a 'subject knowledge memory map' to identify a pupil's understanding of historical concepts before teaching each topic. This is given to the children again at the end of each topic to assess the children's understanding of these concepts after teaching has taken place. This aims to identify what the children have learned and if there are any gaps in understanding/misconceptions that need to be addressed before moving on to any future topics.

5.3. Pupils' work will be marked in line with the **Marking Policy** and will model how corrections will be made, giving pupils a chance to learn from their misconceptions and mistakes.

5.4. Summative assessments are made at least once per term, six times per academic year and logged on Arbor for English and mathematics. Whilst there is currently no requirement for summative assessments specific to history, evidence to support teachers' judgements in English and maths can be obtained (where relevant) from work that pupils have completed whilst developing their understanding of historical key skills.

6. Role of the subject leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in History through:

- Monitoring and evaluating history:
 - pupil progress and analysis of data (through book scrutiny, lesson observation etc...)
 - provision of history: ensuring the breadth and balance of the curriculum with clear and progressive steps taught in knowledge and skills.
 - How history is taught in the through other areas of the curriculum
 - the quality of the learning environment (teaching, displays and use of ICT)
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- reporting to governors and SLT

- guidance support and training for parents and carers
- keeping up to date with recent pedagogical developments

7. Expectations of teaching staff

- Teachers are aware of school policy and plan and teach lessons in keeping with its ethos
- A yearly overview is used to ensure coverage of the expected curriculum and progression from year to year
- Planning covers all History objectives throughout the year
- Weekly plans are based on medium term planning and success criteria based on the most recent assessment
- Skills and knowledge taught in History are reinforced and embedded throughout all other areas of learning; this is evidenced in all appropriate work (esp. English, D&T etc...)
- Guided group work is planned for and delivered
- Learning Objectives, success criteria and key pieces of vocabulary are displayed in all lessons and are evident in books
- Marking is directly linked to the Learning objective and Success Criteria in all lessons. (See feedback and Marking policy)
- Assessment for Learning is used in classrooms.
- High quality displays are used to support teaching and celebrate the achievements of pupils
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7. EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ASSISTANTS AND OTHER HELPERS IN CLASS

- All staff are aware of school policy and plan and teach lessons in keeping with its ethos.
- Staff will feedback to teachers and pupils as necessary and in line with marking and feedback policy.
- Staff will use historical vocabulary with accuracy and identify and correct misunderstandings or misconceptions in a timely manner.
- Staff will model the high standards we expect from pupils and foster a love of history through their own enthusiasm for the subject.