



History

OUR CORE AIM FOR HISTORY

For our children to become keen historians, curious about the world around them and enthusiastic to understand and question how it came to be.

What do history lessons look like at Swiss Gardens Primary School?

Children's history lessons at Swiss Gardens are often some of the most memorable they experience throughout their time in primary education. The very concept of history is at the heart of Swiss Gardens' topic-based approach to learning, with each and every year group creating themed termly units of learning to complement key historical events. From prehistoric dinosaurs in Reception to World War II in Year 6, children experience a rich and powerful journey through history that sparks a lifelong interest and curiosity about the world around them. Wherever possible we try hard to make history come alive through artefacts, visits, visitors and enactments.

In history lessons, we would expect any observers to see:

- Varied resources, depending upon the learning taking place and where possible use of artefacts.
- Varied approaches to the lesson (such as discussions, drama opportunities, observation of videos, visitors etc.)
- Curiosity for and desire to understand and question why things happened and the impact it has on our lives today
- Raising of questions to develop understanding and assess validity of our sources
- Conversations and debates
- Explicit exposure to new vocabulary
- Clear links to previous history learning and a developing understanding of chronology
- Awe and wonder
- Children using classroom displays and resources to support their learning

What does the children's work look like in history?

Some work is recorded in topic books, in order for children to show individual independence with the subject and as evidence of their growth of understanding. Sometimes, teachers will provide a written record of the learning that has taken place, in order for children to have information to refer back to in the future.

The vast majority of work is marked alongside the children, in order for misconceptions or inaccuracies to be addressed through immediate dialogue and modelling with the teacher, learning support assistant, or peers. Therefore, the books will not provide reams and reams of written feedback (marking) from the staff to the children, as most feedback is provided orally for immediate impact within lessons. Strong links are made between History and English and often the children's writing focus will have a historical content, for example writing newspaper articles about The Great Fire of London or writing in role as an evacuee. Where possible, trips occur beyond the school building and grounds to support historical understanding. These trips form an important part of children's history learning and are very much

enjoyed by children and staff alike, strengthening concepts through local studies and bringing concrete examples, relevance and context to our history curriculum.

How do the teachers plan for history?

First and foremost, the teachers are always striving to deliver – and for children to achieve – age appropriate expectations, adhering to national curriculum requirements in conjunction with the school's history progression document.

It is vital that history is planned as a progressive subject throughout the children's time at the school, building on and making links with previous learning. To ensure this, history topic webs have been created for each area of study and are used by teachers to underpin their planning and ensure key history skills are at the heart of what we teach.

There is a long-term overview of planned units of learning for the year to ensure full coverage of the learning, with the year team agreeing which history learning will be taught and when in the term. The medium-term plan (topic web) then details finer specifics and the short-term plan sets out the fine details of the learning that must occur, the activities and tasks through which the learning will occur, the adult roles within the lessons, the key vocabulary focus, etc.

The school has set planning documents used by staff throughout the school for long, medium and short term planning.

How does the school know whether children are making good progress and attaining high standards in history?

Teacher's use formative assessment within history lessons to quickly gauge children's understanding and assess whether this is in line with expectations. This information is used to re-shape learning within the lesson and also to inform future planning.

The history subject leader (supported by SLT as necessary) monitors provision, progression and attainment e.g. via planning check-ins, lesson check-ins (observations), book looks, pupil interviews, teacher interviews.

What happens if a child is finding history difficult?

We use a "mastery" approach to history, which means we are always striving for the vast majority of children to attain the same age-expected standards of learning at the same rate as each other. However, some children find history learning more challenging than others. For these children, the subject is made accessible in its very nature of varied teaching approaches, with plenty of discussion to which all children may contribute. Adult support and scaffolding is provided to ensure each child's history understanding is still effectively shared, in order for adults to properly know each child's true ability in this subject.

What happens if a child is achieving very high standards in history?

Where children are attaining particularly highly in history, teachers extend their knowledge further through higher level questioning and/or task expectation. The teachers deepen these children's knowledge so that their learning does not "stand still".

How do opportunities for history extend beyond each year group's lessons?

As history drives many of our topics, strong links are made to other subjects and history is often taught and celebrated through art, music, dance and English. Year groups are also encouraged to teach the history learning away from the classroom as well as within it – e.g. trips and visits in order to provide as many first hand experiences for our children. Research home work is also used to encourage the

children to ask family members and friends about their own experiences linked to a given history topic, for example, speaking to great grandparents about their experiences of war.

We are also fully aware that new history is made each day and is part of a continuum. As a school we are reactive to this and take opportunities to raise topical issues with the children in an age appropriate way to continually develop their understanding of the world they live in.

Is there anything else parents can do to support the learning in history?

Children may continue to learn about history at home as well as in school. There are numerous historical documentaries available across various media platforms and we would always encourage children to watch anything that is age-appropriate about the world around them and how it came to be. Any visits to enhance children's understanding such as to castles (Y2) and Roman Palaces (Y3) are always encouraged. The Museum of London has a great website

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london>

Brighton Museum and art gallery is a museum with some interesting displays and artefacts.

<https://brightonmuseums.org.uk/brighton-museum-art-gallery/>

Who to contact

If you have any questions you would like to ask about history, please do not hesitate to contact the following members of staff, or your child's class teacher or the subject leader:

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