

History Curriculum Statement 2022-23

History Intent Statement

In History we aim to develop pupil's curiosity and enthusiasm for the past. We study a variety of topics throughout our curriculum using a thematic approach to ensure pupils are given both breadth and depth. Our curriculum has been chosen to ensure all pupils, regardless of their special educational needs or disabilities, social disadvantage or academic ability, are equipped with knowledge about current issues facing the world around us. Furthermore, we ensure all students are taught the historical skills they need for the future, including chronological skills and the ability to evaluate interpretations presented to us. Our intent is that all pupils know more and remember more, and this really is the driving force behind our curriculum delivery. The History department also recognises the importance of building the cultural capital of all of our students and have designed the curriculum in order to do so.

It is our intention to ensure that the History curriculum inspires students to be curious and to have a fascination about the origins of the world in which they live and the people that they will interact with, and we intend for this to remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching equips students with knowledge of the development of the government and the State throughout Britain. We begin with Anglo Saxon England and the forging of English identity and how this has been subject to change throughout the following centuries. Students also consider the impact of religion on different societies, to gain an understanding of why it held influence, how this changed and the impacts this has had on England. Students will also study the development of society, looking at the 'forgotten in History'; the women, the poor and those from different cultures whose stories are often neglected. These themes are consistent through all key stages, with students developing their knowledge and understanding as they progress through the History curriculum. In doing so, Cowley historians are equipped for the world they live in through a History curriculum that has a focus on British Values and Britain's place in the modern world. They have values of respect, tolerance and empathy for others.

It is our intention that our curriculum develops confident learners and young adults that are prepared to lead, have the ability to make informed decisions, the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to reflect and adapt, and independent and critical thinkers. They learn from success and failure in equal measure and are determined and resilient individuals that never give up. The Cowleian Values Programme is embedded throughout the History Curriculum, with every learner being given the opportunity to strive for personal excellence.

History Implementation Statement

All students are taught the same curriculum, regardless of their special educational needs or disabilities, social disadvantage or academic ability.

At the beginning of Year 7 students complete a baseline assessment in History based on National Curriculum content for Key Stages 1 and 2. This enables us to consolidate previous knowledge and skills. The curriculum is designed with six key 'pillars of history' embedded: Economy, society, war and conflict, political, religion and ideas and diversity. Each unit has a focus on one pillar, but is not solely restricted to it. The curriculum is designed to ensure the National Curriculum is delivered in as much depth and breadth as possible. Units of study also reflect current events, and changes are made to keep the subject relevant. For example, as part of the decolonise the curriculum movement we have made a conscious effort to include more diverse stories within our curriculum such as the role the British Empire played in the First World War. Teaching and learning is the bedrock of the stories of history to life. Throughout key stage 3 we imbed what we have identified as the 5 universal skills required to excel at history: change and continuity, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, significance and interpretation. Pupils in Year 9 can select an extension opportunity in History. This enables students to study in greater depth, building their skills and knowledge within the Key Stage 3 framework. The aim is to build additional expertise in History which will ultimately allow rapid progress to be made in Key Stage 4.

History at Key Stage 4 follows the Edexcel Course. Skills embedded at Key Stage 3 are now built on and developed at greater depth, with students also strengthening their ability to recall prior learning and skills. Our devotion to offering breadth and depth alongside diversity is compounded within our GCSE options. We currently cover Crime and Punishment through time- which will be changing to Migration and the People in 2024. We offer Elizabethan England, Super Power Relation 1941-1991 and Weimar and Nazi Germany.

History at Key Stage 5 follows the AQA course. We provide an ambitious and creative curriculum, allowing students to further develop their skills and to recall prior learning, but will also introduce our students to new content, new concepts, and, ultimately, new challenges. As part of the course students must complete a 3000-4000 word historical investigation on a topic of their choice. The AQA course focuses on two key areas of The Tudors and Weimar and Nazi Germany. The Tudor course examines the consolidation of the Tudor Dynasty under Henry VII and his son, and then investigates the turbulent and triumphant years of Henry VIII's children. The German course examines the Weimar Republic, investigating its difficult start and then its 'Golden Years', followed by an in-depth study of the rise of Hitler and the Nazi dictatorship. Above all, the History department supports our students in becoming independent, lifelong learners, with a desire to fulfil their potential and maximise opportunities presented to them.

