

Riverside Primary School

History Policy

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Our STAR Values

At Riverside Primary School, our STAR values underpin our school culture and shape how we live, learn and work together.

- STRIVE – Work hard and believe in yourself.
- TOLERANCE – Respect others and celebrate differences.
- ACHIEVE – Be proud of your progress and success.
- RESILIENCE – Keep going when things feel difficult.

These values are embedded throughout school life, encouraging children to develop positive attitudes towards learning, relationships and personal achievement.

Our Curriculum Drivers

Our curriculum is shaped by five key drivers which reflect what our Riverside children need and what we deliberately seek to develop through their learning and wider school experiences.

- Knowledge of the World – Know more. Understand more.
- Communication – Speak. Read. Write with confidence.
- Global Citizens – Respect others. Change the world.
- Health and Wellbeing – Healthy minds. Healthy bodies.
- Ambition – Dream big. Aim high.

Our Curriculum Drivers enrich our curriculum and help us make purposeful decisions about what we teach and the experiences we provide. They complement, rather than replace, the subject-specific knowledge and understanding children need to develop.

How History Contributes

History makes a particularly important contribution to our Curriculum Drivers of Knowledge of the World, Global Citizens and Communication.

Through studying significant people, events and civilisations, children develop a deeper understanding of the world and the diverse experiences that have shaped it. Historical enquiry encourages curiosity, critical thinking and confident communication as children examine evidence, explore different perspectives and construct informed explanations.

Our STAR values support children in approaching historical learning with curiosity, respect and

resilience, while our wider curriculum ambition is to develop Riverside Learners who are knowledgeable, confident, respectful, independent and prepared for life beyond primary school.

For further information about our whole-school curriculum vision, please see the Riverside Curriculum Statement.

Intent

At Riverside Primary School, we aim to inspire children's curiosity about the past and develop their knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history. We want children to understand how people, events and societies have shaped the world we live in and to develop the knowledge and confidence to question, investigate and make informed judgements about the past.

Our History curriculum is ambitious, knowledge-rich and carefully sequenced. Learning builds progressively from children's early understanding of past and present towards increasingly secure chronological knowledge and a deeper understanding of significant historical periods, people, events and civilisations.

Our curriculum develops two closely connected aspects of historical understanding:

- **Substantive knowledge:** Knowledge of historical people, events, periods and societies, including important concepts such as civilisation, empire, invasion, settlement, migration and legacy.
- **Disciplinary knowledge:** Understanding how historians investigate the past, use sources as evidence, construct accounts and develop interpretations.

Children progressively develop their understanding of key second-order concepts, including cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, historical significance and interpretation. Chronology is a central thread running throughout our curriculum, enabling children to make connections between different periods and place new knowledge within an increasingly secure historical framework.

Our curriculum is deliberately sequenced to build upon previous learning. Important concepts are revisited through different historical contexts, allowing children to develop increasingly detailed and connected understanding. Historical enquiries are carefully selected to develop both knowledge of the past and an understanding of how that knowledge is established.

Our intention is that every child leaves Riverside with a secure foundation of historical knowledge, an appreciation of the diversity and complexity of the past, and the ability to ask thoughtful questions and communicate historically informed explanations and judgements.

Key Substantive Concepts (know what)

Symbol	Concept and Definition
	Significant Events The key happenings surrounding the events and the accomplishments that have been made as a result.
	Significant People Who has played an important role within the event or events and changes that have taken place.
	Civilisation The way of life in particular areas or at a particular period in time.
	Empire An extensive group of states or countries ruled over by one single ruler or state.
	Legacy – Influence and Impact The effect that someone or something has on someone or something else and may still be effective today.
	Invasion An act or instance of invading by an enemy or hostile army.

Key Second Order Concepts (know how)

Symbol	Concept and Definition
	Chronology The study of time - chronological means 'the order in which things happen'.
	Continuity and Change What has changed over time and what has remained the same?
	Cause and Effect The relationship in history between an event, a condition, or a decision (the cause) and the events or results that follow it (the effects). A single cause can have multiple effects.
	Similarities and Differences Understanding the complexity of people's lives, differing perspectives and the relationships between different groups of people.
	Historical Interpretation This is the process by which we describe, analyse, evaluate and create our own explanation of past events based on primary and secondary historical sources.

Implementation

History is taught through carefully planned, knowledge-rich units of work, informed by the National Curriculum and Riverside's History Curriculum Map and Progression of Knowledge and Skills.

