



Handbook & Policies (Parents)

2016-17

Our team this year:

Mr Modica, Mrs Norton, Mrs. Towle

www.stchistory.com

Our Philosophy:

The study of History is vital in your child's education. It enhances many transferable skills that can be used in all other subjects across the curriculum; skills such as reading, writing, communicating their ideas and opinions, arguing, analysing, interpreting, persuading, organising themselves and their ideas, working independently and as part of a team. There will also be opportunities for your child to solve problems and mysteries that have gone unsolved for many years, the hope here is someone can solve the mystery of the Princes in the Tower! – Open challenge from Mr Modica (my life's work).

We also believe it is important to help your child understand our position in the world, how society is set up today and why, the cultural differences in the world and a moral discussion to the key events from history. Learning from the past can inform and contribute to a more inclusive society.

We are passionate about our subject and will work tirelessly to enthuse your child and help them understand and enjoy learning history, this combined with their effort and contributions will lead to great success in history and beyond. Your child will be able to link key events together, argue which are more important and why, analyse a source to find out what it is saying and why it was made as well as understand history in a chronological order. In order to succeed, your child will also need to always discuss both sides of any argument, which again is a key skill. One of the most important outcomes of studying history is the building of confidence. We will do this by encouraging role-play, group discussions and presentations. Again, this can be transferred to the 'real world' in a job interview, or work task.

Ultimately, we want to stimulate your child's curiosity and imagination and so encourage discussion, opinion and team work in our lessons. One of the best bits of our subject is that it's very hard for anyone to say "No, you're wrong!" – As long as we have evidence for our opinion and are confident and brave enough to argue our viewpoint, we can't be wrong!

Think about this... ***"Hitler was a great leader and brought stability and prosperity to Germany"*** – At first glance you might think, "What!!! He was evil and murdered millions of people!" and you would be right, but let your child discuss with you what they will learn and at least be able to appreciate the other side of the story!

Our Aims:

As previously mentioned we aim to enable our students to:

- Develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to reach their potential and beyond in academic success.
- Extend their interest, knowledge and understanding of contrasting societies in Britain, Europe and the world and how this has changed frequently throughout history.
- Extend their interest and enthusiasm for studying history.
- Respect and value similarities and differences in peoples beliefs, attitudes and values around the world (working closely within our Humanities faculty with Geography and RE)
- Develop the historical skills and vocabulary necessary to carry out effective historical enquiry and answer specific questions.
- Formulate appropriate questions, develop research skills and evaluate material to inform opinions.
- Build confidence in presenting ideas (verbally and practically) and challenge other ideas within our classroom environment.
- Work independently by using the Internet, library or each other to clarify or find out for themselves something they are interested in.

Our classrooms will be:

- Open, supportive and collaborative. We adopt an inclusive approach to learning.
- A positive environment where students will be free to offer their opinions and answer questions without worrying.
- Set up to “get it wrong” – By this we mean it is ok to get the answer wrong as we feel this is the best way to move forward and get it right next time, as long as our students are positively contributing to our lessons and having a go.



Our Curriculum:

We have designed a broad Key Stage 3 curriculum that we are sure will enthuse, interest and challenge our year 7 and 8 students. Topics will be in blocks of lessons (usually 6-8) with an overarching enquiry question. Learning will be chronological as we feel this will benefit the students understanding and ability to compare and contrast the key events from early history to today by the end of their studies.

We have a range of key themes that go through all topics that we present as the "Big Picture". These themes are Empire, War, Government, Religion, Protest and Society. We have designed our schemes of work to allow students to assess what has changed and what has stayed the same over time thinking about these themes, for example was War the same in 1914 as it was in 1066, if not, why not?



Key stage 4 (GCSE) students will build on the work from Years 7 & 8 and utilise the key skills learnt. They will follow the Edexcel exam board for the new 9-1 GCSE. We believe the topics studied at KS3 will lend themselves well to the key topics at GCSE.

