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## Inspector guidance: primary history

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### The purpose of this document

This document has been created for training and supporting inspectors to conduct subject deep dives in schools. The training guidance provides a structure to explain variation in subject-level impact. It should be used in conjunction with handbooks for section 5, section 8 inspections of good and outstanding schools, and section 8 no formal designation (subject-specific) inspections.

### **Points to consider when examining the evidence:**

School leaders may not be able, and should not be expected, to articulate their intent **as it is outlined** in this document or to provide documents which neatly provide the evidence for these focus areas.

Inspectors should always investigate claims that issues affecting quality of subject education are outside the school's control. It should be evident that the issue has been identified prior to the inspection and that the school has taken steps to mitigate the ill effects. For example, in the case of text books or materials downloaded from websites, it should be clear that leaders have previously identified the issue and raised it with senior leadership, investigated funding, identified texts they would prefer, identified the specific weaknesses of the current text and taken specific action to mitigate against those weaknesses.

### The six focus areas

The six focus areas below provide a structure to explain reasons for the quality of subject education as identified by inspection activities. Inspection activities are likely to be an iterative process as inspectors consider evidence of impact and evidence which explains that impact. Under each focus area are three columns.

**Column 1:** This provides examples of useful questions inspectors might ask of people or evidence to explain reasons for the quality of subject education. This is **not** a comprehensive list of questions which may be asked. Inspectors should use their own judgement but will find these suggestions useful.

**Column 2:** This is an outline of potentially stronger practice in the area each question explores.

**Column 3:** This is an outline of weaker practice in the area each question explores. It also provides likely responses and other evidence inspectors may hear or encounter and gives explicit guidance on how these responses can be interpreted.

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**Inspectors are likely to use the following sources of evidence in making their judgements:**

**They will generally use:**

- interviews with subject lead (if there is one) and/or the appropriate senior leader
- curriculum plans
- pupils' work
- discussions with pupils
- interviews with teachers
- lesson visits, including conversation with teachers, if possible.

**Where appropriate, inspectors may use:**

- the school's own records of lesson visits in the subject
- the resources available for teaching history (incl. school library, ICT facilities)
- the school's assessment policy
- assessment instruments, including mark schemes if there are any (not internal data)
- how the school provides pupils with feedback on their work
- how the school promotes the value of the subject including via enrichment activities
- forms of support for inexperienced, non-specialist or struggling staff
- any support provided for the subject lead
- performance management's role in improving history provision
- details of the timetable and staffing (including details of experience and qualifications of staff)
- school policies on teaching, assessment, homework, behaviour
- documents analysing strengths and weaknesses of the subject and any associated improvement plans.

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## 1. The school's understanding of progress in history and how that informs its approach to the curriculum

<b>Focused questions to ask the evidence</b>	<b>Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b>	<b>Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b>
<p>1) Does the school give meaningful attention to all <b>categories of knowledge</b> in which progress is made in history?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>When you think about pupils getting 'better' at history, what does that mean for your school?</p> <p>What kinds of things are pupils expected to learn and remember over time?</p>	<p>NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for</p> <p><b>Pupils make progress in history by knowing and remembering more history content</b> as set out in schemes of work or equivalent documents. Pupils need to develop their <i>substantive</i> knowledge of the past, and their knowledge of history as a <i>discipline</i>.</p> <p><b><u>Substantive knowledge of the past: people, events, ideas.</u></b></p> <p>In history, <i>substantive</i> knowledge refers specifically to knowledge of the past: people, events, ideas, and so on. This includes:</p> <p><b>i) Topic knowledge</b></p> <p>For pupils to engage meaningfully with the past, they need a rich knowledge of the period/place/society they are studying.</p> <p><b>ii) Chronological knowledge</b></p> <p>Pupils need a secure overview of major developments and periods to contextualise new knowledge. In KS2 they should be learning secure narrative across and within periods.</p> <p><b>iii) Knowledge of substantive concepts</b></p>	<p>NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for</p> <p><b>The curriculum does not pay meaningful attention to all aspects of progression.</b></p> <p>Even if all the categories and areas of knowledge emphasised in the NC are mentioned in school planning, there may not be adequate attention paid to developing secure pupil knowledge in any of these areas across the curriculum. It is worthwhile to ask <i>what</i> pupils learn about each aspect, rather than <i>whether</i> they learn about each.</p> <p><b>The school primarily considers progress in terms of history 'skills'</b></p> <p>It is problematic to think of second order (historical) concepts such as 'causation', 'significance' and 'change' as skills that are the primary form of progression in history. These are history-specific ways in which pupils can think and debate historical content. Pupils get better by knowing and remembering more history content and more about the ways that historians analyse the past.</p> <p>It is also problematic if schools undervalue the importance of substantive knowledge.</p> <p><b>"We prioritise both knowledge and skills."</b></p>

