

English Martyrs' Catholic School

History and Politics Curriculum Statement

At English Martyrs', we study history (Intent):

- For the love of discovering the past – we study history simply for the interest in the past.
- To see today through the lens of the past - to understand what the main people, ideas and events are that have shaped the modern world today.
- To learn how to think independently - to look for the evidence behind every statement, and to search for the truth.
- To explore British Identity – how have past events shaped students understanding of Britain today and to help understand 'modern Britain'

What we deliver in knowledge and skills

We closely follow the National Curriculum for History at KS3, covering specific sections from each core area of study in depth to allow deep, meaningful and quality learning. We develop and extend the learning at KS2 to build upon the primary curriculum of ancient civilisations up to c.1000 to bring student understanding of history up to the modern age, as well as offering greater depth and exploration of key topics studied in KS2 which extend beyond 1066 such as World War One, the Tudors etc. At KS3, we study some of the key events and themes which have shaped Britain and its place in the world today from 1066 to the present day, which is largely taught in chronological order to aid students develop a historical narrative of the past. In year 7, this runs from c.1000-c.1750. In year 8 it runs from c.1750 to 9/11.

We aim to ensure that all students will leave year 8 with a good understanding of some of the main events of English and global history from the Medieval, Early Modern, Industrial and Modern Age. They will have a good understanding of some of the main events that have shaped these ages, including the Norman Conquest, the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, the World Wars, the Holocaust, and racial injustice in the 20th Century. For a more in-depth view, please refer to the curriculum map.

From 2021-2, the KS3 curriculum is being reviewed and amended; in Year 7, to give a greater focus on the challenges to the nature of power in Medieval England, combining them and increasing the range and depth by including issues such as Simon de Montfort and the development of parliament; in Year 8, the first two units on Slavery, Empire and the Industrial Revolution are being re-designed with a focus on creating greater cohesion and connections to show the inter-relationship of these within the period. The final unit, Racial Injustice, has been created as a result of student and parent voice, local context and CPD with the educational consultants at Justice2History.

In KS3, students are explicitly taught the key historical content in each unit, with second order concepts such as change and continuity, significance, cause and consequence, interpretation, use of evidence, historical understanding and analysis. These are the same skills needed for the GCSE and as such are developed in preparation for this.

At GCSE we study the Edexcel History syllabus covering the units of:

1. Warfare and British society, c1250–present and London and the Second World War, 1939–45 (*From 2022-3 we have opted to change this to the new Edexcel 'Migration topic (Migrants in Britain, c800-present and Notting Hill, c1948-1970)' due to student and parent voice, local context and national prominence.*)
2. Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88.

3. Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91
4. Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

At GCSE the same skills are applied as of KS3, but in a greater depth with more focused and detailed evidence, alongside more refined arguments.

At AS Level, we focus on understanding the the impact of Communist rule in the 20th Century, and so study the Edexcel History syllabus covering the units of:

1. Russia, 1917-91: from Lenin to Yeltsin
2. The German Democratic Republic, 1949-90

At A Level, we study the Edexcel History syllabus, with an active and advance reviews of the AS topics, in addition to the depth study of the Tudors and the Coursework on the American Civil War.

1. Russia, 1917-91: from Lenin to Yeltsin
2. The German Democratic Republic, 1949-90
3. Rebellion and disorder under the Tudors, 1485–1603
4. Coursework - The United States, A Disunited Nation? – The American Civil War

In A-Level Politics we follow the Edexcel Politics syllabus which focuses on modern British and American politics and political ideologies.

1. UK Politics: Democracy and Participation, Political Parties, Electoral systems, Voting behaviour and the media.
2. UK Government: The Constitution, Parliament, The Prime Minister and Executive, Relations between the different branches of government.
3. Politics and Government of the USA: The Constitution, Congress, The Presidency, the Supreme Court and the Civil Rights movement, Political parties and participation.
4. Political Ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism, and Nationalism.

How do we do it (Implementation)?

‘We debate. We argue. All the time. That is what makes a good historian. We challenge the conventional. We question the accepted view. We look for the evidence behind every statement. We question the supposed truth, in search of the truth.’

For further clarity, see department teaching and learning policy. Teachers’ subject knowledge is supplemented by on-going work with UCL Centre for Holocaust Education, English Heritage, Leicester SCITT, Leicester History Teaching Network, and on-going CPD such as NPQ programmes. The department is also a corporate member of the Historical Association and regularly updated on new approaches to teaching and ideas through journals and magazines like Teaching History, Modern History Review, the Historian, Hindsight, as well as an on-going and extensive library of academic texts. A. Preston also leads the Leicester Education Improvement Partnership History hub and so leads on a range of education development and CPD within History teaching – many of the ideas, resources etc. shared as part of this are then shared with the dept. and implemented as appropriate.

