



History

National Curriculum in England

‘Purpose of study:

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.’

Intent

At St Eanswythe’s, we have a dedicated and passionate team of staff who value all areas of the curriculum and strive to deliver rich, holistic learning experiences. We are named after a significant historical figure, a Saxon book clasp was found when our playground was excavated, and the church we visit every term is deeply woven into the history of our town. History is an essential part of who we are.

We follow the National Curriculum for History and use the **Oak National Academy** curriculum to structure and support our teaching. The Oak National Academy history curriculum aims to cultivate curious, knowledgeable young historians who develop a deep understanding and appreciation of history as an academic discipline. Pupils are taught to sift and weigh evidence, debate differing interpretations, and formulate their own reasoned viewpoints about the past and its connection to the modern world.

Implementation

The Oak National Academy history curriculum is designed to be rigorous, knowledge-rich, and coherently sequenced. It explicitly develops two interlinked strands of historical understanding:

- **Substantive knowledge:** The factual foundation of events, dates, historical figures, and recurring concepts such as *monarchy, empire, civil war, trade, and democracy*.
- **Disciplinary knowledge:** The methods and disciplinary tools historians use to construct accounts of the past, including *evidence, cause and consequence, change and continuity, historical significance, and interpretation*.

Pupils build a secure, chronological mental timeline of local, British, and world history. Units are sequenced to establish an overarching narrative of Britain and the wider world, anchoring new learning within prior knowledge. For example, understanding major modern historical developments requires secure background knowledge of earlier civilisations, exploration, and the origins and impact of empires.

Key substantive and disciplinary concepts are systematically revisited across different time periods and contexts:

- **Conceptual progression:** Concepts like *governance* and *monarchy* develop progressively. Pupils might encounter significant rulers early on, advancing over time to understand how autocratic rule shifted towards constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy.
- **Working as a historian:** Pupils explore how the past is constructed and contested. They learn how to examine primary and secondary sources, identify bias and perspective, ask perceptive questions, and understand that historical narratives depend on the evidence available.
- **Breadth and representation:** Pupils study diverse civilisations, societies, and individuals—from ancient cultures and prehistoric Britain to the struggle for civil rights, social reform, and technological transformation. They study both widely renowned figures and ordinary people whose everyday lives illuminate the reality of their era.
- **Local enrichment:** We ground national and world narratives within our local heritage. We take full advantage of our surroundings through visits to Folkestone Museum, Dover Museum, Penshurst Place, Walmer and Deal Castles, alongside visits to major collections in London to help history come alive.

Impact

Assessment in history is ongoing and designed to ensure pupils retain and apply what they have learned over time:

- **Formative assessment:** Teachers provide immediate verbal feedback, adapt explanations in real time, and use low-stakes retrieval quizzes and timeline recaps at the start of lessons to reinforce long-term memory.
- **Summative checks:** End-of-unit review tasks and assessments evaluate how effectively pupils have integrated new substantive knowledge and disciplinary concepts, directly informing future planning and catch-up opportunities.
- **Historical literacy and critical thought:** Pupils leave St Eanswythe's able to articulate their knowledge using precise historical vocabulary, back up their arguments with evidence, and evaluate multiple points of view.

Ultimately, learning history through the Oak Academy framework enables our pupils to leave primary school with empathy, perspective, and a nuanced moral, spiritual, and cultural understanding of the human story.