

Beech Hill School

## History Policy



Written by: Katie Whitton and Laura Brambani

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## Intent

Throughout their learning journey at Beech Hill School, the children will gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. One of our aims is to inspire pupils' curiosity about the past in order to support and encourage the asking of perceptive questions, critical thinking and the development of perspective and judgement. We will support our children to do this by building awareness of both their own heritage and that of the wider world, and by equipping them with essential disciplinary skills that can be used in meaningful historical enquiry.

We aim to supply the children with the resources and tools needed to be effective historians who are able to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and the relationships between different groups.

Artefacts, visitors and educational visits are used to stimulate an in-depth and analytic understanding of significant events in British history as well as an appreciation of how things have changed and will continue to change over time. The children are taught the skills that will enable them to have a better understanding of the society in which they live and that of the wider world, as well as how history of wider world has impacted upon Britain both in the past and at present. This helps the children to gain a sense of their own identity within a social, political, cultural and economic background.

Without history, there would not be a future!

This process of knowledge acquisition begins in Reception with a focus on local history and familiar aspects of the past. Learning about the immediate world around them is the ideal foundation for later composite learning in Key Stage 1 and 2. This component learning is undertaken whilst children also build knowledge of substantive concepts and slowly enrich their chronological schema. Children learn to ask questions, use different sources and begin to understand that the past can be represented in different ways.

In Key Stage 2, children's chronological frameworks are further developed, at a local, national and international level. This includes a focus, for example, on the Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Scots, an early civilisations overview, studies of Ancient Greece, Ancient Egypt and Early Islamic Civilisations and World War II. Whilst developing this wider chronological understanding of history, our children build and add to timelines through the year groups to ensure they can reference and refer to events from prior learning. Disciplinary knowledge continues to be systematically developed accordingly, in tandem with this substantive knowledge.

## Aims for pupils

Through our teaching of history, we aim to:

- Stimulate pupils' interest in discovering the past.
- Enable children to know and understand the history of Britain, from the earliest times to the present day.
- Provide the children with a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and the wider world, and the impact on the modern day. This includes understanding how people and events from the past have influenced modern-day British culture and British values, and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.
- Develop a strong understanding of the chronology of all the time periods studied in preparation for any new learning.
- Develop the children's skills so they can study historical evidence and give understanding and reason whilst analysing evidence and making judgements or decisions.
- Encourage children to consider different points of view with explanation and reasoning.
- Make links between topics through systematic thinking.

## Implementation

### Planning

For years 1 - 6, we follow the National Curriculum as defined by the Department for Education. The history curriculum is underpinned by providing our children with wider opportunities, independent learning and basic skills.

History is taught in years 1-6 through a topical theme in specific half terms throughout the year. These themes have been established to ensure that chronological understanding is sequenced, relevant and can support children in building upon prior learning. A body of key knowledge in the form of 'Must Know Facts' is established for each historical topic. The unit is planned in a way so that these facts are recapped and revisited to encourage retention.

*Why? We teach history in themed half terms as it allows greater opportunity for children to draw on knowledge from other subject areas and form a wider subject basis. We regularly link our English unit to our historical topic. Teaching history in this way supports the learning in other subjects to give a contextual understanding as well as supporting retention. We use stories to reinforce the teaching of history and to support in the developing of love of reading.*