	<p>These are concepts such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.</p> <p>Unlike history 'skills', important substantive concepts in History are readily transferable to new contexts and greatly aid pupils in developing new historical knowledge.</p> <p><b><u>Knowledge of history as a discipline</u></b></p> <p><i>Disciplinary</i> knowledge refers to knowledge of history as a discipline: how do historians construct knowledge about the past?</p> <p>At KS2 pupils need to know how historians analyse the past using concepts such as causation, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and historical significance.</p> <p>They need to know how historians use sources of evidence to construct knowledge about the past.</p> <p><b><u>Early years and KS1:</u></b></p> <p>In early years, pupils can begin to build early schema which relate to the categories above e.g. chronological concepts such as 'the past' or substantive concepts such as 'king'.</p> <p>In KS1, pupils will study specific events from the past and therefore will be able to build a greater range and sophistication of schemata relating to the categories above.</p> <p>However, it is quite appropriate for pupils not to engage with disciplinary knowledge in these stages as teachers focus on building their substantive knowledge.</p>	<p>This indicates that the school is not aware that knowledge and skills are linked. What are considered 'skills' draw on relevant knowledge.</p> <p><b>Answers focus on generic skills, such as critical thinking.</b></p> <p>Learning about the past in a rigorous way is important for pupils beyond the history classroom, but schools should not consider the primary purpose of their curriculum as developing 'thinking skills', or generic competencies such as 'understanding the media'.</p> <p><b>We want to teach pupils to 'think like historians'.</b></p> <p>Check that 'thinking like a historian' encapsulates the range of disciplinary knowledge below (Q3), and not vague processes like 'writing essays' or 'analysing sources' or teaching processes (like essay structures or source skills) which are applied in generic ways without reference to the specific historical context being studied.</p> <p><b>Leaders find it hard to answer this question coherently.</b></p>
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<p>2 a) Scope and components: Does the school's rationale for content selection ensure a wide ranging and expanding <b>substantive knowledge</b> of the past?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What knowledge do you want pupils to learn through this topic?</p> <p>What content is emphasised in this topic? Why?</p>	<p><b>For pupils to progress, they must have knowledge of the complex features of past events and societies. School's rationale for content selection might include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The effectiveness of a topic for building knowledge to support later learning (such as important substantive concepts)</li> <li>ii) The importance of a topic for securing chronological understanding</li> <li>iii) The importance of a topic for ensuring adequate scope across the curriculum</li> </ul> <p><b>Within topics, pupils develop rich and secure knowledge.</b></p> <p>For pupils to progress, they must have knowledge of the complex features of past events and societies. Pupils must know enough about the period under study to make sense of new knowledge.</p> <p>Teaching must make effective use of secure prior knowledge to allow pupils to learn about new periods, events and societies.</p> <p>To make historical judgments, pupils must have sufficient knowledge to draw valid conclusions.</p> <p><b>Within topics, the school identify the most significant aspects of the history content chosen.</b></p> <p>E.g. teachers understand that teaching the pupils about Baghdad also allows the pupils to develop knowledge of important concepts like 'city' and 'trade'.</p>	<p><b>The school largely choose content because it is seen as engaging or relevant.</b></p> <p>This is not a good basis for designing a history curriculum which needs to provide coherence in terms of concepts, contexts and chronology. It should be 'cumulatively sufficient' in e.g. its coverage of 'the history of Britain' and 'the wider world'.</p> <p><b>The school focus on teaching transferable skills such as critical thinking through the content.</b></p> <p>Such an answer could suggest a lack of confidence in the value of history as a discipline – hence attempts to justify it in terms of things outside the discipline (e.g. apparent transferrable skills).</p> <p><b>Topics are chosen because they fit a particular 'theme'.</b></p> <p>There can be huge value in getting pupils to explore developments within one thematic area (such as 'invaders and settlers') over time. However, this can also narrow the curriculum e.g. in one year pupils focus on invaders which means that topics in this year are overwhelmingly focused on political or military history or on British history without wider context. This may mean that opportunities to build other important knowledge are missed (e.g. social and cultural changes).</p> <p><b>The emphasis within topics does not have a clear rationale.</b></p> <p>The content which teachers emphasise is not focused on important features of past societies or important knowledge for future learning. E.g. when studying the</p>
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	<p>E.g. in the Anglo-Saxons, pupils develop knowledge of concepts like 'king' and 'invasion' and secure their knowledge of the period.</p> <p>Teaching goes beyond superficial coverage of these topics to ensure pupils build deeper knowledge about the past.</p>	<p>Mayans, pupils focus on learning about chocolate and practising number, but they do not learn about Mayan society or important concepts like 'empire' and 'warfare'.</p> <p><b>The content within topics lacks ambition or depth.</b></p> <p>Pupils may only learn about superficial aspects of the past (e.g. what people wore in Anglo-Saxon England) without progressing to complex features of societies or complex events.</p>
<p>2 b) Scope and components: Does the school ensure wide-ranging and expanding <b>substantive knowledge</b> of past events, people and societies in British and wider world history?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>Where does your curriculum cover X (e.g. the Roman Empire)?</p> <p>In what sort of depth does your curriculum cover X?</p>	<p><b>The curriculum matches the scope and ambition of the National Curriculum.</b></p> <p>The EYFS framework requires that pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class</li> <li>▪ Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling</li> </ul> <p>At KS1, the NC requires that pupils are taught about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes within living memory</li> <li>▪ Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally</li> <li>▪ The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods</li> </ul>	<p><b>The curriculum does not have the scope or ambition of the National Curriculum.</b></p> <p>There is not enough attention paid to pupils developing a rich knowledge of each of these periods. E.g. pupils 'did one afternoon where we did cave paintings to study the stone age'.</p> <p><b>Pupil knowledge at KS2 does not cohere into secure narratives.</b></p> <p>Pupils may have knowledge of different episodes in history but lack a sense of long-term developments or the chronological sequence of events studied.</p> <p><b>The curriculum does not balance overview and depth effectively.</b></p> <p>E.g. pupils mostly study history through a series of thematic 'overviews' such as 'the history of protest', but are not able to study events or societies in depth.</p> <p><b>The teaching of history within a 'topic' fails to address subject-specific content or goals, or leads to misconceptions.</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.</li> </ul> <p>At KS2, pupils must learn about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age</li> <li>▪ The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain</li> <li>▪ Britain’s settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots</li> <li>▪ The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor</li> <li>▪ A local history study</li> <li>▪ A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils’ chronological knowledge beyond 1066</li> <li>▪ The achievements of the earliest civilisations – an overview of where and when the first civilisations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer; The Indus Valley; Ancient Egypt; The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China</li> <li>▪ Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world</li> <li>▪ A non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300.</li> </ul>	<p>The ‘topic’ approach is widespread in English primary schools and while Ofsted do not hold a view on how a school should organise their curriculum, schools should be considering how they deliver effective subject teaching within a topic structure and how to ensure pupils know enough about each of the aspects of the National Curriculum for history.</p> <p>Check the coverage of history-specific content is adequate (see Q2a). E.g. a school does a topic on ‘the Egyptians’ but because of a focus on numeracy and geography, pupils do not learn about the historical context in sufficient depth.</p> <p>Check that tasks or approaches do not lead to misconceptions. E.g. a literacy task in the ‘Egyptians’ topic encourages anachronism (such as writing a newspaper report) or teaching leaves pupils with no sense of chronology.</p>
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	<p><b>The curriculum exceeds the scope and ambition of the National Curriculum.</b></p> <p>This might be through the coverage of additional areas, or through greater depth in a number of areas. E.g. a school enhances pupils' overview knowledge by studying parallel developments in European, East Asian and South American societies up to 1066, and pupils study a range of wider world societies in depth.</p>	
<p>2 c) Scope and components: Does the school ensure wide-ranging and expanding <b>chronological knowledge</b>?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How do you secure pupils' chronological knowledge across the curriculum?</p> <p>What do pupils know about the broad chronology of the periods they have studied?</p>	<p><b>Chronological knowledge is taught well and pupils build secure chronological frameworks.</b></p> <p>Pupils with a secure chronological framework are better able to navigate the past, contextualise and remember information about specific events. Chronological frameworks facilitate secure future knowledge in diverse fields. The school may have planned specifically for pupils to build and remember broad chronological frameworks or to have a 'timeline' in their heads.</p> <p>They may help pupils to secure key 'chronological markers' to help pupils to navigate the past. These might be broad periods such as 'the ancient world', or specific events such as the first Greek Olympics, as both can be used to help pupils place other new knowledge in time.</p> <p>They may also explicitly look to build a 'sense of period'. This is hard to define but involves pupils having a rich sense of what a past society/period was like, which supports pupils in learning about complex events in these societies/periods.</p> <p>The National Curriculum requires that pupils at KS2 secure clear narratives within and across periods</p>	<p><b>Inadequate attention is paid to chronology or pupils are 'chronologically lost'.</b></p> <p>Pupils may lack secure chronological knowledge or be unable to place knowledge about previous topics in historical time.</p> <p>They may make anachronistic judgments or inappropriate assumptions about the past. Pupils may lack an adequate 'sense of period' which means they are unable to grasp the meaning or significance of new information.</p> <p>E.g. a pupil responds to a question that it would be easy for Romans to conquer Britain because there weren't many people and they lived in caves.</p> <p><b>Pupil knowledge does not cohere into broader narratives about the past.</b></p> <p>E.g. pupils who have studied Ancient Greece and Anglo-Saxon invasions of Britain cannot place these topics in time, or identify broad differences between these periods.</p> <p><b>Chronology is taught as a 'skill'.</b></p>

