

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES

History Policy and Practice

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1. **RATIONALE**

This document should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum Intent Statement, which outlines specific issues underpinning the Curriculum approach SES.

The very nature and purpose of the holistic provision at our establishments means that the focus is always on the 'whole child'. This is amplified in the range of documentation, policy and practice that reflects our philosophy of '24hr' learning, coupled with our "no limits' positive psychology.

The intensity of work in this respect, with both the child and where possible, family, is beyond what any child in a mainstream setting, and in many other specialist settings, would experience because of the very purpose and nature of practice at SES.

This document sets out the policy and principles that underpin the whole process of learning across the twenty-four hour learning experience available.

2. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the SES History curriculum are commensurate with the philosophy and foundations for the teaching of History described in the National Curriculum.

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils 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.

2.1 HISTORY AND NATIONAL CURRICULUM AIMS

The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all students:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically valid questions

and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses

- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts: understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales

2.2 HISTORY AND READING, WRITING, COMMUNICATION, MATHS AND COMPUTING SKILLS (RWCM+C)

RDCM+C skills are core elements of English, Mathematics and Computing that provide individuals with the skills and abilities they need to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life, their communities and work. Individuals possessing these skills are able to progress in education, training and employment and make a positive contribution to the communities in which they live and work.

Development of RWCM+C skills is embedded within personalised programmes of study in History. RWCM+C skills within the curriculum are not limited to this subject. The curriculum offers opportunities for RWCM+C skills development in History, which encourages working beyond the Learning Centre and making links to a wide range of learning opportunities. To be effective, RWCM+C skills teaching must be relevant and allow learners to engage with real situations in the real world.

SES aspires to develop learners confidence in RWCM+C skills through History by providing opportunities to:

- read and understand information and instructions, then use this understanding to act appropriately.
- Interpret given information in line with specific learning intention.
- Record evidence of learning in written form of varying formats at appropriate timescales, taking into account individual needs of learners.
- use key terminology to explore and develop knowledge and understanding..
- use verbal communication to effectively develop knowledge and understanding
- to acknowledge listening as integral to developing knowledge and understanding
- to seek opportunities to develop mathematically skills in the areas of using and applying, number, shape, space and measure and handling data.
- to integrate opportunities for a contextualized use of computing applications

2.3 HISTORY AND PERSONAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (PESD)

Effective planning for PESD in History must ensure that relevant elements are embedded into; individual learning episodes, sequences of work, teaching approaches and learning outcomes. When this is done well, it will build individual confidence and enrich the experiences of learners and support their progress in History while increasing coherence across the curriculum.

At SES mastery of PESD skills is integral to all aspects of Learning Opportunities through a holistic and cross-curricular approach. We seek to ensure pupils demonstrate that they can develop and then apply their PESD skills in an extensive

range of subject based and real life contexts. In History we promote the consolidation of core PESD skills by structuring learning opportunities to promote development in this area. Progress in PESD is reflected in personalised PESD files and Learning Centre Education Plans.

2.4 HISTORY AND THE SEMH (SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH) DIMENSION

Many of the students coming to our establishments may well have had difficult experiences with History, either in the way it has been taught or in the way they have received the teaching. Their low self esteem and poor self image as learners, coupled with their learned avoidance behaviours often used for self protection against the risk of failure, mean that they may never have experienced the excitement and satisfaction of success in History.

Our aim is to provide experiences that will improve the child's self esteem allowing him to develop confidence and at the same time enjoy success in areas of endeavour specific to the subject.

History can and should:

- fire children's curiosity and imagination, moving and inspiring them with the dilemmas, choices and beliefs of people in the past.
- help children develop their own identities through an understanding of history at personal, local, national and international levels.
- help them to ask and answer questions of the present by engaging with the past.
- help them find out about the history of their community, Britain, Europe and the world.
- help them develop a chronological overview that enables them to make connections within and across different periods and societies.
- help them investigate Britain's relationships with the wider world, and relate past events to the present day.

This can be an extremely useful process for youngsters with SEMH needs insofar as it helps them find a sense of place and time at both the micro and macro level of their lives. It can help them understand their place in the wider cultural identity of their country and the world, leading them to a greater understanding of the diverse and sometimes difficult lives others have lived.

History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days.

Winston Churchill

3 HISTORY AND KEY OUTCOMES

These key outcomes are a useful vehicle to conceptualise a holistic approach to children's needs.

