



NEWTON BLUECOAT CE PRIMARY SCHOOL



History

Progression of Key Learning

Nursery to Year 6 • 2026–27

REMEMBER • QUESTION • INVESTIGATE • INTERPRET • CONNECT

“Shine from the inside out”

Purpose

This document makes the progression from EYFS Understanding the World into the school’s History curriculum explicit. It shows how children move from talking about their own lives, families, familiar routines and changes over time towards increasingly secure chronology, substantive historical knowledge and disciplinary thinking using evidence, interpretation, cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, significance and legacy.

Progression at a glance

EYFS foundation. Children develop an early sense of past and present through their own lives, families, stories, photographs, objects, routines and celebrations. They sequence familiar events, notice change and ask questions about people and experiences.

Key Stage 1 foundations. Pupils place familiar events and significant people on simple timelines, distinguish past and present, use accessible sources to answer questions, and begin to explain change, cause, consequence and significance.

Lower Key Stage 2 development. Pupils build a broader chronological framework, use archaeological, written, visual and local sources to make inferences, and explain change, cause, consequence, similarity, difference, significance and legacy with growing precision.

Upper Key Stage 2 depth. Pupils make connections across periods, weigh primary and secondary evidence, consider reliability, perspective and interpretation, explain multiple causes and consequences, and construct supported historical judgements.

The historical journey

CHRONOLOGY	EVIDENCE	INTERPRETATION	CAUSE & CHANGE	SIGNIFICANCE & LEGACY
When did it happen and how does it connect?	How do we know about the past?	Why might accounts of the past differ?	Why did things happen and what changed?	Why does this matter and what remains today?

Chronology & understanding of time

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Use everyday language about now, before, after, yesterday and long ago. Sequence familiar routines and events and notice that people grow and things change.
Reception	Talk about past and present events in their own lives and families. Sequence familiar events and stories and use simple time language with increasing confidence.
Year 1	Distinguish past and present; sequence events within living memory and beyond living memory; place key events such as 1666 on a simple timeline.
Year 2	Sequence significant people and events including the 1969 Moon landing and changes in Blackpool over time; use dates and chronological language more securely.
Year 3	Place the history of Newton Bluecoat, Stone Age to Iron Age and Roman Britain within an increasingly secure timeline; recognise duration and overlap.
Year 4	Locate the Plague and Ancient Egypt within wider chronological frameworks; make links between periods already studied and recognise that ancient and later periods are separated by very different lengths of time.
Year 5	Place Anglo-Saxons, Early Islamic Civilisation and Ancient Greece securely in time; compare concurrent and separated developments and make links across British and world history.
Year 6	Use a secure mental timeline to connect WWII, the Viking period and the transatlantic slave trade with prior learning; use dates, periods and duration accurately and recognise overlap and long-term change.

Evidence & historical enquiry

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Explore photographs, objects and stories connected with family and familiar experiences. Ask simple questions such as 'What is this?' and 'Who used it?'
Reception	Use photographs, objects, stories and memories to find out about the past. Ask questions and talk about what evidence might tell us.
Year 1	Use diaries, pictures, artefacts, family photographs, memories and objects to answer simple questions about the past.
Year 2	Use photographs, accounts, timelines, maps and local evidence; compare sources and use them to test simple claims about events and people.
Year 3	Use school records, photographs, artefacts, oral history and archaeological evidence; select details from sources and make supported inferences about how people lived.
Year 4	Use written, visual, artefact and tomb evidence; distinguish what people believed at the time from later knowledge and make increasingly reasoned inferences.

Stage	Key learning
Year 5	Use archaeological and written sources, considering reliability; select evidence to explain achievements, settlement, belief and aspects of past societies.
Year 6	Examine carefully selected primary and secondary sources; consider whose voices are represented or missing; distinguish evidence from interpretation; weigh reliability and perspective and construct supported judgements.