	<p>studied. Pupils should be able to place periods they have studied in time and should know some broad developments across periods.</p>	<p>Secure chronological frameworks are the product of secure knowledge built up over time. Pupils can only 'get better' at chronology when they know more about the past and their knowledge is secure and well organised.</p>
<p>2 d) Components/ sequencing: Does planning consider component content and its sequencing to build knowledge over time and create 'readiness for future learning' (especially <b>substantive concepts</b>)?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How does your curriculum help pupils to build their knowledge of key substantive concepts?</p> <p>(NB: inspectors may need to exemplify for leaders – 'concepts such as 'empire' or 'king')</p> <p>What key concepts does topic X allow you to teach pupils?</p> <p>What key concepts do pupils need knowledge of in</p>	<p><b>Important substantive concepts are identified, and pupils build their knowledge of these over time.</b></p> <p>These are concepts such as 'king', 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.</p> <p>E.g. the study of Ancient Greeks, Persians and Egyptians is designed to result in secure usage of substantive terms such as 'empire', 'alliance', 'tradition', 'trade', 'tax', 'warfare', 'culture'. These are emphasised by the school because of their importance for future learning.</p> <p>Pupils need to build the range, security and sophistication of their schemata for these concepts over time.</p> <p>E.g. a school ensures that pupils begin to build their knowledge of terms like 'king' through stories in Reception.</p> <p>When they encounter these concepts in new contexts, pupils are supported to develop their knowledge. E.g. in Year 3 pupils encounter 'king' again and begin to build up a picture of the politics of kingship. And in Year 5, pupils are able to draw on a complex concept of 'king' to make sense of a complex narrative about Anglo-Saxon kings.</p>	<p><b>Pupils lack secure knowledge of important concepts.</b></p> <p>E.g. when teaching the Christian conversion of England, teachers would need to identify if pupils have knowledge of concepts necessary to understand the process – such as: the papacy, Christendom, conversion, paganism etc. If not their grasp of events will be confused and partial.</p> <p><b>School plans do not include careful consideration of the need to reinforce key concepts over time.</b></p> <p>School responses may be post hoc rather than evident when the curriculum was written. Subject leaders should be able to come up with examples of how their curriculum facilitates reinforcement of prior learning, when put on the spot, but further investigation will reveal the quality and depth of the curricular planning.</p> <p><b>The order of content teaching is not based upon ensuring the most coherent acquisition of knowledge.</b></p> <p>The order of teaching should primarily be based upon ensuring the most <i>coherent</i> acquisition of knowledge.</p> <p>For example, if pupils are taught about the Anglo-Saxon invasions before they are taught about the Roman Conquest of Britain, this might mean pupils do</p>

<p>order to make sense of new content in topic X?</p>	<p><b>The order of teaching should primarily be based upon ensuring the most <i>coherent</i> acquisition of knowledge.</b></p> <p>Schools should have identified the useful historical knowledge to ensure quicker and more detailed grasp of subsequent events, including to gain a secure chronological grasp of events taught, and increasing grasp of substantive concepts. The impact should be evident in pupils' work and possibly the prior knowledge they draw upon in lessons.</p>	<p>not have the cumulatively sufficient knowledge to understand the Anglo-Saxon invasions in the context of the collapse of Roman rule. Coherence of content ordering will not always lead to teaching topics in chronological, order but in this example the ordering seems indicative of a lack of consideration given to coherent acquisition of knowledge. One example of non-chronological but coherent ordering would be a study of Queen Victoria and then following this with an enquiry about what powers earlier monarchs had and why they were different.</p>
<p>3 a) Rigour: Does the school ensure wide-ranging and expanding knowledge of <b>second order (historical) concepts</b> such as causation, change and significance?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What second-order concepts do pupils encounter in history?</p> <p>How do you build pupils' understanding of these second-order concepts?</p>	<p><b>Teaching about second-order concepts helps pupils to build up knowledge of how historians work over time.</b></p> <p>When teaching pupils about the work of historians, teaching should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ treat disciplinary knowledge as knowledge rather than skills. Pupils must build up schemata over time.</li> <li>▪ Be taught in specific contexts (topics) with pupils knowing enough of the context to make valid judgments.</li> <li>▪ Allow pupils to make historical judgments only where they have sufficient knowledge to do so in ways which are valid within disciplinary traditions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pupils are taught about the range of second-order concepts.</b></p> <p>Pupils need to gain knowledge of the discipline of history – how historians produce knowledge. Historians often analyse the past using the second-order concepts</p>	<p><b>There is little evidence that pupils are taught about second-order concepts.</b></p> <p>This may be the case where history content is only taught as part of topics. Pupils must learn history content <i>and</i> apply it to historical questions to build their knowledge of the discipline of history.</p> <p><b>The school makes attempts to teach historical 'skills' without a clear substantive context.</b></p> <p>These second-order concepts should not be seen as generic 'skills'. Pupils need to be taught how historians frame and answer historical questions. If a school describes tasks as helping pupils 'get better at change and continuity', consider whether pupils are being taught more about how historians use tools like change and continuity to analyse information about specific past events and societies. Second-order concepts must be taught with a rich knowledge of a specific substantive context.</p> <p><b>Pupils answer questions which are inappropriate or ahistorical.</b></p>

What do pupils learn about concept X (e.g. causation) in this topic?

(NB: if 'second-order concepts' is not understood, inspectors might refer to 'the kinds of questions historians ask' or 'concepts like causation, change...')

below. The NC requires that pupils regularly address questions focusing on the second-order concepts below. These questions should be historically valid.

**Causation** – analysis of why events happened, or states of affairs existed. E.g. 'Why did the Roman empire collapse?'

**Change and continuity** – analysing changes in the past, particularly the pace, type or extent of change. E.g. 'How much Britain change after the Romans left?'

**Similarity and difference** – Analysing how homogenous or diverse past societies, regions or groups were in terms of identity or experience. E.g. 'Was everyone affected by the Viking invasions in the same way?'

**Historical significance** – This is not about *importance* or *impact* (these relate to 'change'), but rather exploring the reasons why some events or people are *deemed* significant by historians or others.

**Sources and evidence and historical interpretations** – see Q3b below.

**Leaders have thought carefully about how, when and in what contexts pupils encounter disciplinary knowledge.**

How historians operate is abstract and complex. Pupils must carefully build up knowledge about the discipline over time. Teaching should not rush into pupils making historical judgments for which they are lacking the depth of knowledge of either the discipline of history or of the specific topic they are studying.

History does not address moral questions, so pupils shouldn't be asked to make moral judgments about the past e.g. 'Were the Vikings good or bad?'.  
**Pupils answer questions for which they lack the requisite knowledge.**

Pupils shouldn't be asked to come to historical judgments without sufficient knowledge, e.g. after a brief description of the collapse of the Roman empire pupils are asked to decide the 'main reason' the empire collapsed, though they lack the knowledge to make such judgments. This may reinforce misconceptions (e.g. that there is 'no right answer' in history).

**'There is no right answer, it is your opinion.'**

This is not accurate and can damage pupils' growing sense of how history operates. Historians often disagree, but there are rules and conventions which govern what is a reasonable claim in history. Across their education, pupils will begin to make sense of these conventions if they regular encounter the real work of historians.

