Applecroft School



History Policy

Person Responsible:	History Leader
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Issue:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027

History Policy

1) Introduction:

School Vision

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life.'

School Mission Statement

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

2) Our Aims and Objectives:

Our Aims and Objectives Using the objectives from the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage as our base, it is our aim to develop:

- To foster a genuine interest in the past and a lifelong enjoyment of history.
- The right for every child to achieve the very best they can in their history learning.
- Competence and confidence in historical knowledge, concepts, and skills.
- Initiative and an ability to work both independently and in cooperation with others.
- An ability to communicate using historical vocabulary.
- An ability to use and apply historical aspects across the curriculum and in real life.
- An understanding of history through a process of chronology, evidence, and enquiry.

3) History Curriculum at Applecroft:

At Applecroft School, our history curriculum ignites children's curiosity about the past, building on prior knowledge so that children can make sense of how societies, both locally, nationally, and worldwide, have developed over time. We provide children with a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world.

Through our history curriculum, we develop an understanding of the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, diversity within societies, and relationships between different groups, as well as helping children understand their own identity and how they fit into society. We aim to bring history to life by immersing children in historical experiences, both in school and through educational visits. We teach pupils to think like historians by asking perceptive questions, developing critical thinking, weighing evidence, sifting arguments, and forming informed judgements.

Our Core Historical Strands

To help children make meaningful connections across different periods and civilisations, our curriculum is shaped by six core recurring threads:

- **Community:** Exploring how people lived together, local history, and how communities have changed, adapted, and supported one another over time.
- **Knowledge:** Focusing on the transformative difference that knowledge makes to people, understanding how discovering new ideas, inventions, and perspectives has fundamentally changed human lives and shaped societies.
- **Power:** Examining how decisions were made, who held authority, and how ruling systems have evolved, such as monarchs, governments, and leaders.
- **Invasion:** Investigating why conflicts and migrations occurred, who came to Britain or other lands, and the lasting impact these events had on society.
- **Civilisation:** Studying the rise and fall of ancient and modern societies, their achievements, culture, and what made them unique.
- **Democracy:** Discovering how people fought for a voice, how laws and rights developed, and what it means to be an active citizen in a fair society.

4) Curriculum Intent:

Coverage of the National Curriculum for History is formalised and strictly adhered to through the CUSP Curriculum. It is taught in all year groups from Year 1 to Year 6. In EYFS, it is taught as part of continuous provision through child-led and adult-led activities related to the specific area of Understanding the World.

The knowledge and skill endpoints that children need by the end of their time at Applecroft are carefully considered to equip them, not only for successful secondary education, but to take advantage of the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

To reach these endpoints, the curriculum is planned and coherently sequenced to ensure that knowledge and understanding are built in a cumulative way, enabling all children to be successful.

- **CUSP units** provide knowledge notes and knowledge organisers to help reduce cognitive load and allow easier retention of information.
- **Prior Learning:** Units identify relevant prior learning so that any elements missed, such as from school closures or children joining later, can be recapped and gaps filled.
- **Thinking Tasks:** Units provide tasks that require specific historical enquiry skills, including connecting, analysing, and interpreting.
- **Core Concepts and Strands:** The curriculum is underpinned by substantive concepts, disciplinary knowledge, and our core threads covering community, knowledge, power, invasion, civilisation, and democracy across all year groups.
- **Accessibility:** Units can be segmented into smaller chunks to make content more accessible for SEND children, with scaffolding and adapted recording to support individuals and groups.

5) Implementation: How History is Taught and Managed:

Sequencing and Progression

History is taught in blocked units across the academic year to allow pupils to build deep, connected understanding. Teachers follow the meticulously mapped CUSP progression framework to ensure that substantive knowledge and disciplinary concepts, explored through our core threads of community, knowledge, power, invasion, civilisation, and democracy, build progressively from Year 1 to Year 6.