Interpretation & perspective

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Understand that different people can remember or tell the same experience in different ways.
Reception	Listen to different accounts and recognise that people may remember or describe past events differently.
Year 1	Begin to recognise that sources tell us different things and that we use evidence to work out what may have happened.
Year 2	Compare different sources about the Moon landing and significant individuals; recognise that claims need evidence.
Year 3	Consider how and why people such as Mary Seacole are remembered; compare accounts and images and begin to recognise different viewpoints.
Year 4	Recognise that beliefs and accounts from the past may differ from what we know today; use biographical and contextual sources to judge significance.
Year 5	Consider reliability and viewpoint in archaeological and written sources; compare evidence and recognise that interpretations of societies and achievements can differ.
Year 6	Analyse contrasting interpretations and perspectives; challenge stereotypes, identify omissions, explain why accounts differ and justify an interpretation using evidence.

Cause & consequence

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Talk about simple reasons for familiar events: what happened and why.
Reception	Explain simple causes and effects in stories, routines and changes they have experienced.
Year 1	Explain simple reasons why the Great Fire spread and identify what happened as a result; connect actions and outcomes.
Year 2	Begin to explain reasons for change in the lives of significant people and the consequences of events such as exploration and social change.

Stage	Key learning
Year 3	Explain why the Romans invaded Britain and identify consequences of invasion and control; identify causes and effects within local and prehistoric change.
Year 4	Explain why the plague spread and how people responded; recognise that historical events can have more than one cause and consequence.
Year 5	Explain reasons for Anglo-Saxon settlement and consequences of cultural and religious change; connect developments to longer-term legacies.
Year 6	Explain multiple causes and short- and long-term consequences of war, settlement and the transatlantic slave trade; distinguish intended and unintended consequences and support explanations with evidence.

Change & continuity; similarity & difference

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Notice changes in themselves, families, seasons, routines and familiar environments. Talk about things that stay the same.
Reception	Compare past and present in familiar contexts and stories; identify simple similarities and differences.
Year 1	Compare homes, families and everyday life within living memory; explain what has changed and what has stayed the same.
Year 2	Compare past and present experiences, including seaside holidays; identify changes over time and similarities and differences between people's experiences.
Year 3	Explain changes from the Stone Age to Iron Age and after Roman invasion; compare ways of life and recognise continuity as well as change.
Year 4	Compare beliefs, daily life and experiences across Ancient Egypt and later periods; explain patterns of change and continuity and avoid assuming everyone experienced the past in the same way.
Year 5	Compare societies such as Anglo-Saxon Britain, Baghdad and Ancient Greece; identify similarities and differences in settlement, belief, knowledge, government and culture.
Year 6	Analyse the pace, extent and impact of change across periods; compare experiences within societies and across time, including whose lives changed and whose experiences may have differed.

Historical significance & legacy

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Talk about special people, events, objects and celebrations in their own lives and community.

Stage	Key learning
Reception	Recognise that some people, places and events are remembered because they are important to families or communities.
Year 1	Explain in simple terms why Rosa Parks and events such as the Great Fire are remembered.
Year 2	Explain why Nelson Mandela and the Moon landing are historically significant and how Blackpool's past forms part of local heritage.
Year 3	Judge why Mary Seacole, Roman developments and the history of Newton Bluecoat matter; identify simple legacies and local connections.
Year 4	Explain why Learie Constantine should be remembered and identify the significance and legacy of Ancient Egypt and responses to the Plague.
Year 5	Evaluate the legacy of Ancient Greece, the achievements of Baghdad and the significance of Anglo-Saxon settlement, Christianity and cultural development.
Year 6	Make supported judgements about significance and legacy, including WWII, Viking settlement and the continuing legacy of slavery; connect local, British and world history to the present.

Substantive knowledge, concepts & vocabulary

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Develop vocabulary linked to family, baby, child, adult, old, new, past, now, before, after and change.
Reception	Use past, present, long ago, before, after, then, now, old, new, same and different accurately in familiar contexts.
Year 1	Use living memory, chronology, past, present, evidence, cause, consequence, diary, significance, equality and change.
Year 2	Use significance, apartheid, chronology, evidence, interpretation, local history, continuity and comparison in context.
Year 3	Use prehistory, chronology, hunter-gatherer, farming, settlement, invasion, empire, legacy, evidence, source, continuity and significance.
Year 4	Use cause, consequence, plague, belief, civilisation, pharaoh, evidence, interpretation, equality, local connection and significance precisely.
Year 5	Use settlement, Christianity, civilisation, caliphate, scholarship, democracy, legacy, reliability, significance, chronology and evidence accurately.
Year 6	Use primary source, secondary source, interpretation, perspective, reliability, invasion, settlement, enslavement, resistance, abolition, empire, legacy, cause, consequence, significance and continuity with precision.

