



Historical Association Quality Mark Final Report

Park End Primary School, Middlesbrough

Date: 27/06/23

Park End Primary is a local authority-controlled school, serving a largely white British urban catchment area in Middlesbrough. It has 620 pupils on roll with 331 boys and 341 girls. Of the total school population, 59.1% are identified as Pupil Premium, 54.6% are on FSM with SEN at 11.5%. 8.9% of pupils are from a variety of non-white British backgrounds, but only 1.8% are EAL. The history curriculum has been reviewed in recent years with advice from Chris Quigley. An OFSTED inspection of 2023 awarded the school 'good' but concern was expressed about the extent to which knowledge was deepened, especially where a content focus was being repeated. Primary History is taught for an average of 18 hours a year, within a half term, the slot alternated with geography.

• Teaching, Learning and Achievement

The assessor was able to interview small groups of pupils from different year groups, scrutinise work and observe portions of three lessons. The first lesson observed was of a Year Three class where behaviour was good and pupil responses to the teacher enthusiastic. In initial questioning, pupils showed that they understood the "Big ideas" shaping the Primary History curriculum and could recall knowledge from prior teaching about the Romans. Pupils were on task throughout as they completed inferences from pictures of archaeological artefacts from the Anglo-Saxon period and then an illustration from A Street through Time of an Anglo-Saxon village sited in the ruins of a Roman settlement.

The second lesson observed was of a Year Six class studying the enquiry question What impact did World War II and its leaders have on Britain? The lesson was characterised by skilful Socratic questioning by the teacher throughout, with good responses from pupils. The teacher led a high-level discussion about the possible meanings of displayed vocabulary partly based on answers that pupils gave to posed questions. Pupils participated enthusiastically in a multiple-choice quiz on their iPads and the teacher was able to assess the extent of knowledge retrieval from across the class. She showed a video summarising the Second World War, which had been seen before, pausing regularly to check pupil understanding of different graphics, such as maps. The teacher later explained that she planned to use particularly enthusiastic and knowledgeable pupils to lead follow-up group work analysing propaganda posters.

The assessor observed a Year Two class being taught about William the Conqueror as a significant individual. The teacher referred to events and individuals that the class had previously been taught about on a class timeline and a few pupils volunteered recall of prior individuals and events. Discussion about when these events or individuals occurred on the timeline would have been helped if the amount of time in between them had been represented accurately. Pupils viewed a BBC teach video on William the Conqueror which the teacher paused at intervals to discuss graphics and details. While doing so, she invited paired discussion of a series of illustrated dates, representing a timeline of William's life which were pegged up on a washing line timeline. This activity would have been more effective with the

amount of time between different dates have been represented by the amount of space between each event. Pupils were enthusiastically on task and attentive in all three observed lessons.

The assessor was able to interview small groups of pupils from different groups. Year Two pupils were able to make good use of recalled knowledge in discussing whether past disasters such as the Titanic proved that people in the past were less advanced than modern people. Year Three pupils were able to explain their understanding of history clearly, and one directly referred to “past, present, and future” in reference to the passage of time. Year Four pupils were able to suggest cross referring evidence as a means of resolving contradictions between sources. Year Six pupils were able to cite Thomas Crapper as an inventor whose work might prove that past people were actually superior to those in the present. The most curious and intellectually nimble discussion was with Year Two pupils. The enthusiastic responses of pupils to questions were corroborated by examples of pupil voice included in the school portfolio.

A variety of tasks were evident in pupil books which showed that pupils were able to reach independent conclusions. For example, inferences were regularly made from original sources as pupils progressed through KS2 content. However, in such tasking insufficient reference appears to be made by teachers to the knowledge that pupils need to test whether the inferences they have made from original sources are valid ones. Other tasks showed that they were geared towards particular disciplinary concepts, such as similarity and difference. For example, at KS1 pupils sorted out images from the Titanic under characteristics of first- and third-class passenger facilities. Year Five pupils listed comparisons between the ancient and modern Olympics under different headings and in Year Six pupils organised information about the lives of poor and rich children in Victorian times onto a Venn diagram. Chronology has been carefully developed. In Reception pupils regularly revisit key events in their passage through the school year on a class display to which photographs of them completing particular activities are gradually added. Timelines feature regularly across KS1 and KS2 content. Tasks sometimes require pupils to re-present historical information they have been given into a creative format, for example, converting details of Tudor monarchs into a Top Trumps game. Resources are well organised and drawn from the HA, the British Museum, Key Stage history, the Hamilton Trust etc. They are appropriately differentiated as appropriate for SEND pupils.