3.1 ENJOY AND ACHIEVE

For many pupils, history is fun. Pupils enjoy studying and learning about key events, individuals and developments in history, and they value the richness and variety of narratives from the past. Pupils appreciate the opportunities provided by a range of approaches to learning, including fieldwork, visits to museums, galleries and historical sites, the use of ICT and investigating real historical questions and issues; especially where they are able to make links and connections with their own lives.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities that history gives them to express themselves, whether in response to less familiar viewpoints and experiences, or in presenting their own ideas and opinions to readers and listeners.

Pupils value the ways in which history helps them to achieve across the curriculum, and in the world outside school, by developing their abilities to communicate clearly and effectively, to solve problems, and to work in teams.

3.2 BE HEALTHY

History provides valuable insights into public and personal health issues and their impacts on everyday life now and in the future. History contributes to pupils' mental and emotional health by acknowledging their value as individuals with personal histories and histories linked to their communities.

Consideration of historical controversies, in which there are often no 'right' answers, helps pupils at a time when they may be dealing with complex issues in their own lives – for which there are also often no 'right' answers. Learning about value systems from other times and places helps pupils to put current values, expectations and pressures in perspective.

3.3 STAY SAFE

Pupils learn to stay safe, not only through understanding risk and developing safe working practices while conducting fieldwork and other investigations, but also through exploring ideas, issues and events from the past when people have not been safe.

History gives pupils the confidence to question things and not take them at face value. It provides pupils with the skills to examine the validity of what they read or are told, and to challenge it on grounds of evidence or reasoned analysis. Being aware of bias and inaccuracies when they are exploring sources and discussing situations and dilemmas helps them make the right choices to stay safe.

3.4 ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

History plays a central role in contributing to young people's long-term economic wellbeing by giving them knowledge and critical understanding of events, values and beliefs that will help inform their lives as working adults. So, for instance, history helps pupils to 'read between the lines' when interpreting media stories, to discern the contexts of domestic and global issues, and to understand the stories of the different communities in which they will live and work.

History is also important in developing the literacy and communication skills essential in many jobs. The subject encourages young people to be adaptable and to suggest informed and creative solutions to real world issues. Pupils are able to plan and prepare to put their views and ideas across for maximum effect, and to work effectively in groups. In addition, history develops pupils' ability to engage in critical research – to evaluate evidence, identify and analyse different interpretations of events, and to substantiate any arguments and judgements they make. All these are skills and attributes valued by employers.

3.5 MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

History provides many opportunities for pupils to get involved and to contribute positively by working collaboratively, most obviously as part of group discussions. Another key aspect of making a positive contribution is involvement in the community. In history pupils have opportunities to work outside the classroom, for example when studying an aspect of local history or learning about the work of museums, galleries, archives and historic sites.

4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HISTORY

SES recognises, but is not limited to, the common framework provided by the structuring of History within the National Curriculum.

4.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

SES is committed to ensuring that all students are treated with equality of regard.

This will involve:

- Providing equality of opportunity in the History curriculum in an attempt to maximise the potential of each individual pupil.
- Treating as of equal value the different needs, interests and abilities of individual students.
- Through their experiences within history pupils should have respect for others and the idea that all should be treated as equals.

In pursuing this policy with regard to individual students, there are four categories of difference between groups of students, in which it is generally acknowledged that 'treatment as equals' may be problematic and for which it is therefore important to have specific policies. These are:

- Racial/Cultural differences
- Social-class differences
- Ability differences
- Gender differences

4.1.1 Racial/Cultural Differences

It is vital that staff avoid any racial bias or stereotyping with respect to the particular individuals who are from ethnic-minority backgrounds and that they

are alert to and willing to challenge any such discrimination or stereotyping by students.

4.1.2 Gender Differences

Equal opportunities in terms of participation are carefully considered, however, issues of prejudiced attitudes and stereotyping towards the opposite sex can be in existence and can potentially be magnified in our environments, especially given the contextual background and past experiences of our young people.

Staff should therefore be aware of this and should be willing to challenge any such discrimination or stereotyping by students. Furthermore such risks can be mitigated through planned teaching strategies.

4.1.3 Social Class Differences

Staff should be aware of making assumptions about student's levels of knowledge and opportunities for acquisition of knowledge whatever their background.

4.1.4 Ability Differences

SES establishments are resourced such that students receive a highly individualised curriculum based on their Portfolio of Achievement and Needs. Implicit in this is a response to differing levels of ability.

It is also important that protected characteristics as defined in the SES Equality and Diversity Policy are considered when planning and implementing teaching practice to ensure equal opportunities. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the SES Equality and Diversity Policy and Practice document and the DfE guidance around our equality duty.