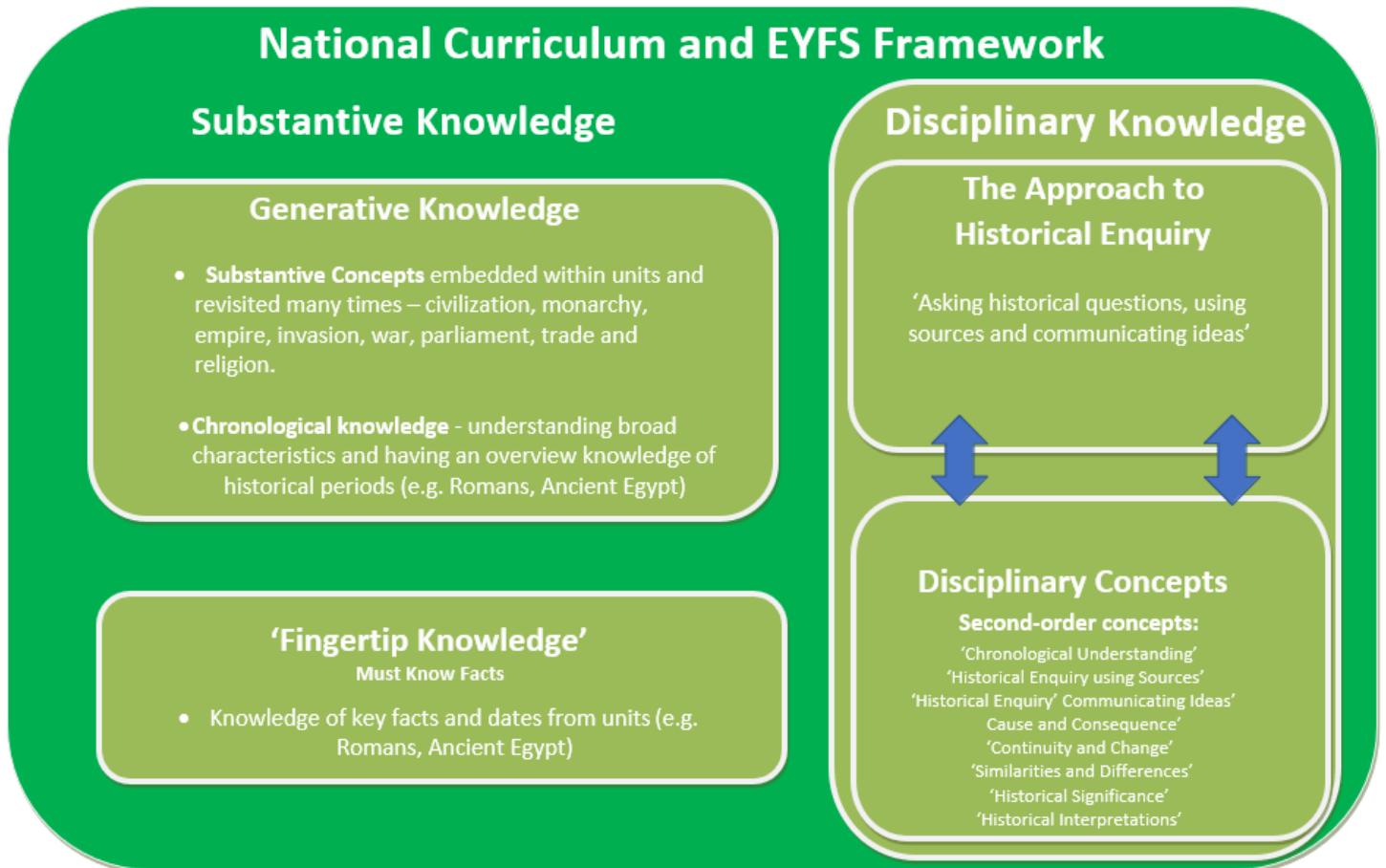
Teachers liaise with colleagues from other year groups to ensure that prior learning is drawn upon and used as a foundation for future learning. The subject leader provides support and advice during planning stages to ensure that learning is well sequenced. Links are made with other areas of the curriculum to provide opportunities for learners to apply historical skills to their learning across the curriculum. Literacy skills are developed through report writing, debating, reading, researching, recording information, speaking and listening.

Historical learning is carried out inside and outside of the classroom, where pupils investigate a variety of people, places and environments in the United Kingdom and the wider world. They compare and contrast the different eras that they study and learn about the people, lifestyle and culture and environment in that time.

In EYFS, history aspects of the children's work are related to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs), as outlined in Development Matters. These underpin the curriculum planning for children aged two to five as history makes a significant contribution to the development of a child's knowledge and understanding of the world and the people and communities within it.

## Understanding Different Types of Knowledge in History

The history curriculum is underpinned by elements of substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge to ensure that the children are enhancing their historical knowledge whilst developing the skills to construct historical rational and critical thinking with enquiry.



