

John Blandy Primary School



**History Policy
September 2025
Belong. Believe. Brilliant**

Intent

At John Blandy Primary School we want our children to believe in themselves and be the best that they can be. We aim to bring history to life by providing good quality teaching and learning in this subject through a range of engaging topics which will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. We endeavour to enthuse and inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the different key periods in history and encourage them to ask questions about why things have happened and the impact of these events. Where possible, children will be encouraged to make links to their own experiences and local history. Although not teaching the main historical periods in chronological order, we will sequence within units and refer to other units studied previously to ensure all the children develop a sense of chronology. At John Blandy we want all our children to thoroughly enjoy learning about history and to leave our school equipped with the historical skills and knowledge to help them in the future.

Teaching and learning style

The expectations are that teaching and learning styles will differ from each lesson and will address the individual needs of all children through adaptive teaching, as well as the requirements of the subject being taught. 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.

History is taught through discrete history lessons which are block taught or taught weekly in classes. Links are made with other subjects, for example, Literacy and Art. History also contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education as well as the promotion of British values.

Key importance is placed towards the use of real-life artefacts and primary sources within lessons. We believe that both visits to historical places of interest and visitors to the school greatly enhance our history curriculum and all year groups have the opportunity to undertake a visit or welcome a visitor during each term. We encourage links with the local community and have participated in history related events such as the village 'Peace Presentation' marking the centenary of WW1. When appropriate, classes will take part in a historical themed dress-up day related to their topic (e.g. Victorian school day), which helps to stimulate their interest and further learning.

History curriculum planning

Our school uses the national curriculum for history as the basis for its curriculum planning, but wherever possible we have adapted this to a local context, for example, using Oxfordshire history when studying WW1 in KS2 and our village history in KS1. Due to our mixed year classes, we have a two-year rolling programme with three history topics per year. Where relevant, teachers will plan history work linked to their key Literacy texts; for example: Year 3/4 will cover Egyptians when looking at *Secrets of a Sun King* by Emma Carroll. Progression is planned into the work scheme so that the children are suitably challenged as they move up through the school and cover the key skills required for their age group.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Our school uses 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage' as a basis for its curriculum planning. History is taught as part of Understanding the World, People and Communities section of Development Matters with strong links to Communication and Language and Personal Social Emotional Development.

The key objective is to develop children's skills to talk about both real past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. Our starting point is to model curiosity and a keen interest in our children's lives and facilitate talk about events that have been important to them both in the recent past (e.g. a holiday or family gathering before they started school) and in the here and now (e.g. a birthday or a special family tradition).

In the context of a number of planned topics and cross-curricular learning through the year children are inspired to learn basic inquiry skills in how to ask questions by becoming 'good detectives'. They are provided opportunities to apply inquiry skills both at school (e.g. circle time, role play, hot seating) and at home (e.g. through homework) to find out both about in relation to the present and past. This has included finding out, for example, what parents or grandparents wished for at Christmas time when they were of a similar age and comparing this to their own wishes.

Additional opportunities to learn about the past have been created based on children's interests or whole school events e.g. toys, transport and music from the present and past.

Assessment for learning

During history lessons, Teachers will assess children's understanding by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. When completing written tasks in books, the teacher gives oral or written feedback as necessary to inform future progress. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own learning performance through the school marking policy. Class teachers record coverage of key objectives in History termly. Reports to parents are completed during the academic year when indicators are made to the individual's progress in this area of the curriculum. Photographic evidence is kept in class books and on class pages on the school website.

Resources

The school library contains a good supply of topic books. Topic resource boxes can also be found in the staffroom. We also make use of the Oxfordshire Museum Services box loans. The school history coordinator is responsible for monitoring resources and ordering new ones when required.

Impact

The impact and measure of this is to ensure that all children at John Blandy are equipped with historical skills and knowledge that will enable them to be ready for the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and for life as an adult in the wider world.