

## History at Ashfield Juniors

### Subject Statement

#### Intent:

At Ashfield Junior School, the study of history involves engaging pupils in investigations about people and events in the past in order to help develop their sense of identity as they come to understand their place in the story of human development. As a school, we recognise that pursuing historical lines of enquiry teaches our children to become more discerning about the past and appreciate the contested nature of knowledge whilst also helping them to better understand their lives today and preparing them for the future as more knowledgeable and reasoned citizens.

We aim to engage our pupils with a relevant, exciting and challenging History curriculum which inspires curiosity. Through the study of history, pupils will develop a wide range of critical thinking skills, which enable them to understand the contested nature of knowledge when it comes to reaching conclusions and making judgements about the past. With this in mind we have established a school curriculum plan for history which is:

- Aspirational - instilling in our pupils a desire to achieve the highest levels of success through providing them with the opportunities to excel in terms of their acquisition of long-lasting knowledge and understanding and mastery of core historical skills.
- Sequenced, broad and balanced in terms of the areas of subject content we have selected which reflect the guidance and the demands of the National Curriculum.
- Progressively more challenging from Years 3 through to 6 both in terms of the complexity of the subject knowledge we want our pupils to acquire and also the critical thinking skills we support them to utilise to ensure they understand the significance of that knowledge.
- Inclusive - delivering the same curriculum to all of our pupils, differentiating provision where necessary through adult support, different learning environments, alternative learning activities and assessment outcomes.

#### Implementation:

We adopt an enquiry-focused approach to learning and teaching in history which enables our pupils to become young historians and to understand the kind of questions that historians ask of the world. Through enquiry, our pupils not only build subject knowledge and understanding but become increasingly adept at critical thinking, specialised vocabulary and their grasp of subject concepts. We structure learning in History through big question-led enquiries which are both in-depth focused and also enable pupils to develop their chronological awareness of themes and issues over more extended periods of time. Our learning and teaching in History

is interactive and practical, allowing opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and also in groups of various sizes. Similarly, we provide varied and differentiated ways for pupils to record the outcomes of their work including the use of computing, annotated diagrams, drawings and maps, speaking and listening opportunities, the class big book, displays and the application of a wide range of writing genres. In this way will knowledge become embedded and 'sticky' and ensure that our pupils can build on what they know and understand from one year to the next. The medium-term plans and schemes of work for each enquiry in History highlight both the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the investigation. They are also carefully structured through the use of ancillary questions, to enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding in incremental steps of increasing complexity until they reach the point where they are able to answer in full the question posed at the beginning of the investigation.

### **Impact:**

Each enquiry which forms our programme of learning and teaching in history sets out clear objectives and outcomes for the pupils in terms of knowledge, understanding and the acquisition of skills. These outcomes are listed as 'end points of learning' i.e. the criteria against which a pupil will be judged to be making good progress. Evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources, including interaction with pupils during discussions and related questioning, day to day observations, practical activities, Earwig, reflective practice and writing in different genres. The outcomes of each enquiry serve to inform the teacher's developing picture of the knowledge and understanding of each pupil and to plan future learning accordingly. We do not make summative judgements about individual pieces of pupil work or even at the culmination of each inquiry, but rather use the outcomes to build a picture of what the pupil knows, understands and can do and at the end of each year make a summative judgement against the subject learning goals for history in that year. At this point we decide upon a 'best fit' judgement as to whether the pupil has achieved and embedded the expected learning goals, exceeded expectations or is still working towards the goals. This decision draws upon the professional knowledge and judgement that teachers possess about the progress of each pupil, developed over the previous three terms. Achievement against the learning goals for history at the end of the year is used as the basis of reporting progress to parents.