

# **St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School**

*A loving Christian family striving to achieve excellence.*



## ***History Policy***

### **Curriculum Intent**

At St. Joseph the Worker Primary School, we are historians! Our goal in teaching history is to ignite every child's curiosity and understanding of the lives of people from the past. We help students grasp a sense of chronology, fostering a sense of identity and cultural appreciation grounded in their historical heritage. Through this, our children learn to value their own and others' cultures within modern, multicultural Britain.

We aim to introduce children to significant figures and events in British history, helping them appreciate how society has evolved over time. History lessons also deepen their understanding of how Britain developed as a society, enriching their connection to the country they live in. In addition, our curriculum covers local, British, and ancient history, broadening their perspective on historical developments across the world.

By providing engaging and meaningful historical learning experiences, we believe children will grow as enthusiastic learners and become informed about the past and its influence on the future. At our school, history lessons also focus on developing key skills such as enquiry, investigation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and presentation

There are two key aspects to learning:

**Substantive knowledge** - the factual content or subject matter of history—knowledge of events, people, and timelines from the past. This includes understanding the key historical terms and vocabulary needed to discuss these topics accurately.

**Disciplinary knowledge** - how historians approach and study history. It involves teaching students to think and work like historians by examining how historical knowledge is constructed, interpreted, and debated. This includes the skills of evaluating sources, understanding cause and effect, identifying change and continuity, and forming historical arguments. It encourages students to ask questions like "How do we know this about the past?" and to analyse evidence critically, rather than just accepting facts at face value.

Together, these two types of knowledge help students develop a deep and nuanced understanding of history, allowing them to connect substantive facts with the methods historians use to interpret the past.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Our history curriculum has been built around the principles of *cumulative knowledge*, where students progressively build upon their understanding over time. This model helps children connect and associate significant periods, people, places, and events across different times and contexts. As they revisit historical content throughout their education, these connections become deeper and more meaningful.

Our history curriculum has been carefully constructed to ensure each unit covered is underpinned by rich, substantive knowledge and ambitious vocabulary, whilst also ensuring children are developing their disciplinary knowledge (historical skills). Each unit of work is planned carefully to ensure concepts are taught in optimal order to support children's understanding. Each unit of work has an emphasis on historical enquiry where children

investigate historically framed questions whilst also developing historical enquiries of their own.

### **Threads**

We have identified a set of key historical concepts or 'threads', that children will repeatedly revisit throughout their time at St Joseph the Worker CPS. Our threads are: power, government and religion, invasion, migration and settlement, empire, persecution and resistance, society, welfare and conflict, trade, ideas and communication. Each unit will not include every 'thread', but over a year, children will visit each one more than once. For example, in Year 4, children will encounter the concepts of invasion, societal change, settlement and invention when studying the Romans. In Year 5, children will revisit the concepts of societal change and invasion as they explore how Britain changed during the Dark Ages when the Anglo-Saxons arrived.



### **Valuing Our Local Heritage**

We believe in fostering a deep understanding of our rich local heritage, which is why local history is carefully woven into our curriculum. We ensure that students not only explore the past but also make connections with larger historical themes. For example, in Year 2, children learn about transport and the significance of the Mersey Tunnels, exploring their construction, purpose, and role in connecting communities across the river. In Year 5, they study the life of Kitty Wilkinson, a local hero who pioneered public health and sanitation during the cholera outbreak, giving students insight into social change and civic responsibility. By Year 6, students delve into the impact of World War II on Liverpool, exploring how the Blitz shaped the city and its people. Through these studies, our children gain a greater appreciation of Liverpool's pivotal role in national and global history.

### **Teaching History through Narrative**

Humans are story telling species. Inspired by this, we place a strong emphasis on using rich and meaningful texts across the curriculum to enhance storytelling in history. This approach brings historical periods to life, making them more relatable and engaging for students.

Where possible history units of work will be taught alongside a thematically linked text. For example, in Year 3, we could read "Ugg" by Raymond Briggs to support our learning about

the Stone Age and In Year 5, we use "Street Child" by Berlie Doherty to enhance our study of the Victorian era.

By weaving literature into our history curriculum, we help students engage emotionally and intellectually with the past, allowing them to see history not just as a series of dates and events, but as lived experiences that shape our present.

### **How do we provide for all learners?**

We are committed to making history teaching accessible for all learners, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN). We adopt a variety of strategies to ensure that every child can engage with and enjoy history, tailored to meet the diverse needs of our students.

### **Key Approaches:**

- 1. Differentiated Tasks:** We provide differentiated activities that allow SEN learners to access the curriculum at an appropriate level.
- 2. Multi-Sensory Learning:** We incorporate a range of multi-sensory teaching techniques to cater to different learning styles. This can include the use of:
  - Visual resources: such as timelines, mind maps, videos, and historical artefacts to make abstract ideas more concrete.
  - Hands-on activities: such as artefact handling, role-play, or models, to bring history to life in a more tactile way.
  - Auditory aids: such as storytelling, podcasts, or dramatised historical events to help auditory learners engage with the material.
- 3. Use of Rich Texts and Storytelling:** As part of our history through narrative approach, we use carefully selected literature that not only enriches the historical content but also provides SEN learners with alternative ways to access the subject. Storytelling, with its strong emotional and visual elements, helps make historical concepts more memorable and engaging for all students.
- 4. Structured Support:** For some learners, we provide additional tools to help them process information more effectively, such as:
  - Visual timelines to help with understanding chronology.
  - Simplified texts and key vocabulary glossaries to aid comprehension.
  - Graphic organisers that break down complex ideas into manageable parts.
  - Pre-teaching key vocabulary and concepts to allow SEN learners to feel more confident when starting a new topic.

By using these inclusive practices, we strive to create a history curriculum where every child, regardless of their needs, can succeed and develop a passion for learning about the past.

### **Impact – How Do We Know Our History Curriculum is Effective?**

**Pupil Voice** - Pupil voice is an important tool in assessing whether children have made progress. If a child is able to confidently formulate and explain their own responses to an

overarching enquiry, then the curriculum and its delivery have been successful. It also provides us with the information to further identify any misconceptions, gaps in knowledge or area of increased interest, enabling us to tweak and amend our curriculum and tailor it to the needs of each cohort of children.

**Pupils Books** – For many children, workbooks should reflect the pupil’s grasp of key historical facts, concepts, and events. Work books should demonstrate a clear understanding of vocabulary through the children’s correct use of subject-specific terms. In addition, workbooks reflect children’s development of enquiry skills. Effective workbooks show that pupils are not just recalling information but also applying critical thinking skills. Look for tasks where pupils interpret sources, assess evidence, or explore cause and effect.

**Low-stakes Quizzes** – Low-stakes quizzes (Plickers) encourage students to actively recall information, a key strategy for deeper learning. When children successfully recall information during quizzes, it demonstrates that they are not just passively absorbing content, but actively engaging with and remembering what they’ve learned.

**Summarising** – Children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 start each history lesson with a hashtag summary activity. This approach not only helps them practice summarising skills but also provides an opportunity to review and retrieve key information from the previous lesson. A well-crafted, concise hashtag reflects the pupil's understanding of the knowledge taught, serving as a quick indicator of their grasp on the topic.

**“You have to know the past to understand the present.”**

**Carl Edward Sagan**

Mrs Godfrey (History Lead)

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