	<p>By the end of KS2, pupils will have some knowledge of the kinds of questions and methods which historians bring to their study of the past, in order to prepare them for study at KS3.</p>	
<p>3 b) Rigour: Does the school ensure wide-ranging and expanding knowledge of methods of <b>historical enquiry</b> (sources and evidence and historical interpretations)?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What do you teach pupils about how historians use sources as evidence?</p> <p>What do your Year 6 pupils know about how historians use sources as evidence?</p> <p>Give an example of a topic where pupils explore how historians use sources as evidence. How is this taught? What do you want pupils to learn?</p>	<p><b>Pupils are taught about how historians use sources as evidence for claims about the past.</b></p> <p>The NC requires pupils to learn about how knowledge about the past is constructed from sources.</p> <p>Pupils need to learn about the range of sources of evidence historians can use to construct knowledge, the kinds of questions historians ask of evidence, and how they form judgments from this evidence.</p> <p>Over time, pupils should build up increasingly sophisticated schemata.</p> <p>Sources should be used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. in a joined-up way (i.e. collections)</li> <li>2. in relation to a specific question (so that sources are interrogated to establish evidence in relation to a particular question and not deemed reliable/unreliable whatever the context)</li> <li>3. constructively – i.e. seeing bias as another type of useful information about the past (e.g. the author’s attitude), rather than emphasising what makes sources unreliable.</li> </ol> <p>Pupils may also learn about historical interpretations, but it is important that these are not confused with source work. Teaching about interpretations should</p>	<p><b>Teaching focuses on progress in source analysis skills, with little reference to the historical context of the sources.</b></p> <p>Drilling in source analysis skills which focus on generic ‘skills’ divorced from a discussion of the historical context of the sources is unhelpful.</p> <p>Useful knowledge can be learned about how to consider historical sources but the capacity to use a source constructively largely stems from a pupil’s knowledge of the source’s particular context.</p> <p><b>The class are keen to talk about spotting bias (which is bad) and why primary sources are more reliable.</b></p> <p>Encouraging such notions is extremely unhelpful. Qualities such as reliability or utility are not inherent to a particular source, they are determined by the questions which are being asked of sources. Sources are not more reliable because they are primary or secondary.</p> <p><b>The school uses historical sources to teach ‘interpretations’.</b></p> <p>This suggests there may be confusion over what is meant by ‘interpretations’. It is crucial to distinguish between “interpretations” of the past (e.g. by historians) and pupils using historical sources to understand how accounts of the past are constructed.</p>

	focus on why historians construct different accounts of the past.	An example of studying interpretations might be a class examining differing interpretations by historians of the reasons for the growing power of Anglo-Saxon kings.
<p>4) How does teaching in the <b>early years</b> introduce pupils to the study of the past?</p> <p><b>School friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What do children learn (e.g. in reception) which will help them to learn more history in the future?</p> <p>Can you think of any vocabulary, which is useful to the study of history, which children have started to learn by the end of reception?</p> <p>What books have you chosen to read to children that give them an understanding of the past?</p>	<p><b>Teachers help children to build chronological understanding.</b></p> <p>Children need to know about 'the past' and 'the present'. They should begin to build a sense of timescale e.g. 'before I was born', 'hundreds of years ago'. It is most likely this will be done through familiar contexts, such as family history, or through stories with familiar elements.</p> <p><b>Teachers begin the careful introduction of key vocabulary and concepts.</b></p> <p>Even at a young age, children can begin to give meaning to concepts like 'king' or 'battle' or 'famous' when they are encountered in established contexts or in age-appropriate stories. These concepts will be immensely powerful in preparing children to learn about specific past events, and so effective teaching will likely consider how the learning of these kinds of concepts can be best secured.</p> <p><b>Leaders consider how learning in early years supports future learning.</b></p> <p>E.g. there is evidence of curricular thinking about how to prepare children for KS1.</p> <p><b>The power of story and narrative are exploited to support learning.</b></p> <p>Stories give familiar structure to events and ideas and can support children to begin to make sense of and</p>	<p><b>Leaders cannot identify how teaching in early years builds useful knowledge for future study in history.</b></p> <p><b>Leaders identify intended knowledge, but this is not learned and remembered by children.</b></p> <p>Remember that at this age, children will be forming early, rough schemata for concepts, but there should be some evidence that children have gained knowledge directly from teaching in early years.</p> <p><b>There is no evidence that teaching or planning in early years takes account of future learning.</b></p> <p>E.g. early years provision is totally separated from KS1, leaders have not given thought to what children need to know by the end of reception, to be prepared to learn in KS1.</p>

	<p>learn even very complex information. Non-historical stories, such as fairy tales, can build powerful knowledge for future learning from a very young age. As children get older, real stories from the past can also be used very successfully.</p>	
<p>5) How does teaching in <b>KS1</b> prepare pupils for further study?</p>	<p>From the KS1 NC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pupils should develop an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time.</li> <li>▪ They should know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.</li> <li>▪ They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms.</li> <li>▪ They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events.</li> <li>▪ They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.</li> </ul> <p>Pupils should be taught about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ changes within living memory. Where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life</li> <li>▪ events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally</li> </ul>	<p><b>'In Reception we don't teach about the past beyond children's experience because children are not yet able to conceive of people living in different times and places.'</b></p> <p>Pupils can begin to build effective and useful schemata, even where their understanding is incomplete or partially incorrect. E.g. if children are learning about Martin Luther King, Jr., but aren't able to distinguish between real and fictional characters, they will still build meaningful ideas about King and about other historical concepts (e.g. 'a protest').</p> <p><b>'It's difficult to teach young pupils about history when their grasp of concepts related to time is not secure.'</b></p> <p>This might reflect either a lack of ambition or a lack of confidence on the teacher's part. Effective teaching in KS1 can begin with what pupils know (e.g. history of their own family, including before they were born) before moving on to the concept of events in the past and how we might know them (e.g. by talking to their grandparents about their childhood).</p> <p><b>Teaching in KS2 fails to prepare pupils for KS2.</b></p> <p>If pupils have not begun to build chronological concepts (like 'the past') and substantive concepts</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods</li> <li>▪ significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.</li> </ul> <p><b>The school plans for progression to KS2.</b></p> <p>This may include introducing pupils to some of the concepts or periods that they will study at KS2.</p>	<p>(such as 'empire', 'king'), they will be unprepared for learning about the past in greater detail in KS2.</p>
<p>6) How does the school develop pupils' <b>written work</b>?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>Do pupils in later years have opportunities to write in ways which are specific to history?</p> <p>What kinds of feedback do pupils get on written work? Are any examples of these history-specific?</p>	<p>At an appropriate point in the curriculum (probably by later KS2), pupils should be given opportunities to write in subject-specific forms such as historical arguments or causal narratives.</p> <p><b>Pupils are encouraged to see historical writing as the presentation of argument.</b></p> <p>All historical writing (i.e. as a final product, not 'notes') involves arguments or claims about the past.</p> <p><b>Pupils secure rich knowledge of events or periods before being expected to produce extended writing about them.</b></p> <p>As discussed above, historical argument rests on secure substantive knowledge. Pupils are taught that good historical writing rests upon secure knowledge. Feedback focuses predominantly on the content of pupils' writing.</p> <p><b>Feedback on written work is specific to the topic and sub-genre of historical writing.</b></p>	<p><b>Pupils are not given subject-specific advice on writing.</b></p> <p>The curriculum by later KS2 should give pupils opportunities to write in historical forms (e.g. arguments, accounts). Feedback given on such writing should help pupils to learn how to write in ways which are appropriate to the discipline.</p> <p>Where this is given, it should go beyond advice on 'how to write like a historian', which is not specific to the context. Historians write in very different ways when constructing causal narratives or deeply interrogating a source.</p> <p>It may be useful for pupils to know about features of historical writing which are common, but this should be balanced with knowledge of how historians write in specific contexts.</p> <p><b>Feedback on written work focuses on features of the writing divorced from content.</b></p>



