



# WOODHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

## HISTORY SUBJECT STATEMENT



***‘The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.’  
(Theodore Roosevelt)***

History is so much more than learning about the past- it is about understanding how people, places and events have shaped the world around us and it is a lens to help us interpret the times we live in.

Through exploring artefacts, visiting historical sites, re-enacting pivotal eras and interviewing experts, we can bring stories from the past to life, not only fostering a deep fascination and understanding of times gone by but developing an appreciation for our role in the history of tomorrow.

### **INTENT**

At Woodhall, we make History jump off the page through hands-on learning, exploring artefacts, visiting local sites and bringing stories from the past to life. We celebrate History as a subject that helps children understand who they are, where they come from, and how they can shape the future. We not only foster a deep fascination and understanding of the past but we also help our children to appreciate their role in the history of tomorrow.

Our school is based in South Oxhey, an area of significant socio-economic deprivation. Many of our children have a high level of need and limited experiences. Responding to the characteristics of our local community, we enrich the history curriculum with events that promote British Values (Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect and Tolerance, Individual Liberty) and celebrate local, national and international events.

Through a robust, engaging and carefully-sequenced curriculum, the children develop a growing knowledge of history and the skills to investigate, question, analyse and evaluate what they have learnt. Our curriculum enables children to learn about and from history; through high-quality play, guided teaching and experiences in our Early Years to the in-depth studies explored in Key Stage 2.

To ensure high standards of teaching and learning throughout the school, our curriculum is carefully mapped. Our History Subject Ladder sets out the progression of skills from EYFS to the end of Key Stage 2 and in doing so, our Children develop a secure knowledge of British history, an understanding of some of the great ancient civilisations of the world and also the significance of local history. By examining changes over time and key events in history, our children can make connections between the past and the present; developing an understanding of how modern society came to be and the part they play in building the future.

In History lessons, children learn to ask questions, think critically, and see how past choices influence our lives now. Exploring different times and cultures allows our children to ask questions, to think critically and children develop empathy, curiosity and respect for others. History helps them see themselves as part of a bigger story, building confidence and a sense of identity and community.

In the Early Years, children explore the Early Learning Goal ‘Knowledge and Understanding of the World’ through guided teaching and child-initiated learning. This includes children developing an understanding of their own lives and changes within their family, as well as knowing about the lives of people around them and their roles in society.

Our History Subject Ladder for Key Stages 1 and 2 is informed by the National Curriculum and outlines objectives for each year group. These are divided into three strands: Historical Knowledge, Historical Skills and Vocabulary. This ensures that children's learning in key areas is developed year on year.

**By the time our children leave Woodhall, we aim to:**

- Create the historians of tomorrow, developing a love and appreciation of History with a thirst to learn more.
- Enable our children to experience and engage with a range of primary and secondary sources- inviting books, engaging school assemblies, visits from experts and professionals, visits to places of historic importance, workshops and whole school events. They will be interested and inspired, which in turn will help them develop a questioning mind, an inquisitive spirit and theories about the past.
- Develop a solid foundation in historical skills, knowledge and linked vocabulary so children are prepared for studying History at secondary school and beyond, but can be transferred and applied to their wider learning and place in modern life.
- Promote that History is for everyone, no matter the age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We will pitch the learning so that it scaffolds and challenges learning to meet the needs of the learner.
- Recognise and promote the achievements of and unique challenges faced by diverse people throughout history.
- Support our children to question subjective opinions of history, to widen their understanding through using a range of historical sources and to draw conclusions based upon evidence.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

History lessons are taught regularly to ensure familiarity and fluency but some topics lend themselves to a block of learning and might be carried out over a day or a week. Rich cross-curricular connections are provided, with practical experiences wherever possible. Learning is recorded in a variety of ways, such as: annotated drawings, extended writing, photographs and the use of ICT. History lessons also develop a wide range of transferable skills including reading, asking questions and locating and evaluating evidence. Our history curriculum is designed to ensure appropriate diversity in the significant figures that children learn about.

