

Our Lady's RC Primary School



History Policy

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Person Responsible	History Lead
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Signed:	<i>K. Rafferty</i>	(Person Responsible)	Date: 4.9.2025
Signed:	<i>A. O'Leary</i>	(Headteacher)	Date: 4.9.2025
Signed:	<i>G. M. Massingham</i>	(Chair/Governor)	Date: 4.9.2025

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

Our Core Values

During Summer 2023 workshops, we revisited both our Mission Statement and Core Values. This involved everyone in discussion, reflection and prayer about the values, Mission and Aims of our Catholic school. There was a calling to all to re-commit to our purpose and to work together to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of Our Lady's



During the workshops, the feedback from parents, and the views expressed by the children during sessions played a prominent role in the decisions we made.

Our Mission Statement is:

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

Faithful

Positive

Safe

Nurturing

Forgiving

Fair

Respectful

Honest

NURTURE

The School's six nurturing principles sum up our practice and theory. They underpin the context, organisation and curriculum.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives



Our Mission is represented by this design. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts** and Christ- **the Cross**

Catholic Life of the School- History

History at Our Lady's is closely connected to the Catholic life of our school, enriching pupils' understanding of both the past and the values we live out today. Through studying a wide range of cultures, civilisations and individuals, children learn about human dignity, justice, compassion and the consequences of moral choices—values that align with our Catholic mission. Historical enquiry encourages pupils to reflect on how people have shaped the world through acts of courage, service and faith, helping them recognise the importance of these qualities in their own lives. By exploring stories of communities and individuals across time, pupils gain a deeper appreciation of the shared human experience and are inspired to contribute positively to the world, guided by our Catholic ethos.

Intent, Implementation and Impact

At Our Lady's, our history curriculum is shaped by a clear intent: to ensure pupils develop secure and wide-ranging **substantive knowledge** of past civilisations, events and individuals, alongside robust **disciplinary knowledge** that helps them understand how historians investigate, interpret and construct accounts of the past. Through the **Opening Worlds** programme, pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 follow a highly sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum that systematically builds their understanding of chronology, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, and historical significance. This carefully structured approach sparks curiosity, deepens understanding and supports all pupils in accessing and enjoying complex historical ideas.

Implementation is grounded in the high-quality teaching practices embedded in the Opening Worlds materials. Lessons make purposeful links across time periods and themes, ensuring that new content is always connected to what pupils already know. Rich vocabulary, clear explanations and well-crafted resources enable pupils to develop a strong conceptual framework. Across Key Stage 2, pupils also engage in planned historical enquiries and practical investigations, including handling sources, evaluating evidence and exploring different interpretations, allowing them to apply disciplinary thinking in authentic ways.

The impact is evident in pupils' confidence, historical fluency and enthusiasm for the subject. Children at Our Lady's develop a secure and extensive body of knowledge, alongside the analytical skills needed to question and understand the past. By the end of Year 6, pupils are equipped with the substantive foundations and disciplinary habits of mind that prepare them exceptionally well for secondary history, enabling them to engage thoughtfully with the complexity of human experiences across time.

History in EYFS

In the EYFS at Our Lady's, history is rooted in the *Understanding the World* area of Development Matters, supporting children to make sense of their lives and the lives of others. Through play, stories, talk and exploration, children begin to develop an awareness of time, noticing changes in themselves, their families and their immediate environment. Activities such as sequencing events, discussing personal experiences, exploring artefacts and looking at photographs help children understand that the past is different from the present. Practitioners model rich language and encourage curiosity, enabling children to ask questions and make connections. This early historical thinking forms a strong foundation for the more structured history curriculum they encounter in Key Stage 1.

History curriculum planning

At Our Lady's, history curriculum planning is guided by the Opening Worlds scheme, ensuring clear progression of substantive knowledge—such as historical events, people and concepts—and disciplinary knowledge, including enquiry, interpretation and evidence use. Each unit begins with a cover sheet outlining the key concepts and essential vocabulary so that pupils build secure understanding from the outset. Lessons follow the carefully sequenced Opening Worlds materials, ensuring coherence and progression across year groups while allowing teachers to adapt resources to meet the needs of their classes. Particular consideration is given to SEN pupils, with scaffolds and adaptations such as Widgit-supported resources used to reduce writing load while maintaining high cognitive challenge. This approach ensures that all pupils can access, engage with and succeed in the rich historical curriculum.

Cross-curricular links

History at Our Lady's is enriched through purposeful cross-curricular links that deepen understanding and strengthen learning across the curriculum. Literacy skills are embedded throughout historical enquiry, with pupils developing their ability to read challenging texts, interpret sources and produce clear, well-structured writing. Mathematics supports history through timelines, chronology, dates and simple data interpretation. Strong links with geography help pupils understand how places, environments and human interactions have shaped events and civilisations over time. Creative subjects such as art and design technology also enhance historical learning; pupils are given opportunities to work with our Artist in Residence (Belinda) to further their historical knowledge through art. These connections ensure that history is meaningful, engaging and rooted in a broad, rich educational experience.

Inclusion

History at Our Lady's is planned and taught with a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring that every pupil can fully access and enjoy the curriculum. Teachers carefully consider the diverse needs, strengths and starting points of all learners, including those with SEND, disabilities, EAL, and pupils who are disadvantaged or working at greater depth. Lessons are adapted through clear scaffolding, tailored resources and flexible outcomes so that all children can engage meaningfully with historical concepts and enquiry. To support pupils who may find extended writing challenging, tools such as Widgit symbols and structured recording frames are used to reduce writing load without lowering expectations. Educational trips linked to historical topics further enhance access and engagement, providing rich, real-world experiences that support all learners. By providing varied ways to explore sources, discuss ideas and demonstrate understanding, we ensure that every child can participate confidently and achieve success in history.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process throughout the duration of a topic in History. At the end of each topic, class teachers assess each child as being either working towards, at expected or greater depth in History. This is a combination of formative and summative assessments. We aim to give all children opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of History through a range of activities; ensuring that all children are given equal opportunity to be a Historian. Assessments are used to plan future work, to provide the basis for assessing the progress of the child, and to share with parents through their annual report. Teachers

endeavour to provide teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to think creatively, explore and develop ideas, and try different approaches.

Monitoring

History is monitored by the coordinator and is carried out regularly through:

- Monitoring of pupil's books
- Informal discussions with staff
- Learning walks
- Lesson observations

History Lead: Katie Rafferty

SMSC in History

History at Our Lady's contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development by helping them reflect on human experiences across time and learn from the choices, beliefs and actions of others. Through exploring different societies, faiths and traditions, pupils develop respect, empathy and an appreciation of cultural diversity. Moral understanding is deepened as children consider issues such as justice, conflict, leadership and the impact of significant events on people's lives. Social development is supported through collaborative enquiry, discussion and problem-solving, as well as shared experiences beyond the classroom. Educational visits—such as trips to museums, historical sites and cultural centres—allow pupils to engage with history first-hand, encouraging awe, curiosity and thoughtful reflection. Through these rich experiences, history helps pupils grow in understanding of themselves, others and the wider world.