	<p>Where it can be observed, feedback should model the shaping of curricular content into the forms needed to address historical questions.</p> <p>Pupils should be taught about specific ways that arguments and accounts are presented in history.</p>	<p>E.g. 'this is an excellent answer because it includes a conclusion' and 'try to give both sides of the argument'.</p> <p>Pupils' writing is effective if it marshals appropriate substantive knowledge into valid arguments which are relevant to the question. Teachers must consider the content of pupil writing to make judgments.</p>
<p>7) How much planned opportunity do pupils have in history lessons to read <b>extended texts</b>?</p> <p><b>School friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What kinds of texts do pupils read in history lessons?</p> <p>Do pupils 'read to learn' in history lessons?</p> <p>How do you support pupils to read challenging texts?</p>	<p><b>Pupils have regular opportunities to 'read to learn' in lessons.</b></p> <p>This supports vocabulary development as well as providing more complex and nuanced accounts of the past which allow pupils to develop more sophisticated historical argument.</p> <p>Narratives of historical events can be read very effectively with pupils of all ages. E.g. in early years pupils might read or hear a story which introduces the concept of 'king' in a fictional setting. In Year 1, pupils may read stories about real historical events or periods, such as the Egyptians.</p> <p><b>Reading opportunities are part of a carefully planned curriculum</b></p> <p>If pupils have secure knowledge which is relevant to the text, they will be able to engage with texts more powerfully. In the example above, pupils may have build their concepts of rulers and power through reading in Reception. In year 1, these concepts will support them in making sense of text about the power of the Pharaoh in Ancient Egypt. Pupils' knowledge and vocabulary should be carefully considered when selecting or designing texts. Pupils must be confident in the narrative or overall sense of a text, as well as a</p>	<p><b>The school doesn't plan for the use for extended texts</b></p> <p>Ofsted has no preferred style for lesson delivery. However, because the content of history can often be delivered successfully through stories, and because pupils are readily capable of making sense of stories from a very young age, the subject provides an excellent opportunity for wider reading. Given the known impact of regular reading on pupil outcomes, inspectors might consider whether a school might make more of the opportunity for reading texts in history lessons.</p> <p><b>Pupils read texts which are inappropriate or inaccessible</b></p> <p>If pupils are not secure in a significant proportion of the vocabulary in a text, or in the overall narrative of a text, they will not be able to learn new words, concepts and content through reading.</p>

	<p>great deal of the vocabulary, in order to readily learn new words and concepts through reading or hearing texts.</p>	
<p>8) How do you ensure those <b>pupils who find it most difficult</b> to learn history (e.g. with SEND) are given the best chance to keep up?</p> <p>NB: Inspectors will always include a sample of pupils with SEND in their subject deep dives.</p> <p><b>School friendly questions:</b></p> <p>Which pupils in this class are finding the subject most difficult? Why do they find the subject hard?</p> <p>What are the most effective ways you have found of helping these pupils keep up?</p>	<p><b>Teachers should ensure that they are aware of the prior knowledge necessary to understand new content.</b></p> <p>For example, pupils learning about the Anglo-Saxons need a basic grasp of kings and their power, what an invasion is, and some knowledge of the geography of England. Without these, they will be unable to access or make sense of the new material.</p> <p>Schools might ensure that these aspects are securely learned and remembered by all pupils, with a particular focus on securing (and assessing security of) these concepts for pupils who find it most difficult.</p> <p><b>Where necessary the components of the subject curriculum should be carefully identified and broken down into manageable chunks.</b></p> <p>In the example above, 'kings and their power' is a complex concept. Schools might have thought carefully about how to break this down by teaching about specific features of kingship. In a well-sequenced curriculum, some of these aspects might well have been secured in previous topics.</p> <p><b>Any adjustments made for some pupils are well-considered and support pupil progress</b></p> <p>A general principle is that most pupils will be taught through the full curriculum. Because of the nature of the subject, there are elements with which pupils will struggle, and learning may happen over time and</p>	<p><b>Pupils struggling to learn (e.g. with SEND) are moved on through the curriculum before key components are given sufficient emphasis so that they are understood.</b></p> <p>This requires careful thinking from schools about what is 'core' which all pupils need to be secure in for future learning. E.g. a school moves on from the study of the Romans before all pupils are secure with the term 'empire', even though this concept will be assumed knowledge in future learning.</p> <p><b>The school make adjustments to the curriculum for some pupils which are detrimental to their learning</b></p> <p>For example, if some pupils have not learned the details of Ancient Greek government, they will struggle more than other pupils to make sense of government in the Roman Empire (in a later topic). In this example, schools should ensure that all pupils have secured knowledge of some aspects of Greek government if these are particularly important to what they will go on to learn.</p> <p>E.g. some pupils are not taught significant content (e.g. early civilisations) and therefore have gaps in their knowledge which will affect their ability to learn in future in history or other subjects.</p> <p>E.g. in order to make resources 'accessible', some pupils are given explanations or materials in which key elements are removed. In some cases these reduced</p>

	<p>indirectly. However, schools should be able to identify the most important content and concepts for all pupils to learn in order to support progress in the future. It should be clear how the curriculum supports all pupils to learn this content.</p> <p>In most cases, skilful teaching and curriculum planning can support the vast majority of pupils to access the full curriculum. Any reduction made to the breadth or depth of content which pupils encounter will have a cost, and so this should be weighed carefully with individual pupil needs. Where pupils have an EHCP this should always be taken into account in planning and teaching.</p>	<p>explanations will be less, not more, comprehensible as they will lack narrative links or other contextual detail which is important to understanding. If a pupil is given only the 'core' information, e.g. a list of key facts about the Roman Empire, they may struggle to make meaning out of these.</p> <p>Paradoxically, giving pupils more information ('hinterland') e.g. through stories about Roman emperors which also create a sense of time and place, may actually lead to more understanding for pupils who find the subject difficult.</p>
<p>9) In practice does the school consider the '<b>curriculum as the progression model</b>'? Simply put: progress through 'knowing more and remembering more'.</p> <p><b>School friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How do you know if pupils are getting better at history across their time at this school?</p> <p>Where can you see evidence of how pupils are progressing in history?</p>	<p><b>To make progress, pupils will have learned the history curriculum.</b></p> <p>Pupils will have an appropriate understanding of substantive and disciplinary knowledge which has been taught. For successful impact it should be evident from lesson observations and other relevant activities that pupils still remember prior content relevant for their current learning.</p> <p>Pupils will not have necessary access to new content if they do not have a sufficient grasp of the concepts intrinsic to learning the new content. Teachers should reflect on what knowledge is necessary for pupils to understand new material, undertake lesson activities and ensure that important content is learned. The school should plan for how to ensure key content is remembered.</p> <p>E.g. when teaching pupils about ancient Greece, particular attention was paid to securing pupils'</p>	<p><b>Leaders have not given sufficient attention to what they want pupils to know and remember in history</b></p> <p>NB: this does not mean that leaders must produce paperwork to show what their 'intent' is, but that curriculum design and teaching should be based on identified knowledge which the school wants pupils to know and remember.</p> <p><b>The school use a taxonomy such as Bloom's or Solo to plan for progress</b></p> <p>Such hierarchies are not useful tools for planning or assessing progression in history. At best, they do not help leaders to identify specific components which pupils need to know. At worst, they can lead to misconceptions about progression in the subject. E.g. that 'description' is a 'low-level skill'. Depending on the question constructing a description or narrative in history can be very challenging.</p>

What do would a pupil who was making good progress know or be able to do by year X?	knowledge of concepts such as 'philosophy', 'ideas' and 'city'. These concepts are then built on in a later study of Baghdad.	
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## 2. The extent to which teaching supports the goals of the history curriculum