We ensure history is accessible to everyone at Woodhall no matter their age, their ability, SEND or background. Due to the nature of our mixed-age classes, the school must operate flexibly and carefully map learning across the key stages to ensure all children are accessing relevant, challenging content whilst exploring age-related skills and a broad and balanced curriculum. Areas highlighted in yellow on the subject ladder may be taught out of the assigned year group in mixed-age classes. When changes are made, teachers ensure they make explicit links to prior and future learning using resources such as timelines to help children secure their understanding of chronology. Necessary adaptations to the subject ladder can be tracked on the Woodhall School Topic Map, Woodhall Topic Coverage documents and the Long Term and Termly Planners of individual classes.

Teachers apply thoughtful differentiation in each lesson, whether that be by activity, support or outcome; we provide scaffolding and appropriate challenge for all levels of learners. SEND children often have personalised strategies, support and resources during History lessons and the teachers can use the History Subject Ladder to track back, fill gaps and help all children access new learning where appropriate.

Cross-curricular links to History are specifically planned for and these are indicated on the school's long-term and medium-term mapping. The school's own context is also considered, with opportunities for visits to places of historical interest and learning outside the classroom also identified. Visits to the local area and use of local artefacts, such as the use of maps and photographs of South Oxhey as a post-war, purpose-built estate also support contextualised learning, as well as the acquisition of key knowledge and systematic development of key skills.

We recognise nationally significant events such as Remembrance and Black History Month through assemblies, workshops, themed days and group work. Our successes are shared with our wider community on the Woodhall School website to help engage and raise awareness of learning in History for parents/carers. We invite parents to support their children by attending class assemblies, trips and workshops and support them in any History homework projects. We invest heavily into awe-inspiring, immersive experiences for our children such as the whole school event where we hosted King Henry VIII and lived as Tudors for the day or creating our own Woodhall Museum and inviting past pupils and leaders in our community to celebrate.

Teachers have access to further guidance from national agencies, including the History Association, of which the school is a member and we have also invested in a HfL advisor to help shape and enhance our provision.

## **IMPACT**

Achievement in History is closely monitored in each class by the teacher and overseen throughout the school by the Leadership Team. As a topic is being taught, teachers make observations about each child and assess their knowledge and understanding against the learning objectives. Children are summatively assessed as working significantly below age-related expectations (ARE), working towards ARE, working at ARE or exceeding ARE. Progress, effort and attainment is reported to parents as part of the child's End of Year Report.

The achievement of vulnerable groups such as SEND, PPG or EAL children are monitored across the curriculum to ensure their progress is in line with their peers. Where there is a large disparity, the Leadership Team works alongside teachers to help provide resources, support and help narrow the gap.

The Leadership Team is also responsible for collating evidence of the impact of the History Teaching and Learning providing feedback to all stakeholders; the teachers, the SLT, the Governing Body and outside agencies including Ofsted and advisors such as the Hertfordshire Improvement Partner.

Evidence is collected through teacher assessment, pupil voice, lesson observations, work and planning scrutiny and learning walks. During each monitoring cycle, the Leadership Team looks for appropriate coverage for that particular point in the year, high quality work being produced over a range of activities, thoughtful differentiation and care and attention over tasks from both teacher and pupil. We have engaged with the HfL History Advisor service to ensure we keep our curriculum fresh and staff well-supported with training and resources. They have conducted learning walks, moderated our scrutiny and lead deep dives to help shape our history provision.

Following the monitoring activities, the Leadership Team summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and puts actions in place to move the provision on; that could be through staff training, team teaching or planning, advisor visits, use of specific resources or even through whole school events. These actions are then evaluated and analysed for impact.

From our monitoring, it is evident that children and staff take pride in the teaching and learning of history; work in books and on display around school is of high quality for every level and age of learner.

Children at Woodhall are excited about history and keen to share their knowledge. Teachers have high expectations of all children. In mixed-age classes, work is suitably differentiated, accessible and challenging for each individual. All children use technical vocabulary accurately and pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the skills. Outcomes in History books evidence a broad and balanced history curriculum and demonstrate the children's acquisition of identified key knowledge.

Emphasis is placed on analytical thinking and questioning and children demonstrate a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world, in addition to being curious to know more about the past. Through this study pupils ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement.

**Woodhall School Leadership Team**

**Reviewed: September 2025**