

Whole-School History Progression Map: EYFS–Y6

Substantive concepts • disciplinary concepts • historical knowledge • vocabulary

1. Curriculum journey: the historical contexts through which concepts develop

Phase	History contexts in the uploaded planning	How the curriculum broadens
EYFS	How have I changed since I was a baby?; What are our favourite celebrations each year?; Why do we wear different clothes at different times of the year?	Own lives, routines, families, celebrations, seasonal/time change; first timelines, comparisons and simple sources.
Y1/2	Changes in Toys; Explorers; Kings, Queens & Castles; Changes in Technology; Florence Nightingale & Mary Seacole; Great Fire of London	Living memory and beyond; significant people/events; monarchy; exploration; technology/industry; health care; evidence and change.
Y3/4	Stone Age to Iron Age; Roman Empire in Britain; Ancient Greece; Eyam and the Plague; Sheffield Floods	British, world and local history; civilisation, migration, settlement, trade, empire, industry, disease/medicine; increasingly analytical enquiry.
Y5/6	Anglo-Saxons & Vikings; Ancient Egypt; Crime & Punishment; World War II; Masbrough Disaster	Complex chronological connections; migration, monarchy, empire, rebellion, settlement, trade/industry; thematic and local studies; increasingly independent historical argument.

2. Disciplinary concepts: progression in how pupils think like historians

Disciplinary concept	EYFS	Y1/2	Y3/4	Y5/6
Chronology	Sequence familiar routines/events; use then/now, before/after, first/next; recognise a timeline and sequence own-life events.	Place people/events in chronological frameworks; use everyday historical time vocabulary; distinguish living memory/beyond living memory; sequence key events.	Use dates/periods and BCE/CE with increasing security; place British/world periods in relation to one another; establish narratives and identify trends.	Make connections within/across periods; use chronology to explain long-term developments and thematic change; relate depth studies to wider British/world timelines.

Evidence & sources	Use photographs, objects, stories, work and familiar records to remember/find out about the recent past; begin asking “How do we know?”	Ask/answer questions using stories, artefacts, pictures, diaries and other sources; select evidence to show understanding; recognise different ways the past is represented.	Interrogate a wider range of primary/secondary evidence; infer from artefacts/archaeology; select relevant evidence; recognise that knowledge of prehistory/local history is constructed from surviving sources.	Select, organise and cross-reference evidence more independently; consider usefulness/limitations and how interpretations are constructed; support informed responses with evidence.
Interpretation & inference	Talk about what pictures/objects might tell us; compare familiar past/present experiences.	Recognise that the past can be represented in different ways; make simple deductions and interpretations from evidence.	Make supported inferences; compare interpretations/theories and explain how evidence leads historians to different conclusions.	Evaluate interpretations and build reasoned explanations from multiple sources; distinguish evidence from interpretation and justify conclusions.
Change & continuity	Notice personal growth, seasonal change and what is different/same over time.	Identify simple changes and continuities in toys, technology, health care, buildings and ways of life.	Explain patterns of change/continuity across longer periods, e.g. Stone–Iron Age, Roman Britain, plague/local industrial change.	Trace developments across centuries/themes, e.g. settlement/power, crime and punishment, warfare/technology; explain pace and extent of change.
Cause & consequence	Use simple because language when talking about why things change/happen.	Identify straightforward reasons and results, e.g. why events happened and what changed afterwards.	Explain multiple causes/consequences and begin to connect them; distinguish triggers from wider conditions in events/invasions/disasters.	Weigh interacting causes and consequences over different timescales; construct supported causal explanations and recognise intended/unintended consequences.
Similarity & difference	Compare self then/now, routines, celebrations, clothes and familiar experiences.	Compare people, periods and ways of life using specific features; identify similarities and differences from sources.	Compare societies/settlements and experiences across periods, using evidence and historically appropriate criteria.	Make nuanced comparisons across societies and periods; explain why similarities/differences matter to wider historical questions.

Significance	Begin to recognise that some events/people are special or remembered, e.g. birthdays and celebrations.	Explain in simple terms why significant people/events are remembered, using evidence.	Judge significance using impact, change and remembrance; apply to people, events and local history.	Develop supported judgements about historical significance, considering impact at the time and over time and using evidence to justify claims.
Historical enquiry & communication	Ask simple questions, talk about observations, sequence and explain familiar events.	Ask and answer historical questions; choose relevant story/source details; use historical vocabulary to communicate understanding.	Address and sometimes devise valid questions; select and organise information into informed responses.	Frame increasingly precise enquiries; select, organise and synthesise relevant information; communicate substantiated conclusions using precise historical vocabulary.