Focused questions to ask the evidence	Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact	Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact
	NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for	NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for
<p>10) What is the rationale for the <b>activities</b> chosen in lessons?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>Why did you choose that particular activity to teach that specific content?</p> <p>What content did you want to emphasise through this activity?</p> <p>What kinds of pedagogical approach are used most effectively in history lessons in this school?</p>	<p><b>Teachers can explain a clear curricular rationale for teaching decisions.</b></p> <p>Inspectors must consider carefully <i>what</i> is being taught. Check that careful decisions have been made about what content the lesson will emphasise and why using the guidance above. Then consider whether <i>how</i> this is being taught is effective for this specific material.</p> <p>Teachers should be able to link pedagogy to curricular intent.</p> <p>E.g. we used a timeline because we want to continue to secure pupils' chronological overview.</p> <p>E.g. we want pupils to understand the consequences of the collapse of the Roman empire, so we used a narrative to help them understand links between events.</p>	<p><b>The activities do not focus squarely on the substantive and disciplinary knowledge identified to be taught.</b></p> <p>Activity choices need to support curricular goals, and teachers should be able to explain the link between curricular intent and activity choices.</p> <p><b>Activities distract from the content to be taught</b></p> <p>History teaching should demonstrate the intrinsic interest of the subject content rather than prioritise engaging activities which can serve to trivialise the subject.</p> <p>Unnecessarily elaborate activities can leave pupils remembering the engaging activity and not the history content, and such activities can be time consuming for limited learning gains.</p>

	<p>E.g. we want pupils to know about the political geography and spread of the Abbasid empire, so we used maps to help pupils grasp this.</p> <p><b>Teaching regularly builds pupils' vocabulary and knowledge of historical concepts.</b></p> <p>Every history lesson will present opportunities to revisit vocabulary and concepts and will very likely see new vocabulary and concepts introduced. Does teaching help pupils to secure this knowledge? Consider quality above incidence – with new or complex ideas or terms it is likely that simply writing a definition will not be sufficient to help pupils work with an idea in future learning.</p> <p><b>Teachers use narrative forms to help pupils make sense of new information</b></p> <p>Stories, individual accounts, cause and consequence structures, overview and depth and many features of narrative can help pupils to more quickly make sense of the past. Good history teaching will often use narrative as a way of supporting pupils' learning.</p>	<p>E.g. pupils wrap each other up as 'mummies' to study Ancient Egypt</p> <p><b>Activities misrepresent, or build misconceptions of, the past or the discipline of history</b></p> <p>Through anachronisms or confused sense of period resulting from e.g. a 'write a newspaper article' activity set in Anglo Saxon England</p> <p>Lack of respect for people in the past or trivialising past suffering resulting from e.g. a flippant description of past violence</p> <p>Pupils address moral questions or impose present values on the past e.g. by answering the question 'should Victorian children have been sent to workhouses?'</p> <p>Misconceptions of the discipline by unhelpful oversimplification e.g. pupils decide which source is 'more reliable'</p> <p><b>The school consider challenge as a feature of activity rather than content</b></p> <p>Challenge in history is the result of pupils making sense of complex information. It is a feature of the content pupils must make sense of and learn.</p> <p>Viewing challenge as created through lesson by lesson generic activity choices (e.g. based on Bloom's taxonomy) is unhelpful.</p> <p><b>'Guess the answer in the teacher's head' questioning</b></p> <p>It is problematic if lots of lesson time is taken with pupils guessing answers and thus largely sharing</p>
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		<p>misconceptions. It isn't constructive to require pupils to guess key content and ideas. These should be clearly explained by the teacher or might be read about by pupils in a text.</p>
<p>11) How do teachers ensure that key content is <b>remembered long term</b>?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How do you ensure that pupils remember key content in the long-term?</p> <p>What content from this topic are pupils expected to remember long-term?</p> <p>Where will pupils revisit content from this topic?</p>	<p><b>Teachers have planned enough systematic repetition of the most crucial content to ensure it is secure in memory and can be subsequently applied by pupils.</b></p> <p>Teaching should ensure that pupils revisit key content (as identified by teachers and curriculum designers) and secure it in long-term memory.</p> <p>This might be through formal retrieval, but also might be through skilful teacher exposition or questioning which revisits and secures prior knowledge.</p> <p>Again, consider <i>what</i> knowledge the school is spending time to secure for all pupils (relate to Focus Area 1).</p> <p><b>Assessment is used to check that key content is learned and remembered</b></p> <p>See Q3 below. In order to give useful and timely insights into pupil progress, it is likely that a mix of assessment approaches will be most effective including informal assessment by teachers in lessons. Check that teachers have considered what content has been prioritised for assessment, and how teachers respond when gaps are identified.</p>	<p><b>There are assessments every half term.</b></p> <p>It is unlikely that half-termly assessments of written work will provide the necessary reinforcement of key content. It is helpful if a school uses different forms of assessment depending on purpose e.g. quick recall exercises are good for reinforcing crucial detail, while less frequent written assessments are useful to identify how well pupils can synthesise what they have learned e.g. to create their own historical argument.</p> <p><b>The school uses 'knowledge organisers'.</b></p> <p>How knowledge organisers are used is much more significant than if they exist. E.g. if pupils spend time memorising material that is excessively detailed or too general to be meaningful that is problematic.</p> <p><b>The school does not assess pupil knowledge in history</b></p> <p>School must check that pupils are building secure knowledge of key content in history. If schools do not assess historical knowledge, or focus only on assessing pupils' 'historical skills' they will not be able to identify and address knowledge gaps or misconceptions.</p>

### 3. The effectiveness of assessment

<b>Focused questions to ask the evidence</b>	<b>Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b> NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for	<b>Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b> NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for
<p>12) What is the rationale for the school's <b>assessment approach</b>?</p> <p>a) What is the rationale for which content is chosen to be assessed?</p> <p>b) how is that content assessed?</p> <p>c) how is any assessment used to inform future curriculum design?</p> <p>NB: a large part of the answer to this question will already be apparent from answers to questions in FOCUS 1.</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What do your assessments focus on? What do they actually assess?</p>	<p><b>The curriculum is the progression model and how far this is the case in practice can be investigated.</b></p> <p>Assessment should check the curriculum content is remembered long term. Q1 outlines the different curriculum areas in which progress can be made and should be assessed in History. In summary (refer back to Q1), does assessment check pupils have learned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Progressively broader knowledge of different events and societies in the past</li> <li>▪ Important concepts</li> <li>▪ Secure chronological frameworks</li> <li>▪ Disciplinary knowledge about how historians make sense of the past</li> <li>▪ Ways to communicate historical ideas and arguments</li> </ul> <p>Check that assessment design reflects thinking about what knowledge pupils must secure e.g. it is more important that pupils know and remember the meaning of 'empire' than that they remember the names of each of the caliphs of the early Islamic empire.</p>	<p><b>The school has not identified components which pupils need to know and remember</b></p> <p>E.g. a school may 'track' pupils' progress against National Curriculum statements like 'know about the Roman empire' or broad outcomes like 'analyse causes' but may not have identified specific components of these (such as specific knowledge of the Romans or knowledge of how historians approach causation) which can be assessed accurately.</p> <p><b>The school tracks history 'skills' or progression in second-order concepts</b></p> <p>It is problematic to think of second order (historical) concepts such as 'causation', 'significance' and 'change' as skills in which pupil progress can be tracked.</p> <p><b>The school has designed a tracking system which tracks progress according to Bloom's or Solo taxonomy (or a similar model).</b></p> <p>Non-history-specific progression models tend to distract from the types of historical knowledge pupils need to build. They often distort thinking about progression in the subject e.g. where 'description' is seen as a 'low-level skill' whereas in fact constructing a historical narrative can be highly challenging.</p>