Lesson Design and Pedagogy

Every history lesson uses evidence-informed practice. Lessons begin with low-stakes retrieval practice and a recap of prior learning to secure knowledge in long-term memory. Teachers explicitly teach and model historical vocabulary, ensuring pupils use precise terminology when discussing how historical developments and changes have impacted human lives.

Enrichment and Fieldwork

History is brought to life through purposeful experiential learning. Pupils engage with historical artefacts, practical workshops, and local fieldwork or educational visits that connect classroom learning to the wider world and bring our core threads to life.

6) Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching:

While the core curriculum remains ambitious for all, teachers use CUSP segmentation, knowledge notes, and targeted scaffolding to ensure SEND and disadvantaged pupils can access the exact same rigorous content. Adaptations are made to teaching methods and recording styles rather than diluting the historical content.

7) Year-by-Year Curriculum Overview:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children in Nursery and Reception begin their understanding of history by talking about the lives of people around them and their roles in society. The EYFS curriculum supports understanding through the planning and teaching of Understanding the World. This aspect focuses on how children find out about past and present events in their own lives, their families, and other people they know. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of change over time and are given opportunities to differentiate between past and present by observing routines throughout the day, growing plants, observing the passing of seasons and time, and looking at photographs of their lives and others. Practitioners encourage investigative behaviour and raise questions such as what they think, asking for more detail, what will happen next, what else could be tried, and how things work. Language relating to time is used in daily routines and conversations, such as yesterday, old, past, now, and then. Children discover similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their own experiences and stories read in class.

Key Stage 1

The Key Stage 1 sequence focuses on helping young children develop a secure sense of time, place, and change. Pupils begin by exploring changes within living memory to build a concrete foundation of chronological understanding from their own everyday experiences. They also study the lives of significant individuals, such as David Attenborough, Mary Anning, Neil Armstrong, Mae Jemison, Bernard Harris Jr, and Tim Peake, introducing key concepts like legacy and contextual chronology. Building on this foundation, pupils explore major events beyond living memory, including the Great Fire of London and the invention of flight, to investigate how society, travel, and building materials have changed over time. Additionally, local history studies allow children to examine significant events, people, and places in the local area, discovering how local housing and communities have evolved. Throughout all units, learning is deeply anchored in our core recurring threads of community, knowledge, power, and significance.

Lower Key Stage 2

In lower KS2, pupils study the cultural and technological advances made by our ancestors as well as understanding how historians think Britain changed throughout the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages. Archaeological history guides us to know how early humans were creative, innovative, and expert at surviving in changeable environments. Having an in-depth understanding of Iron Age Britain offers solid foundations for the study of how Rome influenced Britain. This foundational knowledge is built upon and used to support long-term retrieval to contrast culture and technology. Pupils draw upon prior understanding to support and position new knowledge, constructing stable long-term memories. Substantive concepts are developed through explicit vocabulary instruction as a central component of the CUSP curriculum.

Studies of how Britain was settled by Anglo-Saxons and Scots give a focus on cultural change and the influence of Christianity. Pupils study how powerful kings and their beliefs shaped the Heptarchy of Anglo-Saxon Britain. The curriculum also focuses on the struggle for the throne of England through a study of the Vikings, their origins, conquests, and agreements with English Anglo-Saxon kings to settle and dwell in the region known as Danelaw.

Upper Key Stage 2

Later in upper KS2, knowledge of Anglo-Saxons is revisited and used to connect with a study of the Maya civilisation. The study compares the advancement of Maya culture and innovation to that of the Anglo-Saxons around c.AD 900. Location, settlement, people, culture, and invention are compared and contrasted.

Pupils study significant monarchs after 1066 in Year 6. Five kings and queens are the focus of a depth study and comparison, drawing on their beliefs, actions, and legacy. This chronological study revisits known periods of time and introduces new content and monarchs. Ancient history, such as the achievements of the earliest civilisations including the Ancient Egyptians in Year 4 and the study of Ancient Greek life and achievements in Year 5, is also studied to understand its influence on the western world. Understanding

culture, people, and places is central to these studies. CUSP History connects these studies with prior knowledge of what was happening in Britain at the same time to deepen and connect a broader understanding through comparison.

