History Overview updated 2025/2026

The History curriculum at The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John has been carefully designed to ensure clear progression in both substantive and disciplinary knowledge from Nursery to Year 6. Through a coherently sequenced curriculum, pupils develop an increasingly secure understanding of chronology, historical concepts and significant events, societies and individuals who have shaped Britain and the wider world. Each unit builds upon prior learning, enabling children to make meaningful connections between periods of history and deepen their understanding over time.

Knowledge is organised and revisited deliberately to support long term retention. Key concepts, including civilisation, monarchy, invasion, settlement, empire, democracy and legacy, are encountered repeatedly throughout the curriculum in increasingly complex contexts. This cumulative approach enables pupils to strengthen existing knowledge, make comparisons across historical periods and develop a more sophisticated understanding of cause and consequence, change and continuity, significance and interpretation.

Disciplinary thinking is woven throughout every unit. Pupils are taught to work as historians by analysing sources, evaluating evidence, considering different viewpoints and constructing informed responses to historical enquiries. As they progress through the school, children move from identifying simple similarities and differences in the past to critically examining the reliability of evidence and reaching reasoned conclusions based on historical sources.

Vocabulary development is a central feature of the curriculum. Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary is explicitly identified, taught and revisited within each unit to ensure pupils can access increasingly complex historical concepts and communicate their understanding with precision. Subject-specific terminology is introduced in meaningful contexts, modelled by adults and embedded through discussion, retrieval activities and written outcomes. This systematic approach supports both historical understanding and wider literacy development.

Retrieval practice, low stakes quizzing and regular opportunities for review are used to strengthen memory and support pupils in knowing more and remembering more. By revisiting previously taught content and making links across units, pupils develop a secure historical schema that enables them to build knowledge progressively throughout their time at the school.

Through this approach, pupils leave The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John with a secure understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world, alongside the disciplinary skills, vocabulary and curiosity required to engage thoughtfully with history beyond the classroom.

Nursery	**Past and Present** My family and friends. Begin to make sense of their own family **People, Culture and Communities** Experiences of celebrations in my home/family/community.	**Past and Present** I remember when… Link to seasonal changes **Past and Present** Passing of time linked to growth of chicks.	**Past and Present** Passing of time linked to growth and planting. **People, Culture and Communities** Experiences of people who help us. Begin to make sense of their own life story and family history – children to find out what jobs the adults in their families do. **Past and Present** I remember when… (memories from Nursery)
Reception	**Let's Explore** Share stories and talk about significant people who lived in the past. People in the past travelled to places that were new and unknown. We can learn about them through stories. **Marvellous machines**	**Long ago** Things change over time, including me, my family, and the world around me. **Ready Steady Grow** Farming happened in the past and still happens today. Farms in the past were different: fewer machines and more manual work.	**On the beach** Holidays and free time have changed over time. People in the past enjoyed different activities and travelled in different ways. **Animal Safari – no history focus.**

	Machines and technology have changed over time. New inventions help people do jobs more easily.		
Year 1	**Childhood** This project teaches children about everyday life and families today, including comparisons with childhood in the 1950s, using artefacts and a range of different sources.	**Bright Lights, Big City - Geography focus**	**School Days** This project teaches children about their own school and locality, both today and in the past. They compare schooling in the Victorian era to their experiences today.
Year 2	**Movers and Shakers** This project teaches children about historically significant people who have had a major impact on the world. They will learn to use timelines, stories and historical sources to find out about the people featured and use historical models to explore their significance.	**Magnificent Monarchs** This project teaches children about the English and British monarchy from AD 871 to the present day. Using timelines, information about royal palaces, portraits and other historical sources, they build up an understanding of the monarchs and then research six of the most significant sovereigns.	**Coastline – Geography focus**
Year 3	**Through the ages** This project teaches children about British prehistory from the Stone Age to the Iron Age, including changes to people and lifestyle caused by ingenuity, invention and technological advancement.	**Rocks, relics and rumbles** **Geography focus**	**Emperors and empires** This project teaches children about the history and structure of ancient Rome and the Roman Empire, including a detailed exploration of the Romanisation of Britain.
Year 4	**Invasion** This project teaches children about life in Britain after the Roman withdrawal. Children will learn about Anglo-Saxon and Viking invasions up to the Norman conquest.	**Misty Mountain, Winding River** **Geography focus**	**Ancient Civilisations** This project teaches children about the history of the ancient civilisation: ancient Egypt Children will learn about the rise, life, achievements and eventual end of Egyptian civilisation.
Year 5	**Dynamic Dynasties** This project teaches children about the history of ancient China, focusing primarily on the Shang Dynasty, and explores the lasting legacy of the first five Chinese dynasties, some of which can still be seen in the world today.	**Sow, grow and farm** **Geography focus**	**Groundbreaking Greeks** This project teaches children about developments and changes over six periods of ancient Greek history, focusing on the city state of Athens in the Classical age, and exploring the lasting legacy of ancient Greece.
Year 6	**Maafa** This project teaches children about Africa past and present, with a particular focus on Benin. It traces the development of the slave trade and explores Britain's role in the transatlantic slave trade, the causes and consequences of the European colonisation of Africa and the worldwide communities that make up the African diaspora.	**Frozen Kingdoms** **Geography focus**	**Britain at War** This project teaches children about the causes, events and consequences of the First and Second World Wars, the influence of new inventions on warfare, how life in Great Britain was affected and the legacy of the wars in the post-war period.