



History Policy

September 2025

Signed (Chair of Trustees):	
Date:	September 2025
Date of Review:	September 2026

Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.

History Curriculum Policy

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Aim

We provide a high-quality history education that helps pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It inspires pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching equips pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

We want pupils to know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world. Pupils should understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind. It is important that pupils gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.

Pupils should understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses. They must understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed. We want pupils to gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

We want our children to be able to:

- develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study
- note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms
- regularly address and devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance
- construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information
- understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
- develop empathy, pride and understanding in relation to events of the past
- contribute positively to society and the understand value in preserving British and their own personal history.

How we teach History

We teach history by focusing on enabling children to think like historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources. Children have the opportunity to explore a range of concrete resources as well as audio and video links to help them to enquire about the past. All key stages have the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance enabling their learning to take place within a different environment. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We focus on helping children to understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, such as 'how do we know?', what can we tell, what if...., about information they are given; this allows children to think like historians and develop speaking and listening skills.

We recognise that in all classes there are children of widely-different abilities 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 common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses; setting tasks with increasing difficulty for children to complete as much as they are able to; grouping children by ability and setting different tasks for each ability group; providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child; using classroom assistants to support children individually or in groups. We make sure that children are given prompts and specific learning material to complete the specific task, where needed. We make sure that children have sufficient time to discuss their thoughts and opinions; sharing their own knowledge and understanding.

Each class teacher creates a resource plan for each lesson, ensuring children are equipped for the lesson, particularly the bottom 20%. These daily lesson plans list specific learning objectives. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and often discusses them with the history subject leader on an informal basis. We plan the topics in history so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school.

We achieve this by:

- asking questions about the past
- exploring artefacts
- visiting museums and places of interest
- exploring secondary sources such as books and photographs and those that are ICT based.
- taking part in visitor's talks about personal experiences of the past
- listening to and interact with stories from the past
- undertaking fieldwork
- using drama and dance and replicated experienced
- showing, or using independently, resources from the internet and videos
- using non-fiction books in school or at the local library for research

- working independently or collaboratively, to ask as well as answer historical questions.

History Curriculum Planning

The composites and components taught are underpinned by the national curriculum for history as the basis for our curriculum planning. We use the national curriculum for history as the basis for our curriculum planning in history, but we have adapted this to the local context by building on the successful units of work already in place. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we build planned progression into the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school. We carry out curriculum planning in history in three phases weekly, termly and yearly composites.

The yearly/long-term plan maps the history topics studied in each term during each key stage; the history subject leader works this out in conjunction with SLT and teaching colleagues in each year group and the children study history topics. All 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. As the basis for our termly/medium-term plans, we use the national scheme of work which gives details of each unit of work for each term. The history subject leader keeps and reviews these plans on a regular basis. The class teacher writes the lesson plans for each history lesson (weekly/short-term plans). These plans list the specific learning objectives of each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although they and the history subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

The Foundation Stage

History is taught in the Nursery and Reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As these classes are a 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 the ELG objectives of developing a child's knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of activities.

Teaching History to children with special educational needs

We teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History is a part of the school curriculum policy. This helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our history teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. The SEND Code of Practice outlines the entitlement of children with SEND including why it is important to make reasonable adjustments and give all children access to the curriculum. So, we teach history to all children, whatever their ability. History is a central part of the school curriculum policy. This helps to provide a broad and balanced education to all children.

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, intensive classroom support, teaching materials, teaching style, variation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively and then catch-up. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs. Intervention through SEN Support and EHC plans will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to history. We enable 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 field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment and recording

We assess the children's work in history by making informal judgements as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a piece of work, we mark and comment as necessary. Once they complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgement of the work of each pupil in relation to the National Curriculum expected standards. We record the attainment grades on Sims and pupil progress booklet, which is discussed with the senior leadership of the school. The class teachers keep evidence of the children's work in an e-portfolio or physical folder. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in history in each key stage of the school. The information is used to plan future work pupils, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child and as part of the child's annual report to parents. The information is also passed on to the next teacher at the end of the year.

Resources

Resourcing history remains a key priority in delivering the subject as intended. We have a wide range of resources to support the teaching of history across the school. All our classrooms have a range of basic resources, but we keep the more specialised equipment in the history cupboards. Within each year group we have a set of atlases. In the library we have a good supply of history topic books and access to the internet to support the children's individual research. We also have access to technological devices which the children use to gather weather data. We have half-termly review of the resources needed to plan ahead to ensure that weekly lessons are delivered with efficiency.

Monitoring and review

The history subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching. This is through half termly monitoring of teacher planning and children's' books. Pupil interviews, learning walks and summative assessments also contribute to the monitoring of the subject where data and feedback is then analysed to identify strengths and areas for development to address the following term. The history subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of history, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The history subject leader gives the senior

leadership team a half termly report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

Subject	Term	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
History	Autumn	Life at different periods in Britain	Events beyond living memory	Changes in Britain from the Stone age to the Iron age	Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots	Ancient Greece – A study of Greek life and achievements	A significant turning point in British history – WW2
	Spring	Significant historical events and people in Britain	Life of significant individuals in the past	Achievement of an early civilization - Ancient Egypt	The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England	A changing power of monarchs	Changes in social history – Crime and punishment
	Summer	Changes to national life in living memory	Lives of significant individuals in the past who contributed to national and international achievement	The Roman empire and its impact on Britain	A local history study	Contrasting a non-European society with British history A significant turning point in British history – WW1	Contrasting two non-European society with British history