Recent history, such as the Battle of Britain, is studied in the context of how conflict changed society in the Second World War. Modern history is also studied through a unit on the Windrush Generation. Knowing about slavery, Caribbean culture, and the injustice of the past enlightens pupils to understand why events happened and how these pioneers' faced racism, discrimination, and prejudice. Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) is a vital component of the history curriculum, challenging racism and prejudice in all its forms as an integral feature that spotlights the lessons we can learn from the past.

8) **Impact: How We Measure Success and Outcomes:**

- **Assessment of Knowledge and Skills:** Assessment is formative and ongoing. Teachers evaluate pupils' understanding against the core knowledge and endpoints mapped out in each CUSP unit. Low-stakes quizzes, verbal discussions, and diagnostic tasks help identify misconceptions and inform responsive teaching.
- **Pupil Voice:** Children can talk articulately about their learning, demonstrating a secure command of historical chronology and vocabulary. Pupils explain how they know about the past and articulate how historical events, ideas, and shifts in power, knowledge, and community have shaped the world around them.
- **Curriculum Monitoring:** Subject leadership monitors standards in history through regular book scrutinies, lesson observations, learning walks, and pupil voice interviews. Work across books reflects pride, high expectations, and clear progression in historical writing and enquiry skills.
- **Readiness for the Future:** By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils leave Applecroft equipped with a deep, chronological understanding of British and world history. They possess the critical thinking skills, analytical resilience, and cultural capital necessary to thrive in secondary education and become thoughtful, active citizens in modern society who understand the true difference knowledge and history make to people's lives.

9) **Learning and Teaching Styles:**

To ensure clear progression and continuity across the school, the National Curriculum is followed in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning is anchored in practical, hands-on activities that complement the current class theme, spending approximately one hour and thirty minutes a week covering Understanding the World topics. Across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, history is delivered through a modular approach, taught in distinct, focused blocks of study alternating with other foundation subjects.

The emphasis in our teaching of history is to encourage curiosity and exploration about the world. We achieve this through multimedia, knowledge-rich exploration of people and processes. A variety of teaching and learning styles is used to offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways, including:

- Whole class teaching
- Use of knowledge organisers and vocabulary module sheets
- Group work
- Paired work
- Independent work
- Reading practice
- Use of computing resources
- Use of Curriculum Visions online books
- Tactile and visual approaches
- Fieldwork and educational visits
- Investigative and problem-solving work
- Research and explorative work
- Use of interactive timelines and CUSP resources
- Asking and answering historical questions
- Deployment of teachers and learning support assistants to support individual children, targeted groups, and monitor the progress of SEND and disadvantaged children

At Applecroft, we teach history to all children. We set high expectations and provide the opportunity for all children to succeed, taking account of pupils with SEND or disabilities and pupils from all social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. We recognise that there are children of different abilities in all classes and ensure suitable learning opportunities by scaffolding up to aid each child's ability.

10) Organisation, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunities:

Lesson Planning and Organisation

In the EYFS, learning is anchored in practical, hands-on activities that complement the current class theme. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, history is taught as a discrete subject through a modular approach, delivered in distinct, focused blocks of study, such as dedicated weeks of afternoon lessons, alternating with other foundation subjects.

Making History Inclusive

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have full access to the history curriculum and are encouraged to participate fully in all historical learning and enrichment. Applecroft School ensures our history curriculum is accessible for all pupils by recognising and celebrating small steps in progress. Pupil Premium funding is used to subsidise curriculum visits, museum trips, and transport costs for disadvantaged pupils, ensuring that financial constraints never impede access to real historical experiences in the local area and beyond. Funding is also allocated to support individuals in accessing topic-specific immersion days, visiting history specialists, and hands-on interactions with classroom artefacts that bring history to life.

As part of the 'Applecroft Adventure', all children are given the opportunity to explore the significance of past events and discover how people's lives in the past impact how we live

today. Through carefully structured enquiries, children are supported in linking different periods of history studied to new knowledge being learned.