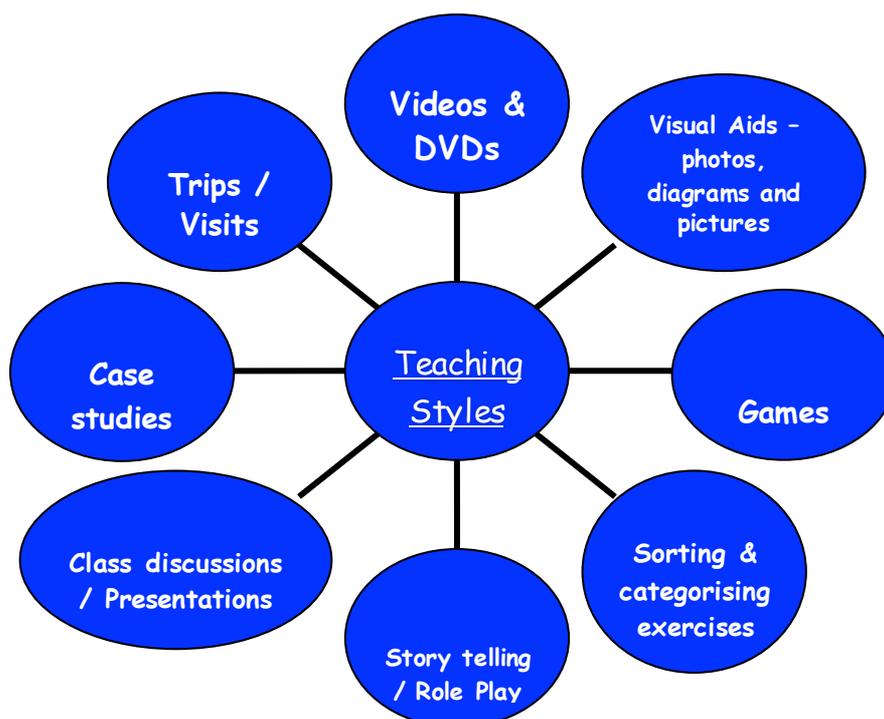
The overview of GCSE topics students will study:

- Medicine Through Time (A Thematic study)
- WW1, Trenches and the impact on medicine & surgery (Environment)
- Elizabethan England 1558-1588
- American expansion in the west / impact on Native American Indians
- Weimar & Nazi Germany 1918-1938

Please see 'COURSES' section of our website for further details.

Differentiation:

We plan to meet the needs of all students in our classes to enable them to fulfill their potential. This is achieved through different teaching styles, strategies, tasks, organisation and resources made available. We also have a team of Teaching Assistants at St. Clement's to support our students with specific needs. Our planning will stretch and challenge ALL students.



Our Resources:

All classrooms have Internet linked laptops and a projector to enable websites, YouTube clips and power points to be presented to students.

We have a wide range of textbooks to support learning within the classroom at Key Stage 3 and 4. We have past exam papers to support exam prep. We also have a range of artefacts ranging from WWI helmets, swords, weapons, and other items to enhance learning in the classroom.

www.stchistory.com will be the first port of call for online resources to support student's learning with key websites and downloadable materials including every lesson for GCSE courses.

We have a large library of books, novels and DVD's to help support learning. We have set up a Twitter account @STCHistory and Facebook at www.facebook.com/stchistory

Assessment:

Our department follows St. Clement's assessment policy leading to 6 assessment reports annually. To provide the data for these reports, all students in KS3 will sit 3 formal assessments in years 7 and year 8. These assessments have been designed to show their knowledge and understanding of recent topics, meet the key skills required to succeed in history and gain valuable experience for sitting external examinations at GCSE. Our assessments are designed to look like a GCSE exam paper where they have specific mark questions to answer within an hour.

The key skills that are embedded into all teaching, learning and assessing in history are:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Written communication
- Change and Continuity
- Significance
- Cause and Consequence
- Evidence
- Interpretation (Through source analysis)

Students will be given ample opportunities to achieve these skills both through formal assessments and class work. Students will also log in their books each time they meet a particular skill with our aim being to master all skills at the highest possible level. **(You can find our skills ladder inside your child's class books or at www.stchistory.com to see what is required for a specific level in each skill).**

As well as these formal assessments, students will be assessed through drama, role-play, presentations and class work throughout the year.

Key Stage 4 and 5:

Students will be regularly assessed in exam classes, generally following each topic to ensure maximum understanding and experience of exam style questions. Where students fail to meet expected standards they will redo the assessment and parents / carers will be informed. This is due to the importance of this practice in preparing our students for the examination season.

Teachers will log marks in their mark books and on our school systems and will monitor performance. We have the highest standards and expectations of all students who study history.

