

## Summary of Main Findings

### Part 1: Discussion with Subject Leader (Assistant Head/Curriculum Lead)

- Leaders have started with the national curriculum and planned a secure journey in long term plans which have been 'fleshed out' in medium term plans. This journey is based on a clear incremental building up of skills and knowledge, with a strong element of experiential learning to help commit knowledge to long term memory.
- For every subject at Kirkby Woodhouse, plans start with the 'BE Excellence' model: PROVIDE-ENHANCE-ENRICH-BE.
- The school's cultural capital programme supports pupils' learning in history; for example, the residential visit to York in Year 4.
- From Year 3 onwards, learning is almost entirely chronological to support pupils' understanding.
- Timelines are used in classrooms to contextualise each unit of study within the specific period of history, but the use of timelines with a longer span (e.g. 2000 years +) is not entirely consistent – this is being addressed.
- End of unit quizzes help inform the assessment process. Beginning this year, the subject leader moderates teacher assessment through work scrutiny activities and pupil interviews. Internal data for the current academic year is being collated this week.
- Teachers are not working to a strict timetable allocation of hours for history – they have the freedom to cover their objectives in the way they see fit. The subject leader monitors work and uses pupil interviews to ensure that teachers are not giving the pupils less history than required in order to retain their knowledge and build their skills.
- The subject leader is currently collating an exemplar document to support secure teacher assessment judgements in history. As part of the quality assurance of provision, the subject leader has also enjoyed opportunities to conduct lesson observations in partnership with the headteacher.
- Based on pupil interviews, the subject leader believes that SEND and PP enjoy history. Data will be analysed to see how these pupils are achieving in comparison to their non-SEN and non-PP peers.
- Embedding vocabulary is considered a relative weakness, as is primary source work. Both of these areas are addressed in improvement plans for history.
- In terms of strengths, the subject leader believes that the amount and quality of work in history has improved significantly in the last 3 years, since the curriculum was refocussed on teaching core knowledge well. Another strength is seen as the opportunities pupils have to learn beyond the classroom.
- Lines of accountability between subject leader and headteacher are very clear.
- In terms of accountability to governors, the subject leader is meeting with the curriculum lead governor next week to discuss the curriculum SEF

- To help ensure effective delivery of the history curriculum, the subject leader provides inputs in staff meeting, leads pupil discussions and carries out book looks.
- Resourcing is considered adequate, although this could always be enhanced – budgeting is an issue.
- Detailed curriculum plans are on the website along with a high quality video with pupils sharing their enthusiasm for history.

## Part 2: Discussion with Pupils

- The majority expressed were positive about history: 18/24 do enjoy history; 6/24 don't.
  - "I don't enjoy, history because sometimes it's hard and I can't figure it out."
  - "I do enjoy it because I've learnt loads of stuff."
  - "It's interesting because you learn about stuff that happened before you were born."
  - "My great-grandad was in the War and one of my family members was Howard Carter! I like learning about the past because of the link with my family history."
  - "I like it because of the way the trips connect with history."
  - "I enjoy it because we learn about Ancient Egypt."
  - "I enjoy finding out about stuff we don't know about."
- When asked, "Are you getting better in history ... and how do you know?" pupils' responses were positive, but only a minority offered answers:
  - "I'm getting better because I'm learning about lots of periods in time and remembering it."
  - "We learn about things which we build on in secondary school."
  - "I know I'm getting better because I answer more questions in lessons."
  - "Our class knows a bit about the Romans and I'm remembering what I'm learning."
- When asked what makes a really good history lesson, responses included the following:
  - "When the teacher goes into more details."
  - "When the teacher doesn't just give you loads of information."
  - "When you're learning new things instead of the same things."
  - "When you're doing something that people enjoy. The topic is important."
  - "When you get better."
  - "When people give us loads of information."
  - "When we focus on it and then do a big writing."
  - "When you get to go on a trip or a residential."
  - "When you get to touch things at places like museums."
  - "When you get involved with your learning."
  - "When you get to watch videos and do quizzes."

I specifically asked if pupils could remember drama/role play ever being part of a history lesson and only 6 pupils could recall that happening.

When asked whether they preferred working alone, with a partner or in a group in history lessons, their voting reflected the way that pupils consistently vote on this question in every school where I've asked the question:

1<sup>st</sup>) Partner – 14 votes

2<sup>nd</sup>) Solo – 11 votes

3<sup>rd</sup>) Group – 3 votes

### Part 3: Work Scrutiny

- Regarding coverage, there is evidence in Curriculum exercise books that the history curriculum is being delivered.
- In terms of 'knowing more and remembering more' as pupils' progress through school, there is clear evidence of raised expectations/attainment. The subject leader explained that more substantial written pieces of work in history would be found in pupils' English books.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst a full 'deep dive' would be required to arrive at a history judgement in terms of Quality of Education, this curriculum review suggests that history provision at Kirkby Woodhouse would support the overall self-evaluation grade of 'good'.

### **Recommendations:**

- Good to outstanding?  
In a history dive or review, my recommendations would often address areas such as assessment and the role of the subject leader. At Kirkby Woodhouse, these areas are already being addressed. With so much good and well-organised provision either in place or scheduled for the immediate future, my only recommendation focuses on the challenge of taking a subject from good to outstanding. As discussed, this is a challenge that can only be met if staff training can focus on what it means to teach outstanding history lessons. I would recommend a session where staff are being trained like inspectors to evaluate a recorded history lesson (e.g. this interesting Year 7 lesson from Teachers' TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSqlUpKI9Ls>) followed by a demo history lesson being taught to a class of volunteer pupils after school and observed by all teaching colleagues. In my experience, these have proved very effective ways of helping all teachers aspire to outstanding teaching in a given subject.