

**Herschel Grammar School
Curriculum Overview 2025/26**

History Curriculum Intent

- We attempt to develop historically literate, critically aware young people who understand the complexity of the past and its influence on the present and future. Our curriculum equips students with the knowledge to engage with key historical events, individuals, and ideas across diverse periods and contexts. Through this, they build a coherent understanding of chronology, causation, consequence, and significance—vital tools in interpreting the modern world.
- We aim to foster intellectual curiosity, analytical thinking, and a passion for learning through a challenging and inclusive curriculum. History encourages students to ask perceptive questions, evaluate source material critically, and construct well-informed arguments. These are lifelong skills that promote academic achievement across the curriculum and prepare students for higher education, employment, and active citizenship in a democratic society.
- To promote cultural understanding, empathy, and a strong sense of identity through the study of diverse narratives and contested histories. Our curriculum reflects local, national, and global contexts, helping students appreciate the experiences of others and the complexity of human behaviour. This builds respect, tolerance, and a deeper awareness of the society they live in—crucial for life in modern Britain.

Curriculum Impact

- Students leave our curriculum with strong knowledge of the past and the ability to think clearly and critically about complex issues. They can explain how and why events happened, make thoughtful judgments, and understand different views and interpretations. They communicate their ideas clearly, both in writing and in discussion.
- History helps students build important skills that are valued in many careers and by universities. These include researching, analysing evidence, thinking carefully before drawing conclusions, and forming strong arguments. The subject supports future careers such as law, journalism, teaching, politics, archaeology, and public services. We also help students understand how History links to the wider world of work through careers discussions and enrichment opportunities.
- Studying History develops essential skills for life, including critical thinking, communication, empathy, independence, and resilience. These skills help students succeed in other subjects, grow in confidence, and prepare them to be thoughtful, informed members of society who can engage with the world around them.

Through education, we have the privilege of engaging directly with children and young people who:

- are passionate about the natural world
- want to do their best to protect it
- can influence their wider communities

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Throughout this document, whenever the following icon is used , it indicates that the teaching and learning is linked to one or more of the following:

- nature
- the causes and impacts of climate change
- careers in the green economy
- the importance of sustainability

Year Group Plans

Year group	Year 7
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Rationale for sequencing	In Year 7 we begin by teaching students about the fundamental skills and terminology required for the subject to ensure all students are able to access the content we cover throughout the years of curriculum. We then approach our yr7 curriculum in a chronological manner to ensure understanding of the sequences of History are showcased with a specific focus on events in Britain highlighting how our modern society was first shaped. There is also a circular structure to our curriculum as the first topic is also our final topic at the end of yr11.
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Term 1	
Half term 1a	Half term 1b
What is History? Key skills. Development of Church, state and society in medieval Britain. 1066-1509. Why did William win the battle of Hastings?  How the Harrying of the North damaged the landscape and affected the environment?	What did the Normans do for us? Study of Medieval society. Feudalism, Castles, Law and order. Did rats and rebels change people's lives completely? Black Death and the Peasants' revolt.  How did the Black Death impact on farmers and the environment?
Term 2	
Half term 2a	Half term 2b
Who is in charge in Medieval times, the King or the Church? Look at the importance of the church. Murder of Thomas Becket. King John and the	Development of church state and society 1509-1745. What was it like to live in this time? Look at range of topics such as theatre, art, science, superstition. Chance for some independent learning. The church or the monarchs; who is in charge? The reformation and the Tudors.

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Magna Carta.	
Term 3	
Half term 3a	Half Term 3b
Can a girl be a good leader? Study of Elizabeth 1. Why did Charles 1 lose his head? Causes of the Civil war. Brief look at life in the Republic and the Restoration.	Ideas, political power, industry and empire. Britain, 1745-1901. Why did Monarchs want to rule more than one country? Brief look at Empire and India.  Local history study - Windsor Castle as our site for looking at changes over time in this period and how the development of Empire impacted on the environment through trade and famine.

Assessment Plans:	
Term 1	Assessment T1 Why did William win the battle of Hastings? (essay) Sept/Oct. Assessment T2 Interpretations of the Black Death or Peasants' revolt. Nov
Term 2	Assessment T3 Knowledge test.
Term 3	Assessment T4 Yr.7 Exam.
	Assessment T5 Essay on Elizabeth 1.

Year group	8
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Rationale for sequencing	Once again we follow a chronological base to our curriculum. Students learn about how our country was developed as part of the industrial revolution. We also examine the British Empire which is required in the curriculum and teach the Transatlantic slave trade and its importance even today in our modern society. We finish by thinking about how our society became more representative through the vote.
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Term 1	
Half term	Half term
Why did Britain become industrialised? How did lives change?	Despite the horrors of the slave trade, why did it remain so popular for so long?

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 How did the Industrial revolution cause pollution and damage the environment?	 How did the Triangular slave trade damage the economy? (Look at increased trade using ships and damage to indigenous regions).
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
Despite the horrors of the slave trade, why did it remain so popular for so long? Ideas, political power, industry and empire. Britain 1745-1901.	Did ordinary people change Britain? Popular protest movements, the vote, working conditions, public health.
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
How did a small island come to control one third of the world? Look at the expansion of the British Empire in this period.  How did the success of the British empire inadvertently cause an increase in pollution and damage as it modernised and industrialised many countries?.	At least one study of a significant society or issue in world history and its interconnections with other world developments. Mughal India 1526-1857. Pick up from the work in yr 7 with particular emphasis on the Victorians in India.  Impact on nature within India.

Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1	Assessment T1 What caused Britain to become an industrial nation? (causation essay) Interpretations on slavery.
Term 2	Assessment T3 Knowledge test. T4 Exam.
Term 3	Migration essay.

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Year group	9
Rationale for sequencing	Once again we approach History through a chronological lens. Students should now be able to use historical skills and terms in an independent way. Students should now have the maturity to deal with more challenging topics like the Holocaust. While studying 20 th Century world events, students can link them to contemporary events.
Term 1	
Half term	Half term
Why did WW1 start? What was it like to be a soldier in WW1? Treaty of Versailles and the rise of the Dictators.  How did WW1 destroy the landscape and link to climate change?	Why did Hitler come to power in Germany? Life under the Nazis including the Holocaust.
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
How close did Britain come to losing the Second World War? Look at key personalities and events. Dunkirk, Battle of Britain, The Blitz, D-day and Hiroshima. What was it like on the Home Front in WW2?  Impact on nature due to bombing campaigns	Britain and WW2 Continued.
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
What was the Cold War? An overview of some of the key events of the Cold War.	What was the Cold War? An overview of some of the key events of the Cold War. With a specific focus on the Korean War.  Impact on sustainability and how it links to climate change today
Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1	Why did WW1 start? Interpretations on the Nazis.
Term 2	Knowledge test. Exam.
Term 3	Causation essay.

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Year group	10
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Rationale for sequencing	Students begin their AQA GCSE paper one topics. We look at Conflict in Asia 1950-1975 and then Russia 1894-1945. Students will develop their skills through the course building upon skills already progressing after their KS3 education.
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Term 1	
Half term	Half term
Conflict in Asia 1950-1975.	Conflict in Asia 1950-1975.  Bombing campaigns on Laos and Cambodia and the impact of chemical warfare on nature (Link to it being classed a war crime today)
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
Conflict in Asia 1950-1975. Russia 1894-1945	Russia 1894-1945
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
Russia 1894-1945	Russia 1894-1945  Impact WW2 had on the Russian landscape with factors like the scorched earth policy.

Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1	GCSE questions on Conflict in Asia 1950-1975.
Term 2	Year 10 exam.
Term 3	GCSE questions on Russia 1894-1945.

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Year group	11
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Rationale for sequencing	Students study the GCSE Paper Two topics of Migration and Norman England. To continue to practise their historical skills, in line with the demands of the GCSE questions.
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Term 1	
Half term	Half term
Migration	Migration
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
Migration  Looking at how the EEC and EU were formed and how they've impacted climate change. Links to careers in the civil servants sector where students could have a direct impact on these issues in the future	Normans
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
Normans	Revision

Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1	GCSE questions on Migration and mock exams.
Term 2	GCSE questions on the Normans.
Term 3	GCSE questions on any of the topics.

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Year group	12
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Rationale for sequencing	British and German History are taught in parallel by subject specialists. Sequencing is chronological to help students best understand historical developments. The German course focuses on understanding the breadth of historical developments whilst the British course is an in-depth study of a shorter period. The NEA covers Russia, builds on foundation at GCSE. Our focus on the 20th century helps pupils to understand the issues facing British and European politics and society today.
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Term 1	
Half term	Half term
German History Context – unification 1871 Bismarck’s Germany 1871-1890	German History Wilhelmine Germany - 1890-1914
British History -1951-1964 Years of Conservative Government.	British History- 1951-64 Years of Conservative Government.
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
German History From the First World War to the German Revolution	German History The Weimar Republic –1919-1923
British History- Labour governments 1964-1970	British History- Labour governments 1964-1970
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
German History The Weimar Republic - 1923-29	German History The Nazi era – 1933-45
British History- 1970s	British History-1970s.

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	Start of background reading for NEA.
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Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1a	Germany – Section B – Bismarck’s political authority Britain - Suez Crisis sources
Term 1b	Germany – Section A – Political developments 1871-1890 Britain – essay on Conservative governments.
Term 2a	Germany – Section B - Power-centres in Wilhelmine Germany Britain – Sources on 1964 general election.
Term 2b	Germany – Section A – Early years of Weimar Britain - essay on Wilson’s government.
Term 3a	Year 12 Exam
Term 3b	Germany – Section B – Weimar Germany extent of political stability Britain - sources on the Northern Island Conflict.

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Year group	13
Rationale for sequencing	As for Year 12
Term 1	
Half term	Half term
German History - The Nazi era – 1933-1945 - Defeat and Division – 1945-49 British History- Thatcher's government 1979-1990. NEA, one lesson per week.	German History the Federal Republic of Germany 1949-91 – government/ opposition British History – Thatcher’s government 1979 –1990. NEA, one lesson per week.
Term 2	
Half term	Half term
German History the Federal Republic of Germany 1949-91 – government/ opposition British History- John Major’s government. NEA, one lesson per week.	German History the Federal Republic of Germany 1949-91 – economy/ society British History – Blair's government. NEA, one lesson per week.
Term 3	
Half term	Half Term
German History - The process of reunification – 1990-91 - Review/ revision British History	N/A

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Blair's government and completion of NEA.	
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Key Assessment Plans:	
Term 1a	Germany – Section B – the military and the establishment of authoritarianism. Britain - essay on Thatcher.
Term 1b	Germany – Section A – responsibility for division 1949 Britain – sources on Thatcher.
Term 2a	Germany – Section B – restoration of political authority Britain – essay on John Major's government.
Term 2b	Year 13 Mock Exam
Term 3a	Germany – Section A – Nazi legacy • Section B – Protest by young people 1960s/70s Completion of NEA.