<p>How will pupils be assessed on their knowledge of this topic?</p> <p>What does this assessment tell you about pupil progress?</p> <p>Can you give an example of how information from an assessment was used to inform teaching or planning?</p>	<p><b>Assessment is used to inform teaching and curriculum development</b></p> <p>Assessment should give useful information about pupil progress (i.e. what pupils know and remember). Where appropriate this information should be put to use e.g. through a teacher decision to revisit a concept, or changes to future curriculum to address gaps.</p>	<p>Conversely 'analysing' or 'evaluating' might be considered 'high-level' but if pupils are 'analysing' causes without sufficient knowledge this will simply be guesswork and therefore not evidence of developed thinking.</p> <p><b>"Essays allow us to check knowledge has been learned and if pupils are getting better at history."</b></p> <p>Extended writing may not be a good way to check broad content learning, as pupils may not need to refer to the whole domain being tested. Essays are much better for assessing pupils' knowledge of how historians present their arguments. Essays also give a sense of the security of certain types of knowledge but are most effective when combined with other forms of assessment.</p>
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**4. The extent to which there is a climate of high subject expectations where a love of history can flourish**

NB: This focus may well help explain the success of some schools, but a lack of evidence for 'a climate where a love of the subject can flourish' may NOT mean that this is a weakness, given the challenge of identifying this during inspection.

<p><b>Focused questions to ask the evidence</b></p>	<p><b>Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b></p>	<p><b>Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b></p>
<p>13) What is the <b>profile/status of history</b> in the school?</p>	<p><b>History should have a healthy profile within the school with a culture of modelling a passion for history.</b></p>	<p><b>A lot of pupils find history 'too hard'.</b></p> <p>Is there an assumption that history is not accessible for all pupils? What is the school doing to ensure all</p>



<p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How do you make sure that history is valued as a subject by pupils?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do lessons build a sense of fascination with the past, or the sense that history is a meaningful and important intellectual pursuit?</li> <li>▪ Check enrichment activities. Have teachers identified what should be learned from these and checked that this has been learned?</li> </ul>	<p>pupils build and secure the prior knowledge they need to learn new material in history lessons?</p> <p><b>Teaching of history lacks subject-specificity or is subordinated to the teaching of other subjects.</b></p> <p>This can occur where history is not taught as a discrete subject. Historical knowledge can make a significant contribution to other areas, e.g. reading comprehensions, but pupils must also learn about history in its own right.</p>
<p>14) How does the school ensure there are <b>high expectations</b> for all pupils?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>How do you get the best from pupils?</p> <p>What might you do to support pupils who seem to lack motivation in history?</p>	<p><b>The school should have systems to ensure they get the best from all pupils.</b></p> <p>Check how the school exercises high expectations of pupils.</p> <p>Has the school developed mechanisms to take action when pupils display low effort, for example in written work or homework?</p>	<p><b>“In year 3 and 4 we focus on making history exciting and engaging.”</b></p> <p>What does this mean in practice? Are teachers underestimating what pupils can achieve and how hard they are used to working? Is time being wasted or are low expectations being reinforced?</p> <p>Teaching should build intrinsic interest in the subject matter of history, not in the activities used in lesson.</p> <p><b>“We ensure resources are accessible to all.”</b></p> <p>Is there an underlying assumption that certain conceptual aspects of historical study are too hard for pupils to access e.g. engagement with longer source extracts? Are pupils routinely provided with text well below their reading ability or limited text?</p>

## 5. The quality of systems and support for staff development

<b>Focused questions to ask the evidence</b>	<b>Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b> NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for	<b>Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b> NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for
15) What do the strengths or weaknesses already identified indicate about the school's <b>capacity to function effectively</b> ?	<p>Much of the evidence already gathered will indicate whether the school has strong leadership with functioning systems in place.</p> <p>Leaders should be able to readily explain and qualify the strengths and weaknesses in history teaching in the school. Any actions they are taking should be having a demonstrable impact on addressing any weaknesses.</p> <p>Check that new staff are given sufficient support.</p>	<p><b>The school's stated ideas about progression in history are not implemented due to the lack of effective systems/training/resourcing.</b></p>
16) What is the quality of the <b>subject level processes</b> , including of curriculum construction, debate and renewal? How does the school evaluate the strengths and areas for development?  <b>School-friendly questions:</b>  Who was responsible for designing your history curriculum? What relevant	<p><b>Appropriate mechanisms are in place to support curriculum design and renewal (as necessary)</b></p> <p>Check who has responsibility for ensuring the history curriculum is of high quality. What support have they been given to develop their subject knowledge and engage in debates around curriculum construction with other professionals?</p> <p>Curriculum designers should have a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum and of wider debates about curriculum. These might be staff within the school, or from a MAT or elsewhere but school leaders must satisfy themselves that appropriate expertise has been applied to the development of the school's history curriculum.</p>	<p><b>"I'm not a historian but no one else is either so I had to step up and write the curriculum. I'm not really sure what the National Curriculum means by concepts."</b></p> <p>In such a situation what is the quality of thinking that has going into curriculum development? It is likely that in this situation you have an explanation of weaknesses already identified through previous questioning. What support has the school given to develop subject knowledge and knowledge of curriculum debates within the staff body?</p> <p><b>Leaders have not evaluated the quality of the history curriculum</b></p>

<p>knowledge or expertise did they bring to this process?</p> <p>What support did/ does the school give to staff involved in curriculum design or renewal?</p> <p>How is the quality of the history curriculum evaluated by leaders?</p>	<p><b>Appropriate mechanisms are in place to evaluate the quality of history education</b></p> <p>Do senior leaders ensure the curriculum is of high quality? How do they support staff (both staff involved in curriculum design, and staff implementing the planned curriculum) to develop their subject knowledge?</p> <p>The school may have links to the subject community or other schools to develop rigorous processes of curriculum construction and renewal.</p>	<p>E.g. a school which has an 'off-the-peg' curriculum but where leaders have not considered the appropriateness or effectiveness of this curriculum.</p> <p>E.g. the school has a teacher with a history background who developed the history curriculum, but leaders have not considered the appropriateness or effectiveness of this</p>
<p>17) How is a <b>consistent quality of teaching</b> ensured?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What support is in place to ensure pupils in all classes access the same quality of history education?</p> <p>Are any teachers less able/ less confident to deliver the history curriculum? How are they supported?</p> <p>How do leaders know that quality of history teaching is consistent?</p>	<p><b>Where there are inexperienced, non-specialist and struggling staff, high-quality resources linked to carefully planned SoW are in place to support those staff.</b></p> <p>Identifying and addressing any gaps in pedagogic knowledge and subject knowledge is given high priority.</p> <p>Resources should be freely shared with regular opportunities for teachers to reflect on practice and develop ideas for improvement.</p> <p>Systems and policies should actively help reduce workload for teachers rather than create unnecessary work.</p> <p><b>Leaders carefully evaluate the quality of history teaching</b></p> <p>This may be directly (e.g. through pupil interviews) or indirectly (e.g. through robust and supportive conversation with a teacher with responsibility for history)</p>	<p><b>Leaders do not evaluate the quality of history teaching</b></p> <p>Leaders may have mechanisms in place, but check these go beyond compliance with generic policy and pay attention to the quality of the history curriculum and the way it is taught.</p> <p><b>Teachers needing support are operating without detailed and clear schemes of learning e.g. relying on text books for a progression model.</b></p> <p>Teachers who need help should have access to the planning and carefully sequenced materials written by more experienced colleagues. This will avoid pupils experiencing a weak curriculum and avoid excessive workload.</p>