3. Substantive concepts: progression of recurring historical knowledge

Substantive concept	EYFS	Y1/2	Y3/4	Y5/6
Civilisation	Begin with communities, routines and ways people live.	Encounter civilisation through significant people, buildings, technology and events; begin to notice how societies are organised.	Study civilisation explicitly through Stone/Iron Age, Romans and Ancient Greece: settlement, agriculture, city-states, organisation, culture and change.	Compare and connect complex civilisations/societies such as Ancient Egypt and later Britain; consider how political, social and cultural systems develop and interact.
Trade	Experience exchange/shopping/community ideas in familiar contexts where relevant.	Introduced through explorers, technology and changing ways of life.	Explicitly examine trade as a driver of civilisation and settlement, including prehistoric communities, Rome and Ancient Greece/Minoans.	Apply trade to migration, settlement, kingdoms and empires; connect trade with power, expansion and societal change.
Settlement	Understand familiar places, homes and communities.	Begin to encounter why people live in particular places and how places/buildings change.	Explain why and where communities settled; connect settlement to resources,	Analyse settlement alongside migration, monarchy, invasion and control in Anglo-

			farming, defence, Roman towns and Greek city-states.	Saxon/Viking Britain and other studies.
Monarchy	Recognise roles of people in families/community; special people in stories/celebrations.	Explicit study of kings, queens and castles; develop monarch/reign and how rulers lived and exercised authority.	Apply monarchy to Roman emperors and Greek/Macedonian rulers; connect rulers to power, empire and conflict.	Deepen through Anglo-Saxon/Viking kingdoms, Egyptian pharaohs and later political contexts; compare forms and consequences of rule.
Empire	No explicit substantive empire strand in the uploaded EYFS History enquiries.	Introduced through Kings, Queens & Castles and significant historical contexts.	Develop explicitly through Roman and Greek/Persian/Macedonian expansion: invasion, control, power and cultural impact.	Apply and connect empire across Ancient Egypt, Anglo-Saxon/Viking contexts and World War II planning, considering expansion, control, resistance and legacy.
Migration	Talk about people/places in familiar community contexts; no explicit migration concept label in EYFS plans.	Early foundations through exploration and people moving/travelling.	Explicitly explain migration in prehistoric Britain and later movement/invasion/settlement; connect movement to resources and communities.	Deepen through Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings: reasons for movement, settlement, control and cultural change.
Industry	Notice jobs/roles and changes in familiar technology.	Explicitly encountered through Changes in Technology and wider changes in national life.	Connect industry to technological/material change and local history, especially Sheffield's growth, steel and urban development.	Apply to industrial/social change in thematic and local studies such as Masbrough and Crime & Punishment where relevant.
Rebellion / resistance	No explicit substantive rebellion strand in the uploaded EYFS History enquiries.	Early encounters with conflict/power through monarchs and nationally significant events.	Develop through Roman Britain/Boudicca and struggles for power in Greek/imperial contexts.	Revisit through Anglo-Saxon/Viking power struggles, Ancient Egyptian invasion/resistance and World War II concepts of power/conflict.

Exploration	Explore own environment and communities; talk about journeys/places.	Explicit focus through Famous Explorers: reasons for exploration, significant individuals, comparison of journeys and changing technology.	Apply ideas of movement, contact and expansion in Greece/Rome and local/world contexts.	Connect exploration/expansion to trade, empire, migration and power where the planned units support it.
Disease & medicine	Talk about health, routines and community experiences where they arise; not a recurring labelled substantive strand in EYFS History.	Develop through Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole: disease, hospitals, nursing and change in health care.	Deepen through Eyam and the Plague: disease, medicine, cause/effect, responses and comparison over time.	Prior concepts can be recalled when analysing social change; no separate uploaded Y5/6 disease/medicine unit.
Power / conflict & disaster	Begin with rules, roles, important events and familiar consequences.	Encounter authority, war, fire and significant people/events in accessible contexts.	Analyse power through rulers/empires and conflict; local disaster studies develop causes, evidence, impact and change.	Sustain complex studies of power and conflict through Anglo-Saxons/Vikings, Ancient Egypt, Crime & Punishment, World War II and Masbrough Disaster.

4. Vocabulary progression: language pupils increasingly use to think and write historically

Phase	Core disciplinary and substantive vocabulary
EYFS	today, yesterday, tomorrow, before, after, first, then, now, next, past, present, time, timeline, sequence, younger, older, change, same, different, compare, remember, celebration, family
Y1/2	past, present, living memory, beyond living memory, timeline, chronological, source, evidence, interpretation, significant/significance, similarity, difference, cause, consequence, monarch, reign, castle, explorer, technology, industry, war, disease
Y3/4	BCE, CE, period, prehistory, primary source, secondary source, archaeology, artefact, inference, interpretation, continuity, cause, consequence, significance, civilisation, migration, settlement, trade, industry, empire, invasion, monarchy, rebellion, city-state, disease, medicine

Y5/6	chronological narrative, continuity, trend, interpretation, inference, reliability/usefulness (where taught through source work), significance, causation, consequence, civilisation, migration, settlement, trade, monarchy, empire, rebellion, invasion, power, conflict, society, industry, justice, deterrence, rehabilitation
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5. What progression looks like across Thornhill History

- EYFS establishes the foundations: children locate themselves in time, sequence familiar experiences, notice change, compare then and now, and begin to use photographs, objects, stories and memories as evidence.
- Y1/2 moves from the familiar to significant people, events and changes within and beyond living memory. Pupils use timelines, ask historical questions, compare ways of life and begin to explain evidence, interpretation, cause, consequence and significance.
- Y3/4 makes the concepts explicit and applies them to longer chronological spans, ancient societies and local history. Pupils work with archaeology and a wider source base, make inferences, explain change/continuity and causation, and connect substantive concepts such as civilisation, migration, settlement, trade, industry, empire and monarchy.
- Y5/6 expects pupils to connect prior concepts across periods and themes. They select and organise evidence, make more complex comparisons and causal explanations, and use recurring substantive concepts to explain power, migration, settlement, empire, conflict and social change.