

History at St Michael's School

At St Michael's we want our children to have a love of History. We believe that studying History is an essential part of their journey to becoming well rounded and empathetic humans, enabling them to understand how History gives a unique perspective to current events. Children explore the fascinating world of the past and make links to their own lives and others in the world today.

Intent

At St Michael's, History is about asking questions: from early questions like "What computer games did you play as a child?" to "Who built Stonehenge and why?" we will start from the children's curiosity. As much as possible, we try and bring history to life. Our links with the Aldbourne Heritage Group, focusing on local, hands on History, allows the children to handle real artefacts and explore relevant themes. We want the History they explore in St Michael's to give them a sense of coherence and ability to see the legacy of past events in things today. History helps develop a sense of chronology and the themes they study can be seen as chapters in the book of world history.

Children will discover about the big picture events as well as the personal stories that bring History alive. We want our pupils to see themselves as Historians, not only for future possible jobs, but for themselves.

We achieve this by providing a rich, diverse curriculum, underpinned by our school's core values of Respect, Honesty and Love, enabling every member of the school community to have a 'Lifetime Love for Learning'.

Implementation

We believe at St Michael's that the History curriculum has some major concepts, at its heart, that all children need to learn. Everything we do in History is to help the children to have a growing understanding of these concepts:

- The history of Britain as a coherent, chronological narrative
- Significant aspects of the history of the wider world including ancient civilisations and empires
- Important concepts such as 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry' monarchy, democracy, and war and peace
- Historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance
- Connections between events, drawing contrasts, analysing trends, framing historically-valid questions and creating their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- The methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously
- Historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and how interpretations of the past have been constructed

The children's historical journey starts in Early Years. Here they explore and develop an understanding of time passing and that some things were different in the past. As part of their understanding the world, past and present focus, they make sense their own timelines and those of their families.

In Key Stage One, children complete three history units each year alongside the rich Continuous Provision environment which enables children to explore concepts, develop key knowledge and foster a love for History and commit knowledge to their long term memory. We use key historical events and key periods of time to inspire children to take that learning into their play. Children develop their understanding of chronology through adding relevant dates to their own class timeline. This then builds over time to make chronology clear and explicit. Children's historical enquiry skills are encouraged in many ways including questioning, describing, comparing and contrasting and speculating.

Children will learn about:

- Great Fire of London
- Neil Armstrong and the Space Race
- Explorers, including Scott of Antarctic, Darwin and Felicity Aston
- Woman in History, including Rosa Parks, Mary Anning, Florence Nightingale and Emmeline Pankhurst
- Brunel: His life and achievements including the Great Western Railway

In Key Stage Two we continue to build their historical learning. We use questions to further their historical knowledge and skills, for example, 'Why would the Romans come to rainy Britain from sunny Italy?' These open ended questions allow the children to come to their own conclusions whilst fully exploring the time or times in question. In lower KS2 we emphasise the following skills: Summarising, Synthesising, Explaining, Demonstrating understanding. At upper KS2, skills we value at this point include: empathising, reaching informed conclusions, making reasoned judgements.

Children will learn about:

- Victorian Seaside Holidays
- Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age
- WW2 Band of Brothers
- Ancient Egyptians
- The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots
- The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor
- Mayans
- Investigation into Great Britons

We are extremely lucky here at St Michael's, as we have the local Aldbourne Heritage Group that provide invaluable support and resources to help us to deliver our curriculum and add a local perspective. Often the Heritage group are present to instigate a new enquiry. They provide knowledge, expertise and resources: photos and artefacts and accompany classes on learning walks around the village.

Teachers are provided with a Curriculum Map and Knowledge Webs to ensure all children are progressing in their historical learning skills. The Knowledge Webs identify what knowledge and skills to assess and how to do this.

Impact

At St Michael's School, we want our children to begin to understand the complexities of people's lives through changes in time. We strive to create a good understanding of the



diversities of societies and how the relationships between different groups have also changed throughout History. Children are encouraged to reflect on their own identity and be grateful for the impact of a diverse range of significant individuals whose lives continue to impact us today.