Our curriculum is sequenced to ensure that children build upon previously acquired knowledge. Each unit identifies the key historical knowledge, vocabulary and concepts to be taught, with consideration given to how these connect to earlier and future learning. The sequence of units is deliberately planned so that children revisit important historical ideas in increasingly complex contexts.

In the Early Years, children develop an understanding of past and present through familiar experiences, family history and storytelling. In Key Stage 1, they explore changes within and beyond living memory, significant individuals and events, and the history of their local area. In Key Stage 2, children develop a broader understanding of British and world history, including significant periods, societies and civilisations.

Chronology is developed throughout the curriculum. In Key Stage 2, a shared whole-school timeline helps children understand the wider historical narrative, including the relative position and duration of periods studied. Classroom timelines support more detailed chronological understanding within individual units. These are revisited to help children make connections between different periods and previously taught knowledge.

Historical enquiry questions provide a purposeful focus for learning. Teaching develops children's knowledge of the period being studied alongside their understanding of historical evidence, interpretations and second-order concepts. Teachers use explicit explanations, modelling, historical sources, artefacts, images, maps and structured discussion to develop understanding.

Previously taught knowledge is regularly revisited through retrieval and discussion. Teachers check understanding throughout lessons, identify misconceptions and adapt subsequent teaching to ensure that essential knowledge is secured.

Local history is an important feature of our curriculum. Studies of Hullbridge and the impact of significant national events upon the local community enable children to connect their learning with familiar places and experiences. Educational visits, visitors and historical resources provide further opportunities to enrich and deepen historical understanding.

Teaching maintains high expectations for all pupils. Appropriate scaffolding, vocabulary support, clear explanations and targeted additional teaching help children overcome barriers and access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Impact

The impact of our History curriculum is demonstrated through the knowledge children remember, the connections they make and their growing ability to think and communicate historically.

As children progress through Riverside, we expect them to:

- Develop secure knowledge of the historical periods, people and events they have studied.
- Build an increasingly accurate understanding of chronology and make meaningful connections between different periods.
- Understand and apply important historical concepts in different contexts.
- Use relevant historical knowledge and evidence to explain events, consider interpretations and form informed judgements.
- Develop curiosity about the past and confidence in asking and answering historical questions.

Teachers assess children's understanding through discussion, questioning, retrieval activities, historical enquiries and the outcomes of their learning. Assessment identifies what children know and remember, highlights misconceptions and informs future teaching.

The Subject Leader evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum through monitoring, including discussions with pupils, scrutiny of learning and consideration of assessment information. Findings inform ongoing curriculum development and staff support.

Teaching and Learning

Effective History teaching at Riverside is underpinned by secure subject knowledge, clear explanations and carefully sequenced learning.

Teachers identify the essential substantive knowledge and vocabulary pupils need before introducing increasingly complex historical questions and disciplinary thinking. New knowledge is explicitly taught and supported through appropriate modelling, visual resources, timelines and opportunities for discussion.

Historical sources, artefacts, maps, images and written accounts are selected purposefully to support historical enquiry. Children are taught how to use sources as evidence, recognising that the usefulness of a source depends upon the historical question being investigated.

Teaching progressively develops children's understanding of chronology, cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, significance and historical interpretations.

Previously taught knowledge is deliberately revisited through retrieval and opportunities to make connections with new learning. Teachers regularly check understanding, address misconceptions and adapt teaching in response to pupils' needs.

Children are given opportunities to communicate their historical understanding through discussion, explanation, comparison, written accounts and other appropriate outcomes. The emphasis remains on developing and demonstrating secure historical knowledge rather than completing activities for their own sake.

As children progress, they are supported to become increasingly independent in asking historically valid questions, selecting and interpreting evidence and constructing informed explanations.

Assessment

Assessment in History is an ongoing process that informs teaching and supports children's

developing historical knowledge and understanding.

Teachers use a range of approaches to establish what children know, remember and can apply, including:

- Retrieval of previously taught knowledge and vocabulary.
- Questioning and structured discussion to check understanding and identify misconceptions.
- Responses to historical enquiry questions.
- Consideration of children's written, oral and practical learning outcomes.
- Opportunities for children to explain connections between different periods, events and concepts.

Assessment focuses on the identified substantive and disciplinary knowledge within each unit. Teachers use this information to adapt teaching, revisit essential knowledge and provide additional support or challenge where appropriate.

The Subject Leader monitors curriculum implementation and progression through a range of evidence, including pupil discussions, learning reviews, planning and assessment information.

Assessment should be purposeful and proportionate, providing useful information about children's historical understanding without creating unnecessary workload.