4.2 HISTORY AS A CROSS CURRICULAR SUBJECT

It is important to stress the inter-relationship of history with many other areas of the curriculum and with aspects of learning, communication and social functioning beyond the Learning Centre day. At Avocet House every aspect of its operation is viewed as a potential vehicle for building upon children's knowledge, understanding and skills. All staff need to be skilled at finding unobtrusive ways of supporting cross-curricular links through taking advantage of the total living experience without this intruding on the naturalness of domestic living.

Cross-curriculum dimensions provide important unifying areas of learning that help young people make sense of the world and give education relevance and authenticity. They reflect the major ideas and challenges that face individuals and society.

Dimensions can add a richness and relevance to the curriculum experience of young people. They can provide a focus for work within and between subjects and across the curriculum as a whole, including the routines, events and ethos of the school.

Cross-curriculum dimensions include:

- identity and cultural diversity
- healthy lifestyles
- community participation
- enterprise
- global dimension and sustainable development
- technology and the media
- creativity and critical thinking

4.3 HISTORY AND COMPUTING

Computing is incorporated as an integral element into all aspects of the curriculum. (See Computing Policy and Practice document). Computing plays a fundamental role in enriching and enabling curriculum delivery.

Computing helps students learning in history by providing quick and effective access to large quantities and a variety of types of information. It can help them to investigate, organise, edit and present information in many different ways.

Computing therefore supports and enhances many of the processes in the development of students' historical knowledge, skills and understanding.

Using Computing skills can help students to:

- access, select and interpret information
- recognise patterns, relationships and behaviours
- model, predict and hypothesise
- test reliability and accuracy
- review and modify their work to improve the quality
- communicate with others and present information
- evaluate their work
- improve efficiency
- be creative and take risks
- gain confidence and independence

In history, Computing can help students:

- access historical sources and critically evaluating them
- classify information, and organise and communicate ideas effectively
- focus directly on the different characteristics of sources
- handle data
- use the internet and multimedia resources to access historical sources
- use the internet and multimedia applications to present and communicate ideas
- use e-mail to exchange views and ideas with their counterparts in other schools or in different countries
- use a flexible and timesaving resource
- respond to different stages in their writing

4.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

Key elements of teaching methods in History are:

- knowledge imparted by the teacher,
- fieldwork,
- creative activities related to elements of the topic,
- question and answer,
- individual and group enquiries,
- use of a range of media presentation,
- use of ICT/video/DVD
- use of a variety of printed and textual material,
- role play and drama,
- discussion and debate,
- story telling,
- visits to museum and historic sites,
- use of artefacts/photographs,
- use of family history/eye witness accounts,
- use of maps.

Approaches to learning will to a greater or lesser extent involve an enquiry method:

- asking questions and possibly forming hypotheses,
- planning investigations,
- finding, collecting and recording information,
- analysing and interpreting information,
- drawing conclusions,
- evaluating and organising information.

Activities that enhance student skills and experience are:

- discussion and debate with the teacher
- writing including narrative, analysis, explanation and description
- communication/presentation of findings in a variety of ways to the group or a wider audience
- tasks which develop knowledge, skills and understanding;
- activities should be balanced between activities which are short in duration and those which have scope for development over an extended period;
- activities should, where appropriate, use students' own interests or questions;
- activities should, where appropriate, involve both independent and co-operative work;
- activities should encourage students to become confident in the use of a range of media and equipment;
- activities should encourage students to become confident in the use of a range of materials available through ICT.

4.5 PLANNING FOR HISTORY EXPERIENCES

The planning of History is guided by, but not limited to, the National Curriculum Framework for History.

Planning for History will take a variety of forms for which personalised learning episodes and units of work will include:

- Individual work
- Group Work
- Classroom based learning
- Extended learning in the wider community

4.5.1 Learning Outside the Classroom

SES supports and endorses the Learning Outside the Classroom initiative as its principles and philosophy match the SES Vision Statement. We believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

The use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning often provide the most memorable learning experiences and help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They stay with us into adulthood and affect our behaviour, lifestyle and work. They influence our values and the decisions we make. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside to the classroom and vice versa.

Students can benefit from well-organised visits, community activities and getting involved in wider learning projects (such as helping to organise information, reviewing policies and providing peer support). As students progress, work placements and visits help shape their decisions about future opportunities.

All children and young people have the opportunity to participate in both focused field trips and extended residential weeks, throughout a range of local and national locations. In addition to the social and personal benefits, these offer real life historical knowledge and experience which can be developed in context.

