

History Policy



Our Curriculum at Finchale

At Finchale Primary School we are proud of our curriculum and the range of experiences we provide for our children. Our curriculum is accessible to all children, irrespective of their ethnic background, gender, disability, religious or linguistic background. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with additional needs, including special educational needs, those with disabilities, those who are more able, those with gifts or talents and the children who are learning English as an additional language. We provide a rich and challenging curriculum which aims to stretch our children. Staff monitor our children to ensure that they are supported in their learning, whatever their ability.

Statement of Intent for

At Finchale Primary School, we intend to deliver a history curriculum that is accessible to all and that will maximise the outcomes for every child so that they know more, remember more and understand more. Our teaching of history will help pupils gain a secure knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. The curriculum is structured in a way that allows for children to make links between current and previous learning. Teachers use the long term plans for history to make comparisons between historical periods previously taught, developing children's chronological knowledge and understanding from the Stone Age to present day.

We want children to be curious to know more about the past and to have the skills required to explore their own interests. History lessons focus on working as historians and developing historical skills and there are many opportunities for the curriculum to be enriched through historical visits, visitors and events held in school.

We aim to enable children to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. It is important for children to develop a sense of identity through learning about the past and we want them to know how history has shaped their own lives. This is why the local area is fully utilised to achieve the curriculum outcomes. In KS1 and KS2, local history studies are threaded throughout so that by the end of KS2 children will have a deep understanding of their locality.

This Policy was agreed in Autumn 2023 and will be reviewed in Autumn 2026.

Chair of Governors: Mrs. Gayle Foster

Date: January 2024

Head Teacher: Dr. Sandra Whitton

Date: January 2024

The Importance of History

The National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) states that a high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It 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.

Aims

At Finchale our core curriculum covers those elements set out in the EYFS statutory framework, as well as the programmes of study for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 within the National Curriculum for England. In addition, our teaching goes beyond this to include a range of areas and activities which we believe equip our pupils not only with the skills and knowledge but also the confidence and resilience to be happy, productive members of our society today.

To ensure a smooth transition between what children learn in the Early Years and Key Stage 1, we have carefully structured our planning to ensure there are strong and purposeful links between what children learn and experience in Reception and what they go on to learn and experience in Year 1. This helps to build confidence, maximizes opportunities for learning and demonstrates how staff have a good understanding of how children progress and develop within each subject.

Our starting point for teaching History at Finchale is within the EYFS. Here, a key component comes within the specific area, Understanding the World. Within this, pupils:

- ★ Talk about the lives of people around them and their role in society.
- ★ Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- ★ Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books and storytelling.
- ★

Our pupils then move on to develop their historical knowledge and understanding as they study the attainment targets and programmes of study for History as set out in the National Curriculum. This aims to ensure that all pupils:

- ★ Know understand the history of The United Kingdom 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.

What This Means at Finchale Primary

We believe history is a practical and engaging subject which motivates and inspires our children

to gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. Through the study of individuals, societies, cultures and countries within which they live - and those within the wider world - history enables pupils to gain awareness of what happened in the past and the reasons for these events.

History helps our children understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies, the relationships between different groups as well as the changes and challenges of their own time. At Finchale, we teach history as a standalone subject, which places emphasis on the importance of the skills our children need to become 'historians.' We follow an enquiry lead approach, encouraging children to ask questions, become 'detectives' of the past and to understand how the impact of the past may still be reflected in life today. Where relevant, we make connections with other areas of our curriculum to provide a wealth of enrichment activities and to deepen children's understanding of history.

History begins within The Early Years as part of Understanding the World. Our children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

In the Early Years, our pupils develop a sense of the past and the present by talking about the lives of those around them and drawing on their knowledge and experiences of what they are learning through storytelling, books and discussions.

In Key Stage 1, our history develops an awareness of the past with a focus on vocabulary development. Our children explore similarities and differences and learn about specific historical events and the lives of significant people. We use the context of our local area's history and children learn about: the changes in seaside holidays and the school and its community.

In Key Stage 2, history is taught chronologically to support the children in establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. We encourage children to ask questions, investigate and begin to make links so that they acquire the knowledge and skills needed to uncover the wonders of the past that have shaped the world they live in today.

Teaching History Should Equip Children To:

- ★ Ask perceptive questions
- ★ Gain an understanding of chronology
- ★ Identify similarities and differences
- ★ Sift arguments
- ★ Think critically
- ★ Weigh evidence
- ★ Develop perspective and judgement

Threads of Learning

We have identified a set of key historical concepts or 'threads', that children will repeatedly revisit throughout their time at Finchale. Our threads are: 'Society and Community', 'Exploration and Invasion', 'Power' and 'Conflict and Disaster'. Each unit will not include every 'thread' but, over the course of their learning journey through school, children will visit each thread more than once. As children progress through school, they will begin to make links and connections between these threads supporting them in gaining a wider understanding of how history has moulded modern society.

Making Learning Memorable

At Finchale, we aim to make learning memorable through the careful planning and delivery of enriching activities. The children have many opportunities to visit educational sites, engage with historians, actors and visitors and to explore a range of historical artefacts and resources that aim to bring historical periods 'to life.' Learning is practical where possible as we believe this helps

learning 'stick'. Planning is carefully mapped across school to ensure that, when appropriate, links are made with other subject areas to deepen children's understanding. High quality texts are used to support the teaching of History, for example, Upper Key Stage Two uses a variety of different texts to support learning when teaching WWII. This enhances the children's understanding and allows them to make an emotional connection to the significant events in our history, that have shaped the lives they now lead.

Organisation

Our History Curriculum is drawn from a range of resources which include but are not restricted to: Durham Learning grids, Grammarsaurus, Historical Association, History Rocks and Key Stage History. History is part of children's learning roughly every other half term; this is organised alongside Geography, Art and D&T learning with British Values woven throughout.

Long term plans and the Progression of Skills, detail the units taught and the sequence of learning through school. Teachers identify their content from these and provide knowledge organisers for each unit of work. The knowledge organisers have a clear knowledge and skill development focus and place importance and priority on developing a child's vocabulary understanding and use.

The content for each year group, along with long-term plans, content can be found on our school website: www.finchale.durham.sch.uk .

Resources

We use a range of resources to support our teaching within history which include the following:

- ★ <https://grammarsaurus.co.uk>
- ★ <https://www.history.org.uk/>
- ★ <https://www.history-rocks.com/>
- ★ <https://www.keystagehistory.co.uk/>
- ★ <https://www.mrtdoeshistory.com/>
- ★ BBC Bitesize History
- ★ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/history/zfmj92p>
- ★ <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

We are continually adapting and amending our resources to meet the needs of our children.

Assessment

Our subject leader for History oversee the planning and monitoring of pupils' work. Throughout a unit we will continually assess children's current knowledge and previous learning using the 'Fast 4'. This retrieval practice is a key aspect of assessment and is carefully placed through school to 'keep learning warm'. Children revisit learning at a distance from taught content to ensure a retention of understanding. At the end of each unit, the key knowledge and understanding will also be assessed by the class teacher usually, through the use of a quiz. These, alongside the 'Fast 4', give a picture of where the children's understanding and knowledge recall sits and provide clear information from which to build further teaching sequences and to extend children's learning.

Assessments will be 'high challenge and low threat' and could be undertaken using the following methods (this is not an exhaustive list):

- ★ Fast 4
- ★ Quizzes
- ★ Observation of pupils
- ★ Talking with pupils
- ★ Marking written work
- ★ Self-assessment
- ★ Peer assessment
- ★ Discussion and debates

'The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.'

Theodore Roosevelt