The Quigley milestones are used to assess progress over time although progression through the concepts of Historical Interpretations and Significance are underdeveloped. Assessment of progress is completed using live marking and on the spot verbal responses, in line with whole school policy. The assessor also saw evidence in books of pupils responding to written teacher comments such as Why did they do this? Tasking in general does make progressively greater demands of pupils as they move through the school with some exceptions detailed below. The Primary History curriculum definitely allows pupils to build their cultural capital in the subject from very low starting points (for example many pupils enter the school never having heard of Captain Cook, despite his status as a local hero and the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum being within walking distance of the school).

The assessor concluded that the school matched the criteria for silver in this category.

Points for development

- Ensure that timelines in use in classrooms accurately reflect the passage of time between periods and events represented.
- Investigate high-quality speaking and listening strategies for pupils across the key stages that will support fluent articulation of opinion, for example, drawn from the Voice 21 project and Philosophy for Children.

• **Leadership**

The history subject leader is an experienced and respected member of staff who is a passionate and knowledgeable advocate for Primary History among her colleagues. For the last few years, she has worked hard to raise the status of the subject within the school which is described as a “key driver in developing cultural capital”. The subject leader was responsible for disseminating the school’s reviewed curriculum to staff through staff meetings and has kept abreast of developments through local CPD and membership of the Facebook Primary History Leadership Group. She regularly conducts learning walks, scrutinizes work, gives teacher’s feedback on observed lessons and prepares action plans for which she is accountable to SLT. The status of the subject is shown by the use of key literacy texts such as Street Child in Year Six linked to history content and a commercial timeline has been installed in a key corridor which is noted by pupils as they pass it by, reinforcing current and past teaching. A smaller copy of this timeline is planned for installation in each classroom. Before the pandemic consultant Chris Quigley worked closely with staff to develop “milestones” for Primary History with enquiry questions around which activities are organised. The subject leader supports teams of teachers in each year group in preparing their medium-term plans and has pointed to a range of resources to improve their subject knowledge and set appropriate tasking to ensure that enquiry questions are addressed. In the case of some planning referred to under the curriculum section below the subject leader needs to monitor medium term plans more closely.

An experienced member of staff and a less experienced colleague, interviewed by the assessor praised her leadership. One commented “she’s always there” while the other said “we never feel done down to “. These comments are corroborated in reflections by staff completed in a questionnaire. Recently qualified and trainee teachers are able to observe the subject leader teaching history and discuss these observations with her afterwards. The deputy interviewed by the assessor praised the subject leader’s approach to her role. The school allocates £3000 per year group each year to spend on resources and the same on trips and enrichment. Staff have voluntarily spent impressive amounts of these allocations in support of history as a result which boosts subject specific enrichment and has paid for topic and artefact boxes for various study units.

The assessor concluded that the school met the criteria for silver in this category.

Points for development

- Put in to place high quality strategies for structuring speaking and listening.

3). Curriculum

The Primary History curriculum at Park End is based around four “Big ideas” which represent a mix of substantive and disciplinary concepts. The ideas are “interpretation and investigation of the past”, “overview of world history”, “understanding, chronology” and “communicate historically”. In a recent mock deep dive conducted by a history lead in another local school it was commented that “it was clear that the children knew the four strands of history and they did not need to go into great detail to recap them as this was embedded learning”. Content is organised around enquiry questions, such as How has nursing changed throughout history? (Year One), What was life like in ancient Greece? (Year Three), The Vikings; ruthless killers, or peaceful settlers? (Year Five), and What contributed to the fall of the Benin empire? (Year Six). The EYFS curriculum shows evidence of recent strengthening with an emphasis on sequencing to build awareness of the passage of time. The KS1 curriculum features an emphasis on local history with Captain Cook and the Transporter Bridge as a focus of study. This is reinforced by a local study of the development of Middlesbrough in Years Five and Six.

