



## Discovery Primary School

### History Policy

#### **Introduction**

#### **Purpose:**

The aim of history teaching here at Discovery Primary School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the lives of people who lived in the past. We teach history through an emphasis on chronology and developing an understanding of the way people and events have shaped our past and present. A clear focus on Britain through the ages encourages children to understand and value their own rich and diverse culture, and identifying ways in which Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world. Through the teaching of historical skills children are encouraged to question, analyse and interpret evidence, in order to make links, comparisons and develop their own views and judgements based on sound historical methods.

#### **Aims:**

- to foster in children an interest in the past, and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer;
- to inspire an appreciation of the extraordinary impact of significant individuals on the past and present;
- to enable children to know about significant events in British history, and to appreciate how things have changed over time;
- to understand history through a coherent, chronological perspective;
- to have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world;
- to help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage;
- to develop in children the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation.

#### **Equal Opportunity:**

At our school we teach history to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. This implements the school's curriculum policy of providing a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Disability NonDiscrimination and Access; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom

organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessments made by teachers against the National Curriculum’s attainment targets and level descriptors allow us to consider each

History Policy child’s attainment and progress in relation to the levels expected. This helps to ensure that our teaching is matched to the child’s needs.

Children with special educational needs will have their own passport with their own individual targets. These may include specific targets relating to history. Work will also be differentiated to meet individual needs as necessary.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning history. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a visit to an archaeological dig, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

#### **Consultation:**

Teaching staff and governors have been consulted to ensure the policy fully reflects the practices and approaches within school to the teaching of history.

#### **Sources and references:**

This policy has been developed with reference to the national curriculum and has been cross-referenced with the following school policies; English, Maths, ICT, Gifted and Talented, Special Educational Needs, Equality and Diversity and Promoting British Values.

#### **Planning:**

We use the Edison Curriculum as the basis for our history planning, but we adapted this to our local context, building on the successful units of work written in the Edison Curriculum. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and that these are built on through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the history topics studied over the year in each key stage; which is through topic based learning and the children study history topics in conjunction with other subjects. Some topics have a particular historical focus, and in Key Stage 2 we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the National Curriculum through the corresponding programme of study.

We use the Edison curriculum which is referenced to the National curriculum for our medium-term plans as well, which give details of each unit of work for each term. The subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis.

The class teacher writes short-term plans for the teaching of History; these plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although s/he and the subject leader discuss them on an informal basis.

### **Teaching:**

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources, to stimulate children's interest and to encourage questioning and analysis. In each key stage we try to bring history to life by giving children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance and encouraging visitors to come into the school to talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history teaching, and we regard this as an important way of engaging interest and deepening understanding of the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways, and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', about information they are given.

We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of ability in history, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- differentiating tasks by ability;
- differentiating resources and adult support to ensure all children access their learning;
- creating opportunities to develop oracy and deepening understanding of historical vocabulary and abstract terms.

We teach history in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the historical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. History makes a significant contribution to developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world, through activities such as dressing up in historical costumes, looking at pictures of famous people in history, or discovering the meaning of vocabulary ('new' and 'old', for example) in relation to their own lives. The children start to think about past and present events and the passing of time by learning about their own history. As with KS1 and KS2, history contributes to learning in Understanding the World and other areas of learning in the revised EYFS Framework including Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in Literacy and Guided Reading are historical in nature. Children develop oracy through discussing historical questions, or presenting their findings to the rest of the class.

The teaching of history contributes to children's mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through activities such as creating time-lines and through sequencing events in their own lives. Children also learn to interpret information presented in graphical or diagrammatic form.

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain their views on a number of social questions, such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognise and challenge stereotypes, and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures, and they start to develop tolerance and respect for others. In our teaching of history we contribute where possible to the children's spiritual development. We also provide children with the opportunity to discuss moral questions, or what is right and wrong. The history programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

Information and communication technology enhances our teaching of history, wherever appropriate, in all key stages. This more than meets the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their history work in Key Stage 2. The children use ICT in a variety of ways, such as word-processing, finding information on the Internet, consulting *Encarta* and presenting information through *PowerPoint*. They can also use interactive timeline software, and they can make creative use of the digital camera to record photographic images.

### **Organisation:**

History is planned and taught through the Edison Curriculum, as such certain topics will have an in depth focus on history but during other topics the focus is on geography. This enables children to become immersed in the subject for these concentrated periods of time; deepening their knowledge and creating greater opportunities to apply their historical skills. During topic work where history is not a focus, links between the skills of research, analysis and evaluation in history and geography are re-enforced.

### **Homework/parent partnership:**

History homework is not routinely set, however, English homework may have a historical focus or where appropriate holiday homework will be used to encourage historical research at the beginning of a topic. An overview of the curriculum is also sent home each term to support parents in discussing and exploring these topics with their children.

### **Resources:**

There are sufficient resources for all history teaching units in the school. We keep these resources in a central store where there is a box of equipment for each unit of work. The library contains a good supply of topic books and software to support children's individual research. These are kept under review and we regularly invest in our history resources, ensuring that we have a range of interesting and stimulating materials in different formats. In addition, we have good links with the Peterborough Museum Services and where possible make use of their resources. We are also very lucky that parents and local community members have donated historical artefacts and materials that we can utilise in lessons. Our school museum provides a focal point to history in the school, raising the profile of the subject and ensuring that resources are well displayed, accessible and promote questioning.

### **Assessment:**

Children demonstrate their ability in history in a variety of different ways. Younger children might, for example, act out a famous historical event, whilst older pupils may produce a *PowerPoint* presentation based on their investigation, for example, of voyages of discovery. Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and uses this information to plan for future learning. Written or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

At the end of the year, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum level of attainment. We use these levels as a basis for assessing the progress of the child, and we pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

### **Monitoring and evaluation:**

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in history is the responsibility of the history subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the head teacher an annual report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

### **Other documents and appendices:**

The History policy should be read in conjunction with our policies for curriculum, learning and assessment, British Values, SEN and Equal Opportunities.

This policy was ratified by the full governing body in March 2016. It is due for review by Spring 2018.