



HISTORY

Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent

We aim make our students the best historians they can be. We challenge students to think like historians by researching thoroughly, weighing-up evidence, understanding chronology, evaluating interpretations and developing arguments. We do this by a consistent approach across the department ensuring all students develop the range of skills needed to become confident in their own opinions, able to make well supported judgements and to express them articulately using keywords from topics and historical vocabulary.

Our curriculum at NHGS goes beyond what is required for exam specifications, for whilst we want students to achieve the very best examination results possible, we believe our curriculum goes beyond what is examinable. As a department we believe that the transferable skills gained in our subject are essential for life in the 21st century. We teach students the importance of challenging the provenance of information, evaluating different interpretations, and processing large amounts of information to create a coherent argument. We teach empathy and tolerance and an understanding of how history has created the world we live in today.

Our curriculum in History links to our whole school ethos statement. Examples of how our curriculum supports the ethos statement are through challenging the students to think independently, to follow their own lines of enquiry and to present their work in a creative way. As staff we are enthusiastic about history, encouraging and rewarding enthusiasm and effort amongst students. Collaboration is encouraged as discussion and debate is at the heart of every lesson in History.

As a knowledge engaged curriculum we believe that knowledge underpins and enables the application of skills; both are entwined. As a department we define the powerful knowledge our students need and help them recall it. All members of the department know the content thoroughly and have helped develop a carefully planned curriculum which builds on previous knowledge and helps students understand topics in a wider context.

We build the Cultural Capital of our students through everything we teach as history and culture are intrinsically linked. We are constantly improving students' understanding of wider culture through exposure to politics, art, religion and language within the history we teach.

In 2018 we redesigned of our Key Stage 3 curriculum to help students to develop a broad understanding of how Britain changed between 1066 and 1945 in Years 7 and 8. We follow the guidance in the KS3 History National Curriculum in a largely chronological based approach, which also incorporates revisited thematic elements, and local history is interwoven within this.

Further rationale behind our curriculum design includes ensuring students see the relevance of history in the modern world. In Year 9 we have developed bespoke units which deal with the history of current issues in the news with the aim to help students better understand the world they are growing up in. The units we initially chose to study are terrorism, the changing role of women, US foreign policy and British Identity. After the disruption of the pandemic and with the changing world situation (Trump no longer being President, war in Ukraine, BLM, world response to pandemic itself) we hope to have time to rework some of these units after the exam groups leave in Summer 2022.

Our choices of GCSE and A-Level exam boards build on work done in KS3 and ensure students study a wide range of history and are able to make comparisons within and across periods thus being fully equipped for the study of history at a higher level or for work in the field.

Implementation

Collaborative curriculum planning lies at the heart of what we do in the department. Over the last four years we have been further developing our schemes of work for all age groups; embedding challenge, metacognition, memory techniques and literacy into our departmental curriculum.

Alongside our schemes of work, we have developed knowledge organisers for all topics throughout all age ranges. This has enabled us to define the core knowledge our students need to master. At GCSE and A Level these are used to provide context, and make links, in between different areas of the course and hence have a largely timeline and thematic structure. At KS3 they are also used for context but also to pick out key dates, analysis and content knowledge. Low stakes quizzing task and Kahoots are used with all year groups. We also build in spiralling back into our Schemes of Work (e.g. in the form of starter exercises and also lagged homework) to ensure key content is secure; this is most common at GCSE and A Level.

Prior to the pandemic we already used Google Classroom consistently to provide links to further reading and revision resources. After the experiences with Covid-19 lockdowns and home-schooling we have since developed this considerably, alongside our use of Google Meets to live teach pupils at home.

Throughout all year groups the use of formative assessment of written answers is regular feature of history lessons, with opportunities for peer and self-assessment, individual and full-class teacher feedback and WAGOLLS provided.

We implement our curriculum through a range of teaching approaches including role play, games and creative tasks as well as more traditional source-based questions and essay writing. For example, in Y12 we use a *Guess Who?* task to help learn the different leaders of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and then convert these rulers into *Top Trumps* to judge who was most successful.