In history lessons, classroom grouping is carefully considered to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils, and teachers use targeted questioning to extend children's understanding. Children with additional needs are supported through explicit vocabulary instruction, ensuring key historical vocabulary is taught and readily available in each child's book for reference throughout lessons. To reduce cognitive load, teachers utilise knowledge organisers and knowledge notes. Furthermore, alternative methods of recording; such as paired writing, voice recorders, diagrams, and Chromebooks; are provided so that literacy barriers do not restrict a child's ability to demonstrate historical knowledge and enquiry skills.

11) Contribution of history to teaching in other curriculum areas:

History serves as a rich context for learning across the primary curriculum. Historical sources and narratives provide a meaningful stimulus for extended writing in English, while chronological studies and timeline work reinforce mathematical concepts of time, intervals, and data sequencing. Exploring ancient civilisations and local heritage develops geographical awareness of maps, settlements, and land use. Furthermore, the critical thinking, evidence evaluation, and debate skills developed through historical enquiry empower children to articulate reasoned arguments across all subjects.

What is our approach to equal opportunities? How do we ensure equal opportunities in history?

Supporting British Values, all children have equal access to history regardless of gender, culture, or ability. Lessons and resources incorporate perspectives from a wide range of historical periods and diverse civilisations, with learning scaffolded and differentiated to meet various learning needs so that every pupil can succeed.

12) Recording Work (see Appendix A):

Children record their history work in a variety of ways at Applecroft School:

- **Early Years:** Children's discussions are recorded by practitioners.
- **Year 1:** Children record their learning in a whole-class floor book until they are ready to use an individual book. Work may take the form of written or recorded work, photos, video, drawings, or connection maps, produced individually, in pairs, or as a whole class using digital technology.
- **Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2:** Once using an individual book, children use a single or double page spread to explore and record learning. Children may align their knowledge note on either the right or left of their double-page spread to allow both left-handed and right-handed children a clear view of the information.

13) Feedback, Assessment, and Reporting:

- **Feedback and Marking:** The school Feedback and Marking Policy supports children's progress. In-class feedback helps move children on in their learning and address misconceptions. At the end of each module, children complete an

assessment piece displaying all that they have retained, and relevant questions provide next steps where appropriate.

- **Assessment and Reporting:** Children's understanding is frequently checked through questioning and cumulative quizzes. Work is assessed through formative judgements via observation and discussion, alongside pupil voice and book looks to provide further evidence of knowledge and understanding.

14) Home Learning:

There is no formal expectation of history home learning at Applecroft, however history projects and links to Curriculum Visions interactive books, Bitesize quizzes, videos, and other resources may be shared on Google Classroom for children to explore independently.

15) Monitoring, Resourcing, and CPD:

Monitoring Standards

It is the responsibility of the history subject leader and class teachers to monitor standards of children's work and the quality of teaching. The subject leader keeps staff informed of local and national developments, informs the senior leadership team of strengths and weaknesses, discusses further improvements, and provides support to improve the quality and continuity of teaching and learning throughout the school.

Resourcing

Topic-specific resources are kept in designated classrooms linked to the curriculum areas taught, with all materials relevant to the schemes of work. Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 libraries contain books relevant to history units, and each class has access to topic-specific books and artefacts. The whole school has access to Curriculum Visions, an online reading and resources portal, with resources purchased, organised, and maintained within a delegated budget.

Staff Professional Development (CPD)

The history subject leader maintains contact with teachers and humanity leaders within school to ensure developments and resources are communicated to relevant staff. The subject leader ensures staff are confident in delivering the CUSP curriculum and provides training where necessary.

16) Parental and Trustee Involvement:

How are parents involved?