Progression

After 2 years studying History, students should be able to explain some of the key events, people and ideas which have shaped both Britain and the wider world from 1000 to the present day. We work to develop a continued enthusiasm for history in all students, which could be expressed in a variety of ways like display work, source enquiries, student voice, but most simply through

discussion. Students will be developing their skills as critical enquirers, able to search for the truth in every statement.

By the end of GCSE, students will have a greater understanding of some of the main events which have shaped the modern world and will have a greater mastery of key historical skills.

By the end of A-Level, students will have an informed understanding of life under Communism in the 20th Century, the impact of the Tudors on the political landscape of England, and a developed understanding of the American Civil War. Students will be experienced in analysis, debate and historical enquiries.

In Politics, students will understand UK and US government, the major political parties within Britain and America, the ideologies which underpin those parties and others, and will have an informed understanding of modern politics and the major political issues of the present day.

How does the curriculum you have in place serve the needs of ALL students (i.e. SEND, Disadvantaged, HPA)?

All students from KS3-4 are provided with bespoke knowledge organisers from the start of their course, providing all the key content covered in their lessons. These are highly detailed and written by the History department to ensure students have access to all of the key knowledge for each unit studied at KS3 and KS4. Digital copies are shared via www.satchelone.com, and physical copies are provided free of charge to PP students at all levels. At KS5 students are largely responsible for the self-creation of these, at KS3 and KS4 these will have been developed by the department. Cognitive question cue cards have been developed at KS4 covering the wide range of questions at GCSE in all topics, with model answers, written by ourselves. These are actively used with students to aid effective revision, modelling and knowledge testing.

All teaching is suitably adapted to serve the needs of disadvantaged, SEND, EAL and HPA students in accordance with their individual needs and data from both formative and summative assessment conducted in class and in exams. This is to be assessed and implemented by the class teacher based upon their relationship with the students in the class.

Setting

Not applicable.

Focus for change (Impact)

The main focus of all assessment in history from KS3-5 is to develop student performance, and therefore is largely formative assessment based.

Assessment results from 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 reflect on-going issues of attainment by disadvantaged students and HPA students at KS3 and KS4. This has narrowed significantly in 2020/21 results but remains a long term concern. In response to this, we have adapted the provision offered by developing knowledge organisers for both key stages. As a department we have active strategies to target both under-performance by disadvantaged and HPA students. The provisional results in 2021 are excellent, especially for HPA, and show the successful impact of our knowledge-engaged strategy.

We follow a knowledge-engaged strategy, which forms the focus of all intervention. Quality First Teaching is our main source of intervention, so whole-class feedback predominates. This focuses on the consistent use of knowledge organisers and cognitive question cue cards. DIRT tasks should regularly be used after assessment reviews, as well as teacher modelling and repetition of work

following intervention. Questioning is used as an active intervention strategy to engage, motivate and challenge all students. Weekly knowledge tests take place in all classes from year 7 – 13 each week to ensure knowledge retention by students. PIXL strategy of Diagnosis, Testing, Therapy enables precise analysis of student weaknesses and allows targeted intervention. Interleaved topic booklets are used at KS4 and now at KS5 to ensure long-term student retention of knowledge. Parental contact is used following underachievement to ensure triangulation of intervention. Walking Talking Mocks form a key part of the strategy at both KS4 and KS5, as well as regular use of teacher and class modelling at all levels.

To further support disadvantaged and SEND students, Literacy wordmats have begun to be incorporated this year to support disadvantaged and lower attainers. Spelling testing has been incorporated into the wider knowledge tests to support literacy. Argument frames following simple principles have been developed to encourage better substantiated arguments at all levels KS3-5. Arrangements are being made to actively engage disadvantaged students in wider historical cultural capital, through historical lectures (see below), trips (Black Country Museum, Bletchley Park, Berlin, Leicester Great War Trail), visiting speakers (Black History Month and Suffrage).

At present, fewer issues have been identified in KS5. However, due to an aspirational target of raising the proportion of A* and A grades, we are actively encouraging wider academic reading to develop students wider contextual understanding and knowledge. This year will see a greater focus on attending professional historian's lectures and webinars, who are either invited into the school through the CMAT or the EIP, at conferences or in webinars. This year we are hoping to have lectures by renowned Historians like Tracy Bormann (Tudors and Stuarts), George Morton Jack (WWI and Empire), and Stephen Alford (Elizabethan government, the Watchers)

Date of last review: October 2021. Reviewer: A. Preston, Head of History and Politics