



Curriculum Intent for History

The history curriculum at West Leigh Junior School is designed to be progressive in terms of knowledge and skills and understanding. There is a balance of local, British and World history. The curriculum takes into account the geographical location of the school, its environment and community and the personal histories of the children attending the school. Strong links are made to other areas of the curriculum and to the society in which the children live. British Values are woven into the history curriculum so that children come to understand how these values have come about, the makeup of the population in Britain and why these have such importance for them as citizens of Britain.

'We are history detectives'



History is taught as an element within a connected curriculum and is closely aligned to geography, computing, art and design technology. Historical links are formed throughout the curriculum through the children's studies of authors, scientists, mathematicians, musicians and other key figures in history. The children study modern and historical maps as part of their curricular work and discover how political and geographical features have changed over time. The R.E. curriculum enables children to come to a deeper understanding of chronology. For example, through their studies of Christianity, they learn that Jesus was alive at the time of the Romans and that our modern calendar is based on the Gregorian calendar. They learn of the birth of Christ, about 'Common Era' and throughout their school life come to an understanding of how other world religions fit into this mental map.

The taught curriculum in history intends to develop the children's sense of chronology as they progress through the school. Children carry out sequencing activities and are given experience of timelines. In the upper school, the children learn that chronologies are not always linear but overlap. Children come to an understanding that events run simultaneously with different start and end points. For example, when learning about the Mayan Civilisation in Year 5, the children relate this to their knowledge of British history.

In Year 3, the children study the topic 'By the Sea' with a history focus on 'Within Living Memory' which allows them to explore their personal history and that of the immediate location in which they live. (Southend-on-Sea and its environs). Through their study on 'Ancient Greece' they learn about the concept of an ancient civilisation.

Building on this, the children study the Romans in Year 4. Through this study they discover the legacy of the Romans, locate Roman settlements in the south-east of Britain where they live, (London, Saint Albans and Colchester) and start to understand why we learn about Roman Numerals in maths, and about the etymology of English, discovering how and why Latin forms part of our language.

In Year 5, the children look at the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings. They come to understand that the British Isles has been invaded and settled throughout its history, extending skills they have learned in Year 4. The Saxon find in Southend enables the children to see 'history on their doorstep' and its significance in British history. A study of the Mayans helps the children to expand their thinking in a global sense and to make comparisons between a British and a non-European Civilisation.

In Year 6 the children study 'Arrivals and Departures -1930-1950.' They learn about the build up to the Second World War, about the movement of people following the Wall Street Crash in America and the Great Depression following the rise of Nazi powers, the movement of children (Kindertransport) and evacuation and the movement of troops. This is linked to their own locality through a study of the evacuation of Dunkirk which involved the 'Little Ships.' They learn the story of 'Endeavour' through a visit to the sea wall in 'Old Leigh' and evaluate the worthiness of the monument to the sailors in St Clement's Church. Post war, they discover how immigrants to Britain contributed to a diverse cultural mix in the makeup of the British populace.

Through a personal study of a specific geographical area of Great Britain, the children in Year 6 look at sources of evidence to support a narrative about the history of their chosen area.

Throughout their studies children learn about sources of historical evidence (primary and secondary) and how these can be used to interpret the past. Some skills are taught discretely, e.g. the rubbish sack activity in Year 5 whereas others are taught within the context of a historical study. Teaching reinforces, builds upon and progresses the skills taught in previous years.

Historical studies are underpinned by key historical terms and historical vocabulary so that children come to a growing understanding of abstract concepts such as 'legacy' or 'civilisation.'

The delivery of the curriculum is intended to be exciting and varied, through a range of media and activities which develop the children's thinking as historians from handling artefacts, images and documents, creating and revising hypotheses, comparing and contrasting and looking at different perspectives through reasoned argument and debate. They are encouraged to question and challenge, develop critical skills and grow in independence.