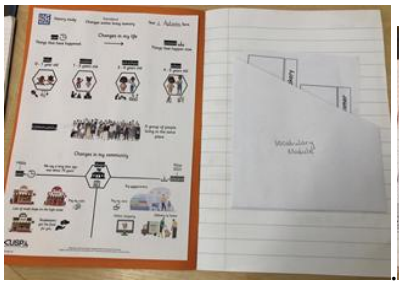
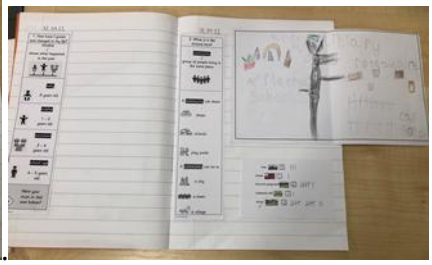
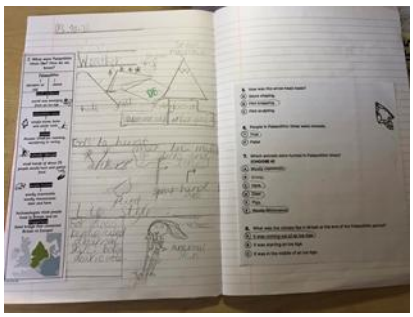
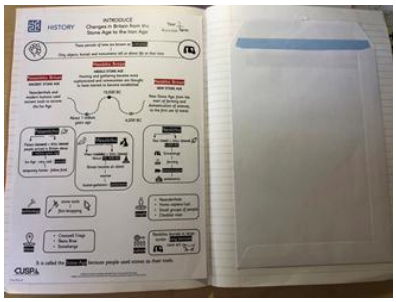
Parental input is highly valued at Applecroft School. History topics being taught each term are shared through curriculum letters, and parents are encouraged to discuss these topics regularly with their children. Parental support is welcomed for activities outside school grounds, such as museum visits and local history walks, drawing on the community's historical knowledge.

How are the Board of Trustees involved (include curriculum committee, faculty and lead trustees?

The curriculum committee reviews the History policy annually. Link Trustees liaise with and support curriculum leaders, participating in monitoring where appropriate. The Trustees ask questions to further their understanding of the school and how History is delivered. They are keen to be involved in history events and to support staff and their wellbeing.

Appendices

Appendix A

History – CUSP	**EYFS:** Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through various child-led and adult-led activities during continuous provision. This is documented on Tapestry. **KS1:** • All work will be contained in the child's subject specific book   • All work dated with short date – aligned to the left • At the beginning of a new unit of work, a 'knowledge organiser' is displayed on the left page and an envelope (containing vocabulary module) or vocabulary definitions on the right page • All work must have a 'Learning Question'- for left-handed children these will be to the right and for right-handers aligned to the left • Evidence may include diagrams, pictures, photographs and tasks carried out from adult-led activities. **KS2:** All work will be contained in the child's subject specific book.   • All work dated with short date – aligned to the left • The date must be underlined with a ruler and a pencil. • At the beginning of a new unit of work, a 'knowledge organiser' is displayed on the left page and an envelope (containing vocabulary module) on the right page • Each new lesson has a "double page spread" (if appropriate). New pieces of work should be on the next page if there is sufficient room. • All work must have a 'Learning Question' which is at the head of the knowledge note for that lesson - for left-handed children these will be to the right and for right-handers aligned to the left • Diagrams must be drawn in pencil and coloured in using coloured pencils • Paragraph breaks should be indicated by indentation and a clear line.

History Substantive Concepts

Children use these key concepts to make links across and between modules of learning.

Substantive Concepts					
 community	 knowledge	 power	 invasion	 civilisation	 democracy
A group of people living in a place.	The difference knowledge makes to people.	The power to advance (improve things) or to take over another place.	Taking over another country or religion with armed force.	A large group of people who follow similar laws, religion and rules.	A form of government voted for by the people.

Disciplinary Knowledge

Children's learning of historical knowledge fits into these key disciplinary concepts.

Disciplinary Knowledge					
 chronology	 cause and consequence	 change and continuity	 similarities and difference	 evidence	 significance
The Science of time.	The reason and result of the things that happened in History.	How key people, places and events changed or stayed the same	Compare similarities at the same time. What stayed the same? What is different?	How we know about the past.	Why people, events and ideas are important to our studies.