Particular history themes such as Invasion for Year 4 have been identified as a general focus for content in each year group. Content has been selected so that a period or civilisation is sometimes taught more than once but revisited with a different focus and a different enquiry question. For example, in Year Three, the enquiry question is What was life like in ancient Greece? and this covers society, city states and conflict between them and cultures and past times. In Year Five, the ancient Greeks feature again through How did the ancient Greeks influence the world? with the focus on democracy, Olympics and culture linked to a general theme of Achievements and Legacies. While this repetition to deepen knowledge makes sense in outline the recent OFSTED deep dive was right to identify some unnecessary repetition of previously taught content and places where the demand of tasks did not take sufficient account of the need to set more challenging work than had been set when the period or civilisation had last been covered. Areas where content is being repeated need careful review by the subject leader to avoid unnecessary repetition and to ensure that the milestones have been effectively used to set appropriately challenging work.

Content that might normally feature in KS1 has been added to themes in KS2 which broadens the focus of content in that key stage. For example, a focus in Year Five on Which women have helped to change the world? features a contrast between Rosa Parks and Greta Thunberg. While this example shows that the curriculum reflects some diversity as regards gender and colour, there are too few such opportunities for the study of diverse content across the history curriculum as a whole. There is the potential, for example to develop diverse content on disability or LBGTQ+ issues. Also, while ancient Egypt is studied in depth, the required overview of ancient civilisations at KS2 is currently lacking.

Points for development

- Ensure that an overview of ancient civilisations is covered at KS2 and further examples of diverse content are included across the key stages.
- Review existing planning carefully where content is revisited to avoid unnecessary repetition and ensure that work is sufficiently challenging.
- Review Milestones so that they better reflect progression through the concepts of historical interpretations, significance and handling evidence.

4). Enrichment

Pupils clearly see the links between different subject areas and history content provides opportunities for tasking in them. For example, the study of Street Child in Year Six means that pupils complete diaries of Victorian children in English lessons which complements the Victorian study unit in history. Creative writing in English is also set as a follow-up to the Beamish visit. The study of Scott and Amundsen in Year Two draws on geographical knowledge of Antarctica and effective use is made of digital maps as a resource in the study of the local area. Local historical figures feature when studying these maps which show the expansion of Middlesbrough over time. In Science past inventors and innovators such as Thomas Edison are regularly featured when the curriculum looks at content such as electricity. Year teams have used budgets to purchase artefacts and other resources in support of history study units and the advisor saw some of these on display in different classrooms. A well-used reading area with access to history texts is sited in a corridor which provides resources in addition to those found in the school library. Timelines are featured in some, but not all classrooms and some lack proportionate space between events and period. The generous budgeting for enrichment has been used to ensure that a programme of visits and visitors have been organised. For example, all Year Five pupils went to Beamish and additional sponsorship arranged by the subject leader from the local rotary group ensured that no pupils were charged. Other examples of enrichment include the visit of Year Two pupils to local castles and the Anglo-Saxon farm at Jarrow Park in Year Five. Photographs from such enrichment activities feature on the school website along with information about how the history curriculum is organised. The school struggles to engage with parents despite efforts to do so.

The assessor concluded that the school met the criteria for silver in this category.

Points for development

- Contact the local historic England Heritage Schools Advisor for support, possible provision of free local history materials and networking opportunities with other local subject leaders.
- Introduce voluntary home learning tasks which seek to engage parents/carers with their children`s history curriculum.

Final Comments:

History in the school has benefited from the energy and enthusiasm of the present subject leader. She is inspiring her colleagues and through them pupils in the school with a love of the subject. The assessor would like to thank Vicky and her colleagues for making his visit such a worthwhile one.

Award made? **Yes**

Date of Award:
27th June 2023

Renewal Date
27th June 2026

Level: Silver