



Curriculum Intent: History

Professor Johnston often said that if you didn't know history, you didn't know anything. You were a leaf that didn't know it was part of a tree. – Michael Chrichton

Curriculum Rationale

The aim of the curriculum is to expose students to core concepts that are important for GCSE but also life in general. We do this through three key questions How did Britain change from a total monarchy to a modern democracy? How does the life of the average person change over time? What impact has Britain had on the wider world? We have picked a broad range of topics, both national and international, that covers social, military, religious and governmental areas. Our range of topics also reflects the demographic for our students, with 30% of our students being British Pakistani it is important they study topics that interest them but also educates them about their heritage and links to this country, such as the British Empire in India, Indian soldiers contributions to this country. Whilst ensuring that the curriculum we deliver is broad, balance and challenging for all. The curriculum fully supports diversity through showing the role women played in significant events e.g. WW1/WW2 and Women's suffrage. As well as this, within the units we have ensure that we show a range of life experiences e.g. Indian contingent of women's suffrage movement and the contribution of the British Empire in WW1 and WW2. The curriculum challenges Western narratives of events such as the Holocaust by teaching it through the Middle East unit to give a broader understanding of the persecution of Jewish people throughout history and not a single isolated event in the 1940s. We also teach local history through the topic of the industrial revolution, to give all students, who have either lived here for generations or are new, knowledge that allows them to feel a sense of belonging and pride about Birmingham. We hope this range and the nature of topics engages students and sparks curiosity. The order is largely chronological to allow for students to build on their knowledge after each new topic and over the years. Throughout KS3 students develop their writing skills from using description and facts, up to explaining points of view and finally analysing arguments and coming to judgements by year 9. This then allows them to access the GCSE. We also allocate a percentage of lessons to source skills, which in the 21st century of fake news and internet, provides students with valuable skills of interrogating evidence, again needed for life but also needed to access the GCSE curriculum. Reading is the 'beating heart of our curriculum' (Christine Counsell). Through our curriculum we want to pass on a love and passion for history 'It [history] tells the story of who we are, how we came to inhabit this small island, the evidence of the past that we can see all around us and the impact of the British people on the world' (Katherine Mortimer).

Curriculum Progression & Strategies

Progress can be seen in history by both accumulating more core knowledge and by progressing in the skills of writing history. Progress is seen as gaining a greater chronological knowledge over KS3, starting from the early Middle Ages and progressing up to 20th century history and being able to place key events in the right time period. Progress in skills sees students develop their writing from using description and facts, up to explaining points of view and finally analysing arguments and coming to judgements by year 9.

Every lesson starts with recall which is focused on last lesson, previous lessons and topics. Where relevant we push students to make links between different topics and explain how they link. At GCSE we teach each topic strategically starting with Conflict and Tension which has links to the year 9 curriculum. Health and the People is taught before Elizabethan England so students have some contextual knowledge of Europe during the Renaissance/ Elizabethan Era. We end with Germany as there are many links to be made to the Conflict and Tension unit allowing learners to recap prior knowledge. Our assessments are cumulative and force students to recall previous knowledge not just current knowledge.

Curriculum Enrichment

Cultural capital visits to the Black Country Museum link to the industrial revolution topic in year 7.
Cultural capital visits to Birmingham Museum link to the year 7 topic of the Vikings by visiting the Staffordshire Hoard.
Visits to London link to the Elizabethan topic at GCSE where students can visit the Globe and the Golden Hind