4.6 PRESENTATION OF WORK

At SES we believe presentation of work is vital aspect of creating a positive and stimulating environment and in enhancing student motivation and self-esteem. Presentation of work can take a wide variety of forms ranging from:

- Written format
- Recording (oral and photographic)
- Displays
- Through use of computing and digital media
- Through witness statements created pupils and adults

Adults at SES, are expected to make a professional judgement with regards to each individual pupil's aptitude and ability in terms of facilitating presentation of work. We seek to continually implement our 'No Limits' thinking in the way we facilitate presentation of work ensuring feedback is given to support young people's continual progress in this area.

4.7 HISTORY AS AN ACCREDITED SUBJECT

Accreditation in History is available for individual students through either GCSE or Entry Level, depending on ability and interest. Due to our personalised approach to learning, chronological age is not seen as a barrier to accreditation opportunities.

4.8 PROGRESSION IN HISTORY

Progression includes:

- a steady acquisition of new skills, knowledge and understanding
- moving from familiar to unfamiliar contexts
- meeting needs which demand more complex or difficult solutions
- students' awareness of their growing capabilities in history be it knowledge or skills
- consolidation of skills in a range of contexts

Students should develop and consolidate the following:

- a gradual extension of content, increasing complexity, greater awareness and understanding
- a progression from the use of more generalised historical knowledge to the application of abstract ideas
- opportunities to apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of relevant contexts.
- an appreciation of artefacts/texts and sources which are familiar and unfamiliar and which increase in complexity as abilities develop.
- use of information technology in open and closed research work.

4.8.1 Continuity

In order to build on the experiences of every child at our establishments there is continuity in the framework of the History NC programme of study, with students expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified for each key stage. The latest National Curriculum has significantly reduced the prescribed content, and due to the personalisation of learning at SES, progress and outcomes are not determined by academic year of age. Decisions about where students are taught on the framework relates to their starting points, maturity, capability and personal interests.

At SES, across both SES establishments, we are continually evolving a 'fit for purpose' assessment framework to support staff in planning for progress, and to ensure an effective, consistent and quantifiable measure of student progress.

4.9 DIFFERENTIATION

Students at Avocet House will clearly differ in ability and teaching should take account of this by providing a range of learning situations and approaches. In addition the philosophy of Avocet House is such that personalised learning is a cornerstone.

Differentiation is a process not a single event. This process involves recognising the variety of individual needs within a group, planning to meet those needs, providing appropriate delivery and evaluating the effectiveness of the activities in order to maximise the achievements of individual students.

History provides wide opportunities for differentiation by:

- Input
- Resource
- Task
- Support
- Outcome
- Response

In planning for our students the following factors should be considered:

- Activities should build on what our students already know and can do
- Our students need immediate and regular encouragement, praise and reward
- The activities should be broad enough to allow scope for development and not prevent more able students from extending their learning
- The work should be pitched at the age, maturity and ability of the group and/or individual
- Tasks should be differentiated according to individual student needs
- Consider the balance between group activities and individual differentiated tasks for specific students

To achieve this, clear attention should be given to the following:

- A range of appropriate equipment
- Using a variety of teaching methods to elicit a particular response
- Organising the group in different ways appropriate to particular objectives
- Setting open-ended tasks so that students can respond at their level
- Issuing different 'challenges' to different students
- Providing extension work for students with greater ability
- Allowing time for individual diagnosis, teaching and feedback.

The method of assessment and reporting should provide feedback, which is appropriate to students of differing abilities. It should aid their future learning by providing knowledge but should also give them support and encouragement. More specifically, the teacher should consider:

- Resources reading levels and ease of use
- Availability of a range of media/software
- Availability of a range of support equipment
- Where ICT is being used, simplified software guides
- Provision of a variety of tasks to cover the main content area
- Take account of time available to support individuals/group
- Other adult/student support
- Student/student support e.g. pairing
- Various ways of praising achievement
- Use of visual prompts to support learning

4.10 ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Assessment is part of an ongoing process that informs future planning and subsequent learning. All assessments should take account of:

- Skills, knowledge and understanding acquired
- The contexts of the activity
- The purpose of the activity

Effective formative and summative assessment:

- is embedded in planning, teaching and learning
- requires a shared understanding of learning objectives and success criteria between teacher and learner
- draws on evidence of learners' achievement and progress from a wide range of contexts within and beyond the classroom
- values information that teachers retain in their heads, as well as concrete evidence produced by learners
- is based on evidence generated in the course of continuous teaching and learning, engagement with learners through observation, discussion, questioning, and review and analysis of work
- helps to shape and refine future teaching and learning, and to personalise the experience of individual learners
- provides the basis for discussions with learners themselves, their parents/carers and with other professionals about their strengths, areas for development and future learning targets
- is the foundation upon which periodic assessment can be based
- recognises and celebrates learners' progress in the light of their previous performance and motivates them to improve further
- promotes independence and self-motivation
- develops the capacity for peer and self-assessment among learners.