Throughout all key stages, the history curriculum plays a significant role in the development of literacy. Students are rigorously developing their writing skills through constant opportunities for extended writing. The study of historical sources and texts develops reading skills and students make inferences and judgements through exposure to a wide range of historical resources. In addition there are opportunities to develop numeracy through analysing numerical historical data such as census returns.

In History we use a range of different teaching and learning strategies to ensure all students are challenged, engaged and look forward to their History lessons. These include decision making activities, debates, the use of clips from documentaries.

Homework is set once a fortnight at Key Stage 3 and once a week at Key Stage 4 and A Level. A range of activities are set to support classwork, help students make progress and encourage independent study.

All assessments, at all key stages, ensure students are tested on prior knowledge. Students will have made progress by “learning more and remembering more”. There are plenty of opportunities to develop students’ recall through a variety of ‘Blast from the Past’ activities, quizzes, knowledge organisers and elaborative interrogation activities.

Curriculum Beyond the Classroom

We have been keen to develop our students’ passion for local history, and, as such, now take our students on a History trip to the local cemetery to investigate what we can learn from studying gravestones. The department are keen to develop these local History trips further and are working on providing further opportunities for our students.

At Key Stage 4, we are currently looking at option to run a trip for the current KS4 cohort who will be studying GCSE topics that Cowley is offering for the first time.

At Key Stage 5, our students visit the Sydney Jones Library at the University of Liverpool. Initially, this trip was introduced to allow students opportunities to research sources of evidence for their required Historical enquiry.

The department also runs a range of educational visits with a focus on key events during the year such as Holocaust Memorial Day, where we attend the Memorial Service at St Helens Town Hall, and Remembrance community events.

Subject Expertise

The History department comprises four full time specialist teachers, and two part time specialist teachers, each with their own expertise and interests. All are enthusiastic about History and keep up to date with current historical debates and discoveries. One member of staff has completed a Master’s Degree on Elizabeth I, which has provided a wealth of expertise for the A Level course. The department also subscribes to the Historical Association.

Staff regularly participate on Historical forums to share ideas with colleagues in other schools, and staff have attended courses on the Key Stage 3 curriculum, GCSE courses and the delivery of A Level courses, along with teaching and behaviour management strategies. These

skills have been used to develop Schemes of Work and Assessments, and to ensure that the History curriculum offers opportunities for all students, of all abilities.

Four members of the department have been members of the College Innovation Team, which has a particular focus on Teaching and Learning strategies.

The Head of Department regularly attends local network meetings to share good practice and this has been invaluable in allowing us to develop our curriculum and delivery to ensure our students are given the very best opportunities in History.

Destinations

The History curriculum plays a key role in developing skills for the world of work, both in the delivery of history at all key stages, and through their contribution to the Cowley Scholars Programme, with History staff volunteering to give Undergraduate type Lectures on specific areas of interest (such as the LGBT fight for equality). Key skills of listening, presenting, team work and literacy are embedded throughout the curriculum. Many of our students take their History studies further, studying History at A Level and at degree level; indeed, a number of our current History A Level students are intending to study a History degree at University. Many of our students at Cowley study History for their full 7 years at Cowley, and we currently have A-Level students who have been taught by the same History teacher for 7 years, with some of our students intending to train to become History teachers. Other careers that can be pursued with a History qualification include Journalism and Broadcasting, Law, Archaeology, Education and Heritage. Employers value the research, analytical, teamwork and communication skills that History students develop throughout their courses at all levels, and these skills are embraced and nurtured at Cowley from Year 7 onwards, with our students knowing and understanding how a qualification in History can serve them in the real world.