



Ranelagh Primary School
Pauls Road Ipswich IP2 0AN
Telephone: (01473) 251608
Email: admin@ranelagh.suffolk.sch.uk

Acting Headteacher: Mrs O Hopper

History Policy

Reviewed on: 16th September 2025

Next Review due: Autumn 2027

Signed by:

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Chair of Governors

Signed by:

A stylized, cursive signature in black ink, likely belonging to the Headteacher.

Headteacher

Introduction

This policy reflects Ranelagh Primary School's values and philosophy to the teaching and learning of History. History is a valued part of the curriculum and is important to our school. It is taught through topic work, as part of a whole school topic-based approach to teaching and learning, rather than as a discrete subject wherever possible. This has enabled more cross curricular links and a wider teaching of History in school.

History teaching at Ranelagh Primary School strives to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people. We help pupils gain knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. They learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain. By considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school, History makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching about how Britain developed as a democratic society. We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and by doing so, to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem solving.

Aims for teaching and learning History

The aims of the subject should be realised by all pupils:

- To foster in children an interest in the past and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer.
- To enable children to know about significant events in British history, and to appreciate how things have changed over time.
- To develop a sense of chronology.
- To know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and in doing so to contribute to a child's citizenship education.
- To understand how Britain is part of a wider European culture, and to study some aspects of European history.
- To have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world.
- To help children understand society and their place in it so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage.
- To develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation and local area.

Teaching and Learning Style

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary resources. In each key stage, we give children

the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of cross curricular learning, drama and storytelling in history teaching, and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways, and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?' about information they are given.

Foundation Stage

In our Early Years Foundation Stage, history is encompassed in Understanding of the World; People and Communities. We find out about and discuss special times and events in children's lives including past and present events in their life and of their family members. This also helps us to identify similarities and differences between each other, family customs and routines.

We use artefacts, photos and video clips to support our teaching in this area and often follow children's individual interests to learn more. We also acknowledge significant events in society e.g. Remembrance Day and The King's Coronation.

At the end of reception, we assess the children against the Early Learning Goals; Past and Present and People, Culture and Communities.

Planning and Differentiation

We use the national curriculum to inform our planning in history. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we plan progression into the schemes of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

The curriculum planning in history is carried out in three main phases (long-term, medium term curriculum mapping and short-term personal planning).

The long-term plan records the history topics studied in each term during each key stage. Some topics have a particular historical focus, and in Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We use curriculum mapping in our medium-term plans, alongside other subjects to enable a topic-based approach focused around a central key text which feeds into various other curriculum areas, including history. These are mapped out as 2 cycles for each Key Stage so that all of the curriculum objectives are covered over the 2 years – Year 1/2, Year 3/4, Year 5/6. Teachers will then put these objectives onto a Medium Term Plan where each individual lesson objective is mapped out in detail. ***Note – during some half terms there will be a Geography focus, instead of History.***

As well as coverage of history objectives during allocated teaching time, children also are exposed to learning through whole school activities, such as the celebration of the local historical figures (e.g. the school's involvement in the 'Thomas Wolsey 550' project).

We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of abilities in history and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of each child. We achieve this by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- grouping children in mixed ability groups to allow pupils to support each other in the learning process.
- providing resources of different complexity and scaffolding, depending on the ability of the child.
- using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups.

The class teacher uses short lesson plans for each history lesson. These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson.

Recording

All lessons, regardless of whether they are written tasks or physical investigations, must be recorded for assessment and evidence purposes. Photographs, speech bubbles of children's comments, post-it notes, of observations and use of historical terminology can be used for lessons where written work is not appropriate. This is to be recorded in cool books in KS1 and in green topic books in KS2.

Cross Curricular links

Whenever possible and appropriate, cross curricular links should be identified in the teaching of history.

English

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in the English lessons are historical in nature. Children's speaking and listening skills are enhanced through the use of drama and role play within history lessons. They develop their writing ability by composing reports, diary entries and letters. Pupils' writing is supported by the use of writing frames and word banks.

Class texts, in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, are chosen each half term based around a key topic. Books are relevant to the history topics covered during this time period, developing an integral approach to learning.

Mathematics

The teaching of history contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through activities such as creating time-lines and through sequencing events in their own lives. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form. Venn diagrams are also used to compare and contrast aspects of history.

Art & Design/Design & Technology

Our half-termly curriculum mapping focused around a key text allows the integration of history knowledge and application into the wider curriculum, through subjects including Art and DT. Teachers in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are encouraged to link their Art & DT lessons to their current topic, in order to enrich children's learning and understanding.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions, such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognise and challenge stereotypes, and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and they start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

In our teaching of history, we contribute where possible to the children's spiritual development. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong through various historical topics. The history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multicultural British society of today.

Assessment for Learning

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous historical event, whilst older pupils may produce PowerPoint presentations based on their research and investigations. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

At the end of a whole unit, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Parents receive an effort and attainment mark for history within an annual written report.

Resources

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We keep these resources in the history cupboard or Year Group areas where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. Resources also include software for some topics. The library also contains a supply of topic books to support children's individual research.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in History is the responsibility of the history subject coordinator. The work of the subject coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject coordinator has specially allocated time in which to fulfil this role by reviewing samples of children's work and visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

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