

Year 7

Year 7 History lays the foundations for KS3 in both skills and knowledge and understanding. Fundamental concepts like chronology are initially taught to empower students with the language needed to access histories and feel confident in our subject. This is undertaken as an introductory unit where students are engaged with a Personal Chronology task.

Through this Personal Chronology task, students make detailed, visual timelines of their lives (or the lives of someone they admire). The intentions for students are multi-layered. We hope that this project allows new Year 7 students to express a little of who they are as well and to see that their contribution is a valuable addition to the Blatch Community; we want students to feel like a part of what Blatch represents and to instil a sense of ownership of their new school by sharing their life stories. We hope to encourage bonding with fellow students and staff through this task; teachers also share their own personal timeline to model expectations to students. This notion of a class as a team who share knowledge and understanding is really helpful in our discursive history classrooms.

Sussex and Brighton and Hove unit

Firstly the teaching of pre-1066 British History is compulsory within the curriculum. Beyond this our Sussex and Brighton and Hove unit fulfils a number of objectives for us.

Over the last few years this smaller study of the area has built into a comprehensive unit of study helping to give new Year 7s a sense of place within the broader area and within the city and helping them to locate themselves within a broader British History. Additionally this study of the development of the people and places within Sussex supports students' understanding that they themselves are a product of multiple cultures, touching on contemporary migration issues.

Welcoming students to Sussex and to Brighton and Hove helps students to cement themselves within their local history and offers reassurance to students from out of the area and overseas that all people are embraced by and welcomed into the local culture and community. It is a reminder and a reassurance that the history of Brighton and Sussex has been built on immigration and that all the different groups who have come into the area make us who we are today. Studies of local 'characters' such as Martha Gunn, Sake Dene Mahomet, the Prince Regent and Magnus Volk help to demonstrate the historical diversity of the community which continues today – making Brighton and Hove truly distinctive as an inclusive city.

We also chart the changing cultural and economic identity of the city; it's evolution from quiet fishing village to a thriving city, also enabling students to find their place within its diverse history.

Skills are built continually through Year 7 – building critical thinking and evaluating evidence are built through interpretations work on George IV in assessment work. GCSE skills are embedded and additionally offer a transferable set of skills across a number of GCSE subjects in the form of causation and hypothesis testing questions.

Medieval Realms unit

This unit starts at 1066, the chronological sequence picking up from KS2 where students come to secondary school. From the end of Anglo-Saxon England comes the beginning of modern Britain and this allows us to probe further these 'turning points' in our British History. We explore the transformation of a civilisation, how customs and traditions ended and how this shift fits into our local and broader British history.

The key thematic link working through Year 7 is how power is gained and legitimised and how power is centralised within key turning points. This unit allows for a more developed study of the nature of authority and the nature of legitimate governments – who gives authority – and touches on contemporary concerns about government and leadership.

Neatly, thinking about how our History curriculum fits into a spiral model, this unit lays the groundwork for the KS4 Anglo-Saxon and Norman Conquest unit, enabling us at KS4 to revise, revisit and rebuild knowledge and understanding so GCSE topics are not students' 'first exposure' to a central topic or theme. As always our commitment to 'elevating histories from below' is present within this unit; the lives of ordinary people, women and workers, the peasant revolt and black death are explored to give a fuller picture of and encourage reflection of the period 1066-c1400.