Thinking & communicating like a historian

Stage	Key learning
Nursery	Talk about what they notice, ask questions, listen to stories and explain simple ideas about what happened before.
Reception	Ask questions about the past, describe what they notice in sources and explain simple similarities, differences and changes.
Year 1	Ask simple historical questions; use sources to answer them; sequence events and explain ideas using because.
Year 2	Choose relevant information from sources, compare evidence and give simple reasons for conclusions.
Year 3	Ask increasingly focused questions, select evidence, make inferences and construct short evidence-based explanations.
Year 4	Use multiple sources, make reasoned inferences and explain cause, change, significance and interpretation using subject vocabulary.
Year 5	Select and organise evidence, compare accounts, consider reliability and build increasingly fluent historical explanations and conclusions.
Year 6	Frame historical enquiries, select and evaluate evidence, weigh interpretations, make connections and construct coherent, well-supported historical arguments and judgements.

Year-by-year History journey

Year 1: Family Album — How can we tell how life has changed within living memory? | Fire! Fire! — Why did the Great Fire of London spread so quickly? | Rosa Parks — Why do we remember Rosa Parks?

Year 2: Nelson Mandela — Why do we remember Nelson Mandela? | Lift Off! — How do we know people really landed on the Moon? | Beside the Seaside — How has a visit to Blackpool changed over time?

Year 3: The History of Newton Bluecoat — How has our school changed over the last 100 years? | Stone Age to Iron Age — How did life in Britain change from the Stone Age to the Iron Age? | Mary Seacole — Why is Mary Seacole historically significant? | The Romans — Why did the Romans invade Britain and what changed?

Year 4: The Plague — Why did the plague spread so quickly and how did people respond? | Ancient Egypt — What can evidence reveal about life and belief in Ancient Egypt? | Learie Constantine — Why should we remember Learie Constantine?

Year 5: Anglo-Saxons — Why did the Anglo-Saxons settle in Britain? | Early Islamic Civilisation — Why was Baghdad a centre of learning and influence? | Ancient Greece — How has Ancient Greece influenced our lives today?

Year 6: Britain at War — How did the Second World War change life in Britain? | Raiders or Settlers? — Vikings: raiders, settlers, or both? | Transatlantic Slave Trade — How did the transatlantic slave trade affect people and how did it change the world?

End-of-phase expectations

By the end of Nursery: Children use simple time language, sequence familiar experiences, notice change, talk about family and familiar events and explore photographs, objects and stories connected with the past.

By the end of Reception: Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and families, sequence familiar events, compare past and present and use simple sources to answer questions.

By the end of Key Stage 1: Pupils place events and people on simple timelines, use historical vocabulary, ask and answer questions from sources, identify change and continuity, explain simple causes and consequences and say why people or events are significant.

By the end of Lower Key Stage 2: Pupils use a broader chronological framework, analyse a range of sources, make supported inferences, explain cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and make reasoned judgements about significance.

By the end of Key Stage 2: Pupils make connections across local, British and world history, evaluate primary and secondary sources, consider reliability and perspective, analyse interpretations and multiple causes, and construct fluent, evidence-supported historical judgements.

Thinking like a historian

- When did this happen, and what came before and after?
- What do we already know that helps us understand this period?
- What sources can help us answer our question?
- What can we infer from the evidence?

- How reliable or useful is this source for this particular enquiry?
- Whose viewpoint or voice is represented — and whose might be missing?
- Why did this happen, and what were the consequences?
- What changed, what stayed the same, and for whom?
- Why is this person, event or development historically significant?
- How has this period influenced later history or the world we live in today?