Marking:

Our department follows St. Clement's marking policy. Student's books will be marked frequently with 'next step' advice and guidance. Students should act on feedback given and fix their work.

After each assessment students will 'find and fix' targets from their assessments and fix them on a separate sheet that will go into their assessment books and you will sign.

As well as assessments, class work will frequently be targeted with 'find and fix' tasks, usually extended written work such as diary entries, letters or newspaper articles.

We expect all work undertaken by students to be of the highest standards and work that they would be proud to show off. Good work will be rewarded with achievement points logged on the booklet stuck in the front of all books. Where work falls below our expected standards, positive logging will be replaced with a negative log, which prevents progress towards a full log sheet culminating in various prizes.

We actively encourage you to look at your child's book and comment where applicable. We believe a collaborative approach to your child's learning can only ever be of positive value.

Cross-curricular:

We as a department endeavour to meet our schools cross-curricular expectations in lessons. As a minimum we will utilise the following in our history syllabus'.

- Drama / Role-play
- Presentations
- Art
- ICT
- Languages
- Geography
- Religious Studies
- Citizenship
- Maths
- English

Literacy / Numeracy:

Literacy is an integral element of history and is naturally embedded throughout as we expect students to write, read and communicate verbally and through work. We do aim to enhance their literacy skills explicitly too.

After each assessment students will get a Literacy Target that they need to take on board to improve over the following weeks, as well as this, in all marking, we will follow our academy's literacy pointers.

We have a word bank of key historical vocabulary on our system in the following languages (We will add to this as more words arise):

Polish, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Portuguese.

We will also encourage Numeracy in our lessons; this will be through timelines, working out dates and durations as well as numbers of casualties etc.

Rewards and Sanctions:

Our department follows St. Clement's behavior policy. We have the highest expectations of our historians and will not accept poor performance, behaviour or attitude. We as a team will support and encourage progress and work with all students to solve any barriers to learning as part of that expectation.

Where necessary, detentions will be set again within whole school policy, but also within department as well this will be with Head of Department at break, lunch or afterschool. We are however confident that this will be a last resort and students should feel comfortable enough to approach us with concerns or difficulties that we can then help them with.

Students will be rewarded with certificates, post cards home, ach. points etc for just following our minimum expectations. Of course exceptional work or attitude will be rewarded appropriately. We aim to foster a culture of pride that doesn't solely rely on these rewards but we also recognise that credit where it is due is fair.

Trips & Visits:

We expect to undertake several trips / external learning each year. We really value these experiences both from a subject point of view in gaining knowledge outside the classroom and insights that our students may not get to see otherwise.

We are proud of the amount of visitors we bring to St. Clement's most recently a 9/11 survivor with her unique and fascinating story, as well as the very lovely and brave Illuminee, who survived the Rwandan Genocide.

We are going to Berlin & Auschwitz this year, and will be setting up an annual Battlefields of France trip, which whilst not crucial to GCSE success, will enhance the learning journey in this unit.

We also actively encourage your visiting of historical sites on holidays and will always make time to discuss these experiences with your child in class. This will of course enhance their progress within history.

All trips follow our Academy's policies of health and safety, and financially.



Homework:

We believe homework is vital in supporting the work we do in class and consolidating learning. Homework is not just a 'finish that work' and we have planned that it will always be challenging and engaging. Our homework tasks will range from standalone tasks to projects over a given period of time.

Homework tasks planned this year:

- Year 7: Shields for battle reenactment (More information will be available in the parents section of our site)
- Year 7: Guidebook to Medieval England
- Year 7: Castle / Peasant's house
- Year 8: Time capsule project (independently filled by students)
- Year 8: Build a trench

Other homework tasks (not limited to):

- Revision for assessments
- Essay / Reading task
- Practice examination questions
- Presentations
- Research task
- Diary entries / Newspaper articles

Further information:

Thank you for taking the time to read through our department's handbook, we hope you find it useful for information you might require. If you have any further questions and you can't find it at www.stchistory.com please don't hesitate to contact us and ask (You'll find this in the 'parents' section of our site).

You can also pass a message via your child in their books, planners or letter.

We look very much forward to supporting and guiding your child through their studies and achieving their potential and beyond.

Just a reminder, we also have several methods of support for your child at:

www.stchistory.com (including all GCSE lessons & exam resources to download

www.facebook.com/stchistory

Twitter www.twitter.com/stchistory @STCHistory

Mr Modica
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