

The History Curriculum at Our Lady's Catholic High School

'To build a future you have to know the past' Otto Frank.

Our subject is platform for pupils to develop a fascination in the past, but at the same time enabling pupils to develop a greater understanding of our present. History invites pupils to engage in and investigate the complexities of human nature, its impact and the circumstances through the darkest and the most triumphant periods in local, British and World History.

History challenges our pupils to consider different perspectives and opinions. It encourages them to develop empathy and moral conscientious. At the same time enriching them in skills of analysis and evaluation, literacy and oracy, deep knowledge and overall understanding.

At Key stage 2 pupils will have studied a variety of topics, ranging from ancient civilizations, the Roman Empire, Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings. In addition, they will have worked on a range of skills, encouraging them to think critically, weighing evidence and being able to ask perceptive questions. Therefore, although the topics at KS2 may be varied pupils will have some understanding of the past and a common bank of skills which can be built on and developed in Key Stage 3.

At KS3, topics are adapted from the national curriculum whilst ensuring its ambition is met. Topics are selected to enhance and enrich pupils' learning and understanding of past and present issues; and where appropriate placed in the context of our local area. The history curriculum is carefully planned and structured to ensure that current learning is linked to previous learning, whilst the department's approaches are informed by varied and effective pedagogy. We aim to ensure that all pupils: gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world which helps to stimulate pupils' curiosity to know about the past; be encouraged to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement; begin to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Our scheme of work is fluid and mobile. Different areas are under constant consultation and evaluation through formal and informal liaison. (Please see the schemes of work for KS3 and KS4, and the pupils' Road Map/overview)

Assessment is integral and takes many forms in the study History. Assessment is ongoing and purposeful. It is summative in our mid-term assessment and end of year exam, but throughout formative assessment is used effectively in the delivery of lessons and in written tasks for pupils.

The department develop vocabulary through their subject specific glossary and etymology guides provided to each year group. This forms the basis of an ongoing study and understanding of subject specific language. Lessons are planned with a view to develop pupils' oral literacy through group work, discussion, word banks and essay writing. We also encourage private reading of historical fiction and non-fiction texts which can be accessed through our department library.

Through the study of History at OLCHS we equip our pupils to continue their study of History at sixth form college, university and potentially in a vocation that finds its roots in the knowledge and skills provided by the subject.

All pupils are offered a rich and ambitious experience of History and study the full breadth of the History curriculum in order to develop knowledge and skills. The department has high expectations and ambition for SEND pupils, recognising the individual's needs and therefore tailoring their access to and their presentation of the work to suit the individual. This enables the pupil to develop at their own pace and enjoy the benefits and opportunities of History at KS3 and KS4.

To further our pupils' understanding and love for the subject, History offers students a range of experiences outside of the classroom environment. These opportunities are designed to develop students' learning experience and their cultural understanding of the world around them. Various experiences include a GCSE History trip to Berlin, where students explore the rich and powerful History that is centered around this capital city – the life of Germans under the Nazi regime and throughout the years of the Cold War. Our GCSE students are involved in a trip to Thackeray Museum, Leeds, aimed at enhancing their study of Medicine through the Ages. KS3 students have had the opportunity to visit Quarry Bank Mill, where they have explored the history of the cotton mills and child labour. Whilst the Year 7 annual Castle Competition is recognised by a trip to Lancaster Castle. Also, students get the opportunity to partake in Parliament workshops, run mock elections, experience activities to mark the Holocaust and Remembrance. In addition, the History Department runs a local History club for those students with a real passion for the subject and their locality.

The culture of the History department is to work collaboratively and share best practice both formally and informally. We have an open-door arrangement to enable us to work effectively as a department and liaise and share on a day-to-day basis. Part of Development Time is set aside to share new ideas and initiatives, as well as constantly reviewing our live SoW. We keep up to date with current pedagogy through the department's participation in CAWG, as well as our subscription to the Historical Association. The department enhance their own subject knowledge in a variety of different ways including reading, podcasts and webinars. We host Edexcel GCSE History network meetings each term, as well as gaining expert advice from London Revision thus ensuring we are up to date with current GCSE requirements.