### Substantive Knowledge

This is factual knowledge of the past: key events, place and people. It includes four types of knowledge: 'generative knowledge', 'Substantive Concepts', 'Chronological Knowledge' and 'Fingertip Knowledge' (Must Know Facts)

- **Generative knowledge** is the essential, underpinning, in-depth knowledge of a topic or time period that supports further historical learning and thus supports pupils to: Generate more knowledge. Generative knowledge can be categorised into 'substantive concepts' (abstract concepts such as monarchy, trade, or empire) and chronological knowledge (knowledge relating to broader developments and the features of historical periods).
- **Substantive Concepts** are concepts concerned with the subject matter of history, such as civilisation, monarchy, empire, invasion, war, parliament, trade and religion. They are

embedded throughout the curriculum so that each one is planned to be encountered multiple times throughout the curriculum. Substantive concepts are best understood with repeated encounters in specific, meaningful contexts, rather than being taught in an abstract way. Substantive concepts are classed generative knowledge because they support the learning of new material. For example, understanding the concept of civilisation from an earlier topic supports understanding of the next topic which involves civilisation.

- **Chronological Knowledge** is also generative knowledge. This is the specific knowledge of the broad characteristics of historical periods and supports pupils to build coherent schema for particular topics.
- **Fingertip Knowledge** is the knowledge of the key facts and dates which pupils need in their minds, or at their fingertips, whilst undertaking historical enquiries, without which they would be incapable of constructing answers. Without essential fingertip knowledge, working memory is overloaded when undertaking enquiries, and it is thus useful to have this fingertip knowledge in Must Know Facts. Fingertip knowledge must be taught and pupils must retain it during their enquiry. However, gaining this type of knowledge is not the ultimate long term aim of the primary classroom, and it may not be needed beyond the current topic.

### Disciplinary Knowledge and Historical Enquiry

Disciplinary knowledge is knowledge about how historians investigate the past, and how they construct historical claims, arguments and accounts - i.e. it is the knowledge of how to undertake historical enquiry. Pupils learn disciplinary knowledge within relevant historical contexts through application to substantive knowledge. Units of learning are framed around central Big Questions which focus a unit of work on elements of this disciplinary knowledge. This knowledge of historical enquiry frames what pupils learn about the past, supporting them to consider the status of historical claims. It enables them to place their historical knowledge in a broad context. It helps pupils to understand the different version of the past can be constructed, and that historical narrative is partially dependent upon viewpoint.

**Disciplinary knowledge** is concerned with developing historical rational and critical thinking within enquiry, and can be categorised into 7 Disciplinary concepts that are systematically developed in our history curriculum:

- **Chronological Understanding** - being able to employ dates and terms to describe the past, and realise that the past can be divided into periods.
- **Historical enquiry using sources** - asking questions, using sources and evidence to construct and challenge the past.

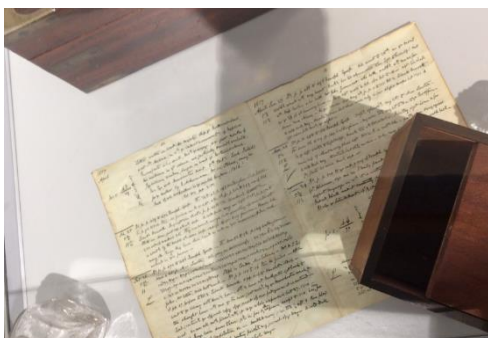


- **Historical enquiry communicating ideas** - Communicating and organising finds with a systematic approach.
- **Cause and consequence** - selecting and combining information that might be deemed a cause and shaping it into a coherent causal explanation and understanding the relationship between an event and other future events.
- **Continuity and change** - analysing the pace, nature and extent of change.
- **Similarities and differences** - analysing the extent and type of difference between people, groups, experiences or places in the same historical period.
- **Historical significance** - understanding how and why historical events, trends and individuals are thought of as being important.
- **Historical interpretations** - understanding how and why different accounts of the past are constructed.

## Teaching and Learning

The history curriculum is delivered by class teachers. In all classes, work is differentiated in order to give appropriate levels of work to each individual child. Children work in a range of groupings including whole class, small groups, pairs and independently. Where appropriate, children are supported by teaching assistants.

