

History

“Study the past if you would define the future.” Confucius

Intent

It is our intention at Balcombe School that History will excite the imagination and inspire curiosity about the past. We work to develop an understanding of chronology and encourage pupils to see links and ‘themes’ that connect the different periods studied. Our aim will be to secure a broad knowledge of British history and that of the wider world. Through investigating the local area, pupils will also gain understanding of how history has shaped Balcombe village. Most importantly, History at Balcombe will develop pupil’s historical skills, including a respect for the evidence and an understanding of how the past is susceptible to different interpretations; guided by the teacher, children are taught to think for themselves and pose their own questions.

Implementation

Our history curriculum is underpinned by a carefully sequenced skills and knowledge progression. Key knowledge for children to learn and remember has been identified and listed for each history ‘unit’ studied. When choosing what to emphasise, the following principles were taken into account: representing the lived experience of different groups in society; drawing attention to the interconnectedness of British and wider-world history; giving children a coherent narrative of the past; content which might interest and excite our pupils; coverage of the curriculum.

Through repeated encounters in different historical contexts, children develop their knowledge of important substantive concepts we have identified: rulers and government, attack and defence, technology, settlement etc.

The age of the children was kept in mind when planning the sequence of history ‘units’ studied. For example, Ancient Greece is planned for the oldest children so that they can see links between this period and many others they have studied at school; some ‘units’ have been placed side by side in one year to enable teachers to draw comparisons between life in Britain and elsewhere in the world at the same time (e.g. Ancient Egypt and Stone Age).

Teachers aim to bring the subject alive with the use of real-life artefacts, evidence, visits and visitors.

In addition, history teaching will exploit any cross-curricular opportunities and therefore broaden children’s understanding and knowledge of different periods; it will often be used to support other areas of the curriculum such as English, Art and SMSC.

Impact

Children will gain the substantive and disciplinary knowledge they need to succeed in the next stage of their history learning journey – as set out in our knowledge and skills progression documents.

Progress will be monitored through formative assessment so that misconceptions are identified in a timely fashion and addressed directly.

End of unit assessment tasks and a summative teacher judgement will be used to determine children’s progress towards achieving the expected standard in this subject.