

Curriculum Intent - History

The purpose of the History curriculum is to endow students with a love of history, and enable their engagement with history, both in and out of school.

This means that, whether they study History for three or five years, students will develop a clear understanding of the work of historians and progress as historians in their own right. They will access skills that are essential to understand the twenty-first century world; learning not to accept everything they see and hear but instead seek to analyse the purpose and source of information. They will understand that the power structures of the world are not static but shifting, and that this process is ongoing. Students will become historically literate and this will enable them to enjoy reading history and visiting historic locations throughout their lives. The History curriculum helps students to put the world around them into context.

To accomplish this, the History curriculum aims to foster students' skills as historians, from causation and source inference in Year 7 to comparing interpretations across periods and places in Year 9. All topics across Years 7 to 11 are framed by an enquiry question, so students can consistently frame their work within a bigger picture.

Achieving these aims begins with a curriculum designed specifically to meet the needs of our community. By the end of their lower school History course, our students will be able to understand the broad sweep of British history, of Britain's relationship with the rest of the world and be able to articulate this confidently. Students know that the chain of 'civilisation' in Britain fluctuates from Romans to Normans, Plantagenets to Tudors and was experienced very differently across a wide and shifting social stratification. They will be similarly confident in their use of first order concepts such as civilisation, which underpins our lower school curriculum, as well as others including democracy and monarchy. Lastly, they will make clear progress in their use of second order concepts which we have grouped together, so students first become proficient in cause, consequence, continuity and change, before progressing to significance, similarity and difference. History also helps students to understand several other areas of study across the school and the curriculum is planned to support this. For example, relevant schemes are planned to link with the English study of Jekyll and Hyde, Orwell and First World War poetry.

At GCSE, students learn about Norman England, Conflict and Tension from 1918-39, the USA from 1920-73 and the history of medicine and health in Britain from c.1000-present. To ensure students are able to retain the information required to succeed at GCSE our teaching is interleaved, rotating between the four wider topic areas and revising previous units before we start new content. Moreover, homework quizzing is planned to rotate between these subjects and all assessments are hybrid, combining questions from across topics students have learned so far.

Our Age-Related Expectations across Years 7 to 9 state exactly what students should be able to achieve by the end of each term, and our knowledge organisers identify the core knowledge they are

expected to retain for each topic. The skills and knowledge progress gradually and logically, with all assessments linked to itemised points within the age-related expectations and drawing on core knowledge. Students also complete progress checks at the mid-point of each unit, checking their comprehension of core knowledge and the continuing development of skills.

Teaching and learning in History is designed to directly promote these aims. Firstly, staff think carefully about their exposition of new information and draw on CPD including Cognitive Load Theory. Thereafter, students work regularly with dense text using the Magenta Principles so that their effort is focussed on analysing and using material. As often as possible this material is derived from the work of historians, such as Rubenhold's 'The Five', 'Morris', 'The Norman Conquest', De Lisle's 'Tudor' and Stevenson's '1914-1918'. Students in History lessons regularly carry out extended reading of this type independently, with support provided to access challenging vocabulary.

There are frequent opportunities for group and pair work using Kagan structures, so students can practise articulating their interpretation of the topic being considered or sources being studied. Sources also form a crucial element of historical learning, with students being guided on how to draw meaning from sources and practising this themselves. Following this, History teachers use random and targeted questions, with probing to deepen initial responses and to keep all learners engaged. Students are provided with regular opportunities to practise their extended writing, with keywords and phrases provided as support where appropriate. History lessons also feature hinge questions, 'fix it grids', true or false questions and other methods of assessment for learning. This enables teachers to be responsive during the lesson, checking understanding before moving on wherever appropriate.

History teachers regularly model work using visualisers, so students can see clear worked examples, both of extended writing and source work. Lastly, progress and progress plus tasks feature in almost all lessons, so all students have opportunities to progress against the age-related expectations, but those who are able complete tasks that draw on higher level thinking, reaching conclusions and comparing factors. Review tasks within lessons mean in many cases students are directed to which of these tasks will enable them to make the most progress, in response to their work in the lesson thus far.

In short, students' experience of History at Horizon means they will be able to enjoy and engage actively with history. They will understand the process by which historians construct history and create their own interpretations. They will articulate the broad sweep of British history and the development of civilisation. All this will ensure students have the tools to succeed in GCSE History and possess the fundamental requirements for further study.