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources where possible. We encourage children, through our lesson delivery, to carry out historical enquiry. In each key stage, children are given the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance to support their development of historical knowledge and skills. We encourage specialists to come into school and talk about the experiences/discoveries of events in the past. The children are supported so that they understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and encourage children to ask searching questions on their topic, such as, 'How do we know?', 'What can I find out about?', 'Where can I find out more? ', 'Why did that happen?' and 'Why are their differing opinions?'.



The majority of history work is completed in the 'curriculum' exercise book, but sometimes, tasks may be completed using Seesaw. When completing history work on Seesaw, it should be saved in the class 'History' folder. You can also find evidence of history learning on our website on the page titled 'History'.

## Resources

History skills are developed through the use of resources such as photographs, artefacts, resources on the internet and resources shared from home or experiences. Children also gain history skills from taking part in trips in our local area and further afield.

Chronology is an important part of our history curriculum at Beech Hill. In 2019, we introduced a progressive uniform timeline into each of our classrooms (Y1-Y6) to support retention of the different time periods studied in each year group. A constant source of reference, not only in history lessons, is helping our children to gain a deep understanding of the chronology of the time periods they are studying and have previously studied.



To reinforce chronological understanding, there is a timeline displaying key events on the Key Stage 1 corridor. The timeline includes areas of history that are studied in EYFS, year 1 and year 2.

Resources are updated where applicable to meet the needs of the new curriculum. We have access to Purple Mash and Seesaw and we encourage children to access these to carry out research for themselves.





## Inclusion

At Beech Hill, history is implemented and taught through our creative curriculum and teachers ensure that there is a broad and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum. Work is accessible, challenging and engaging for all learners to ensure that true progress is made. We ensure this is the case by posing thought provoking questions, setting challenging work and providing extension tasks, encouraging learners to conduct independent research and pose their own questions. For each topic, 'Must Knows' provide a set of key facts and vocabulary; these are used to recap prior learning for retention, pre-teaching, home learning tasks and assessment.

We also aim to provide opportunities for our pupils to develop their cultural capital linked to their history learning and includes school trips with a historical focus, to local areas, museums and beyond, workshops and visitors within school. History is taught across the key stages in ways that enable each child to access the National Curriculum, regardless of ethnic group, age, disability, SEN and gender. Where children have significant needs, they may be taught and assessed against BSquared history objectives, in-line with their specific requirements. All children are challenged and provided with first quality teaching.

## Assessment for Learning

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways and teachers assess accordingly. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons to move forward each individual child's learning. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks and assesses the work and uses this to inform future planning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide their progress. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

Once the children complete a whole unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement of work for each child in relation to the National Curriculum objectives. The children will also complete a Must Know quiz based on the Must Know facts that the children will have learned during the topic. The Must Know quizzes will also include knowledge facts from the children's previous topics to ensure children are constantly recapping and deepening their knowledge.

As well as assessing the children's chronological understanding, generative knowledge and fingertip knowledge, the children are assessed against disciplinary concepts to ensure that the knowledge and skills that they have been taught are transferrable to all areas of historical study. The progression document that details the expectations in each year group ensures that teachers are able to understand what has been taught previously, what they need to teach in their year group and what

will be taught next. It is also a tool for identifying any gaps in pupils' learning and allows teachers to plan for this effectively.

### Monitoring and reviewing

The subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and quality of teaching in history, developing the assessment and ensuring progression and continuity within the subject. As well as this, the subject leader will support colleagues in their teaching, inform staff of any current developments in the subject and provide leadership and direction for history in the school. The subject leader updates resources which are needed to deliver the new curriculum, within budget restraints.

## Impact

### Assessment and Feedback

All teachers use the progression document in history as a tool for teaching and assessment. The progression document ensures that teachers are able to understand what has been previously been taught, what they need to teach in their year group and what will be taught next. It is also a tool for identifying any gaps in pupils' learning and allows teachers to plan for this effectively. Teachers then assess children's progress by making informal judgements during lessons; this informs planning for subsequent learning experiences.

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways and teachers assess accordingly. Challenge questions are used to deepen learning and children are expected to respond to these. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks and assesses the work and uses this to inform future planning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide their progress. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work and are always encouraged to strive for excellence.