Assessment is a continuous process and testing and accreditation are built in at various stages of a students development.

Any system of evaluation and assessment should:

- Identify what has been taught and learnt
- Monitor students progress continually
- Monitor students progress in cross-curricular elements
- Establish students' needs as a basis for further planning and teaching.

Student involvement in the assessment and evaluation process is critical.

Evidence can be gleaned from:

- Observing
- Questioning and listening
- Discussion
- Written work, audio and video tape recording, drawings, charts, etc.
- Specific assessments tied to curriculum materials.

4.10.1 The marking of students work

Teachers' responses to students' work should be positive, encouraging, sympathetic, honest and appropriate. Marking should be completed in a pragmatic way, as appropriate to the needs of the student and whenever possible completed in their presence. Further areas of study can then be negotiated with the student.

- Students should be made aware of the assessment criteria being employed, particularly before tackling new situations and subsequently when marking work
- Students should, as a result of the interaction, be aware of the next steps in their learning
- It is sometimes useful for students to respond to each others work

4.10.2 Record Keeping

Records are kept in the form of long term planning (Curriculum Overview), Medium Term Planning (unit objectives) and short term planning (detailed planning of learning episodes). A record of progress is evident in the on-going feedback (verbal and written) between adult and pupil. Where appropriate an evidence base is collated for an episode of learning this can take various forms e.g.files, exercise books, scrap books, digital media files

4.10.3 Individual Programmes

- The Portfolio of Achievement and Needs of each student will inform the global priority targets to be addressed for the child.
- More detailed educational objectives will be identified by Learning Centre staff and students, and negotiated targets reached.
- Targets set will be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time related.
- Targets will always be compatible with the requirements of the National Curriculum and/or Portfolio of Achievement and Needs

5 SMSC AND BRITISH VALUES IN HISTORY

At SES we believe the development of SMSC and promotion of British values, should be embedded within all areas of teaching and learning across both the school and residential setting. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Spiritual, Moral, Cultural and Social Policy and Practice document and the British Values Policy and Practice document.

5.1 SMSC

At SES we develop SMSC in many aspects of the curriculum through ensuring opportunities for SMSC development are extensive and frequent. These opportunities are reflected in planning documents as well as in outcomes for pupils.

Examples of SMSC development within History are:

Spiritual

- Independent research time, allowing pupils to enquire and expand their knowledge base.
- Pupils are encouraged understand their own place in history and time.
- Pupils are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings when reading writing and communicating.

Moral

- A variety of topics can be explored with historical dilemmas being discussed.
- Tasks are designed to support pupils in questioning and discussing issues such as right and wrong.
- Pupils are encouraged to explore moral and ethical themes within the contexts of their own personal history.

Social

- In History teamwork and cooperation can be promoted through a range of learning activities.
- Pupils are offered the opportunity to develop their argument and debating skills within History.
- Pupils are offered the opportunity to explore real life issues and discuss ideas and themes, which relate to them.
- Independent and self-reliance is promoted through independent research, reading and writing opportunities.

Cultural

- The cultural development of Great Britain and indeed the world, can be approached through the learning of history.
- Speaking and listening within History offers pupils the opportunity to share experiences and learn to appreciate the perspectives of others.

5.2 BRITISH VALUES

Promotion of British values is an integral part of life at SES. We believe that the promotion of such values should be inherent in teaching and learning as well as in the wider community. We fundamentally believe that the promotion of British Values is an essential strategy in preventing radicalisation. This document should therefore be read in conjunction with our Radicalisation Policy and Practice document.

Examples of the promotion of British values within History are:

Rule of Law

- Pupils are offered the opportunity to explore themes relating to rule of the law and supported in considering the importance of rules and laws.
- Whilst studying History rules and expectations regarding respect and attitude are made clear and pupils are supported in following these.

Democracy

- In History, pupils are offered the opportunity to make personal or group decisions and complete voting tasks.
- Importance of listening to all points of view and opinions is activity promoted within History.

Individual Liberty

- Pupils are given the opportunity to develop personalised learning focuses within History and indicate areas of study, which are of interest to them.
- At SES it is a fundamental belief that pupils should be respected and provided with a learning environment in which to express themselves freely, yet respectfully.

Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and those without faith

- Collaborative working is integral to many aspects of History, including producing presentations and speeches developing mutual respect.
- Studying literature offers pupils the opportunity to explore different cultural themes including exploring different faiths and beliefs.