Discussion and debate are a regular feature of lessons. Some examples of this are Y7 work on who had the best claim in 1066, Y9 work on whether the Atomic bomb was justified and in Y12 work on how far the Normans changed England and whether this was for the better.

To help build students' Cultural Capital we use music and film in our lessons wherever possible to give students access to a wide range of influences and help them to understand how culture can reflect or drive historical events. For example, we watch and then discuss Jimi Hendrix's 1969 Woodstock performance of the Star-Spangled Banner when studying Vietnam as part of

our US Foreign Policy topic with Y9. Other examples are painters in Weimar Germany with Y10 and Billy Bragg's protest songs against Thatcher's actions in the miners' strike and Falklands War in Y13.

Cross-curricular links have been developed with RPSE and English in the sequencing of our curriculums. For example, we planned when we teach topics such as pilgrimage to Y7 to link to English work on Chaucer and then also on how the Holocaust in Y8 fits with previous RSPE work on Judaism.

Students are encouraged to work independently where appropriate in all year groups but we increase this as they get older. Notable examples of this are the Y9 Personal Interest Project and British Identity Olympic opening ceremony tasks. In later year groups, Y11 for example conduct their own research using exam board resources on the chosen Historical Environment, and then in Y13 the coursework involves pupils selecting and comparing 3 differing interpretations from notable historians in regard to a specific historical debate.

Linked to this from the start in Y7 we think it is vital to prepare students to be able to understand how information can be manipulated and how this will have a role in all of their day-to-day lives. For example, we look at Elizabeth I's control and manipulation of her image and make links to the modern day. This is then followed up when looking at child labour and slavery later in Y7 and also with the portrayal of the Jews in Nazi Germany in Y8. This is then built on in Y9 with the Personal Interest Project where we help guide the pupils in doing their own research and judging the quality of the sources they find.

We believe that local history is vital to connecting students to their and therefore wider history. To help this in 2021 we developed a timeline knowledge organiser that covers the centuries from the Norman Conquest until the present day. KS3 students were given a simplified version and KS4 and KS5 a more detailed one. The timeline knowledge organiser has information for Halifax, Britain and the world; picking out key events, trends and developments, importantly including ones we don't have the curriculum time to teach. Hopefully in Summer 2022 we will be able to build on this to develop classroom displays to help link this even more regularly into day-to-day lessons from Y7 to 13.

Through extra-curricular projects such as Armistice 100, VE75 (virtually) and History Club we mark important anniversaries and help students appreciate important turning points both nationally and internationally. As a department we took the lead in the preparation of the new Year 8 St Omer trip by writing the work booklet and developing a scheme of work to be taught before the trip to ensure that students are immersed in the historical experience once they get there.

To help pupils aiming to study History (or related subjects such as Archaeology) at university we make suggestions about further reading and watching to encourage a knowledge and interest beyond the taught curriculum. We also help pupils work on their personal statements and have helped a number of successful Oxbridge candidates prepare for the HAT exams.

Impact

We know our curriculum is working in the History department through whole-school engagement with our Armistice 100 project. This showed that History is deemed to be of importance to pupils throughout the school and their contributions demonstrated empathy with the experiences of people in WWI. We had planned similar school-wide activities for VE75 but these were sadly disrupted by the pandemic.

Additionally, the quality of teaching and learning in History has been praised during learning walks by both external and internal observers. In light of competition from many subjects, numbers are healthy at both GCSE and A-Level.

Students go on to study a range of courses at university following the completion of their History A Level. Many choose courses related to the subject including History itself, Law, Journalism and Politics. Many of these students attend Russell Group universities.

Examination results have been historically good - especially in the light of the skew between Maths and English attainment on entry, with History being a literacy-based subject. Prior to the disruption due to the pandemic our ALPS scores at GCSE continued to be notable and amongst the best at NHGS. Contributions by History towards the school's P8 score were noteworthy.

Student voice shows that students enjoy the learning activities that enable them to progress in the subject. Above all, students continue to express their interest in the relevance of History and its skills in today's world.