Planning and Organisation

History is planned through Riverside's History Curriculum Map and Progression of Knowledge and Skills, ensuring coverage of the National Curriculum and a coherent progression of learning from EYFS to Year 6.

Long-term curriculum planning identifies the historical periods, people, events and civilisations studied, together with the key enquiry questions and intended progression.

The sequencing of units is supported by our *Why This, Why Now?* rationale, which identifies how learning builds upon children's prior knowledge and prepares them for subsequent study.

Medium-term planning identifies the essential historical knowledge, vocabulary, concepts and enquiry opportunities within each unit. Teachers consider appropriate resources, assessment opportunities, adaptations and links to previous learning.

Lessons are planned and adapted in response to pupils' understanding, with sufficient time allocated for children to secure essential knowledge, revisit prior learning and develop increasingly sophisticated historical understanding.

History in the Early Years

In the Early Years, children's foundations for historical understanding are developed through the *Understanding the World* area of learning, particularly *Past and Present*.

Children explore their own experiences, family histories, familiar events and changes over time. Through stories, photographs, discussion and practical experiences, they begin to recognise similarities and differences between the past and present and develop vocabulary relating to time and chronology.

These early experiences provide important foundations for the more formal study of History in Key Stage 1.

Health and Safety

- Teachers are responsible for reading the school's Health and Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- All teachers must carry out a risk assessment prior to taking the children off site for a history lesson
- Planning of lessons adheres to the whole school E-safety Policy, when using online research tools.

Inclusion

At Riverside, we are committed to ensuring that every child can access and succeed in an ambitious History curriculum, regardless of their starting points, additional needs or background.

Our approach to inclusion prioritises high-quality, explicit teaching and access to shared historical learning alongside peers. We recognise that children may encounter barriers relating to language, literacy, working memory, communication or understanding abstract historical concepts.

Teachers identify and respond to these barriers through appropriate ordinarily available provision, which may include:

- Explicit teaching and pre-teaching of essential historical vocabulary.
- Clear explanations, modelling and instructions broken into manageable steps.
- Visual resources, timelines, maps and images to support understanding.
- Regular retrieval and revisiting of prior knowledge.
- Structured discussion, oral rehearsal and opportunities to clarify ideas.
- Scaffolds such as word banks, sentence starters and writing frames where appropriate.
- Alternative methods of recording understanding when literacy or transcription creates a barrier to demonstrating historical knowledge.

Support is carefully selected according to individual need and should enable pupils to engage with ambitious historical content rather than routinely reduce the knowledge or challenge expected.

Additional adults are deployed purposefully to support participation, understanding and increasing independence. Where pupils have significant gaps in essential knowledge, carefully targeted additional teaching may be provided.

Teachers use ongoing assessment and information from pupils' individual plans to ensure that adaptations are appropriate and effective.

Our aim is for all pupils to develop secure historical knowledge, participate meaningfully in historical enquiry and experience success as increasingly independent learners.

Equality and Diversity

At Riverside, we are committed to ensuring that all children have equitable opportunities to access and succeed in History.

Our curriculum introduces pupils to a diverse range of people, societies, cultures and historical experiences, encouraging an understanding of different perspectives and contributions to the past.

Teaching promotes respect, challenges stereotypes and supports children in developing informed, evidence-based understanding of historical events and experiences.

Our curriculum includes opportunities to explore significant individuals, migration, Black history and the changing nature of British society, alongside the wider study of British, local and world history.

We recognise the importance of representing diverse histories throughout the curriculum, rather than limiting these opportunities to individual events or themed weeks.

This policy should be read alongside Riverside's current Equality Information and Objectives and relevant whole-school inclusion policies.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader's responsibilities are:

- To ensure a high profile of the subject.
- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.

- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported by SLT.
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of history.
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview.
- To ensure that the history curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment.
- To ensure that the history curriculum takes account of the school's context, promotes children's pride in the local area, and provides access to positive role models from the local area to enhance the history curriculum.
- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.
- Ensure that curriculum sequencing and progression remain coherent, with clear links between substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and historical concepts.
- Monitor how effectively pupils know, remember and connect important historical knowledge over time.
- Evaluate the accessibility and ambition of History provision for all pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- Use evidence from monitoring, assessment and pupil voice to identify priorities for curriculum refinement and staff professional development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Riverside Teaching for Learning policy
- Riverside Feedback and Marking policy
- Riverside Assessment policy
- Riverside Curriculum Statement
- Riverside History Curriculum Map
- Riverside History Progression of Knowledge and Skills
- Riverside History Curriculum Map Overview

Review

Next review date: September 2027