<p>18) How are all staff in the school encouraged to develop their <b>subject knowledge</b> and knowledge of how to teach that subject knowledge (pedagogical content knowledge)?</p> <p><b>School-friendly questions:</b></p> <p>What support or CPD have teachers had to develop their subject knowledge?</p> <p>What gaps exist in teacher subject knowledge? How are you addressing these?</p>	<p><b>All teachers continue to develop their subject knowledge and subject pedagogical knowledge.</b></p> <p>In order to teach effective lessons and to develop effective curriculum content, teachers need well-developed historical knowledge of many historical periods. There should be evidence of ongoing subject knowledge development for all teachers who teach the subject.</p> <p>Subject networks offer a wide-range of history-specific development for both subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, and schools should be aware of this material and making use of it as appropriate.</p> <p>In some schools, there may be established or long-term plans to develop subject knowledge, such as shared reading of scholarship or developing experts in different fields.</p>	<p><b>There is evidence of lack of subject knowledge without plans for addressing this.</b></p> <p>E.g. in lessons a teacher appears to lack the requisite subject knowledge to teach a topic effectively and there is no support in place to develop this.</p> <p>Or curricular choices are influenced by a lack of subject knowledge e.g. 'none of us know much about ancient history so we don't spend long on that'.</p> <p><b>The school is not clear about the importance of teacher subject knowledge.</b></p> <p>E.g. 'we don't know about the Mayans, but we got this fact sheet, so we read through that with the pupils'.</p> <p>E.g. 'We didn't know how to teach about sources so we used training which our English lead had completed on how to analyse poems'.</p>
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**6. The extent to which whole school policies affect the capacity for effective history education**

<p><b>Focused questions to ask the evidence</b></p>	<p><b>Outline of potentially stronger practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b></p> <p>NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for</p>	<p><b>Outline of weaker practice in terms of intent, implementation and impact</b></p> <p>NB: answers will take many forms. Below are common findings to look out for</p>
<p>19) What rationale is used to decide on how the <b>class/year timetable</b> is constructed?</p>	<p>Leaders should allocate sufficient curriculum time for teaching of history. This may be discrete but equally it may be integrated into other aspects of the curriculum.</p>	<p><b>There are extended periods when there is no history teaching.</b></p> <p>Short blocks of history teaching are interspersed throughout the year.</p>

	Pupils are likely to have regular (probably weekly) experience of history.	<b>Insufficient time is allocated</b> to cover the breadth of the curriculum.
20) How do <b>school-wide policies</b> e.g. marking or CPD support the quality of history education?	<p><b>The quality of history education is taken seriously across the school</b></p> <p>The teaching of history can only be effective if it is done for its own sake, and not if history content is used purely as a vehicle for learning about other things (such as literacy and numeracy).</p> <p>The school should be developing expertise in history curriculum design, either internally or through other schools/organisations.</p> <p>The teaching of history should be focused on teaching pupils knowledge they need which is of equal scope and ambition as the National Curriculum.</p> <p>Senior leaders should ensure that the history curriculum is of high quality, and the teaching of history is effective.</p>	<p><b>At line management meetings we mainly discuss assessment data for core subjects. We only rarely look at other subjects.</b></p> <p>How does senior leadership take assurance that the curriculum is appropriate? What support does a non-specialist subject lead have to ensure the curriculum is appropriate?</p> <p><b>The whole school assessment requires the subject to report using generic measures which do not map well onto history assessment.</b></p> <p>This is problematic. Pupil responses in history should be judged by, and feedback should focus on, their knowledge of the history content they have studied.</p> <p><b>Whole school policy limits subject-specific curricular thinking.</b></p> <p>'Top-down' systems can prevent the delivery of a quality history education where they are not the best approaches for history in particular (e.g. a 'four-part lesson'). These systems should allow enough flexibility that best practice subject teaching is enabled.</p> <p><b>Whole school policy adversely affects teacher workload without significant impact on pupil learning.</b></p>

## Glossary

Term	Description
<b>Automaticity</b>	Ability to recall and deploy (facts, concepts, and methods) with <b>accuracy and speed</b> and without using conscious memory; frees the working memory for higher-order processes that require holding a line of thought.
<b>Components</b>	The building blocks of knowledge or sub-skills that a pupil needs to understand, store and recall from long-term memory in order to be successful in a complex task. See Automaticity.
<b>Composites</b>	The more complex knowledge which can be acquired or more complex tasks which can be undertaken when prior knowledge components are secure in a pupil's memory.
<b>Cumulative dysfluency</b>	Educational failure caused when pupils do not have enough opportunities to recall knowledge to gain automaticity with the use of that knowledge. Over time this may prevent or limit pupils' acquisition of more complex knowledge.
<b>Cumulative sufficiency</b>	Sufficient coverage of significant topics in the curriculum, particularly where identification of individually significant topics is not possible.
<b>Deep structure</b>	The similarity of underlying structures in two examples which appear different on the surface. For example, the way two historians have approached different causal problems from different topics might share a deep structure.
<b>Disciplinary knowledge</b>	Methods and conceptual frameworks used by specialists in a given subject, e.g. knowledge of history or geography as a discipline.
<b>Memory</b>	Two types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ working, or short-term memory: where conscious processing or 'thoughts' occur. Limited to holding 4 to 7 items of information for up to around 30 seconds at a time.</li> <li>▪ Long-term memory: where knowledge resides in integrated schema, ready for use without taking up working memory</li> </ul>
<b>Phonics</b>	The study of the relationship between the spoken and written language. Each letter or combination of letters represent a sound or sounds. The information is codified, as we must be able to recognise which symbols make which sounds in order to read the language.
<b>Progression model</b>	The planned path from the pupil's current state of competence to the school's intended manifestation of expertise.

<b>Schema/schemata (plural)</b>	A pattern of thought that organises categories of information and the connections between them.
<b>Substantive knowledge</b>	Significant concepts; knowledge that carries considerable weight in a given subject domain, e.g. concepts such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry' in history.

## Appendix – Progress in history

### What are the aims of history education?

The National Curriculum for history outlines a clear set of aims for history education

<b>Aims for history education set out in the National Curriculum</b>
What pupils should know (in <b>memory</b> ) and learn ( <b>remember</b> ) to be <b>understood</b> at the expected depth*:
'Know and understand the history of these islands <b>as a coherent, chronological narrative</b> , from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world.'
Note: This is not an injunction for pupils to commit one fixed story of the past to memory but historical narratives' that explain and account for change over time in a chronological fashion over a very long time period.
'Know and understand <b>significant aspects of the history</b> of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind.'
'Gain and deploy a <b>historically grounded understanding of abstract terms</b> such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'.
'Gain historical perspective by <b>placing their growing knowledge into different contexts</b> : understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.'
'Pupils should learn (remember) <b>the methods of historical enquiry</b> , including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.'

Note: The first statement is not an injunction to practise repetitive, decontextualised source activities – rather sources should be used constructively to build a narrative or an answer. There is a problem if teachers are not using sources (a) in a joined-up way (i.e. collections); (b) in relation to a specific question (so that sources are interrogated to establish evidence in relation to a Q and not deemed reliable/unreliable sui generis); (c) constructively – i.e. deeming bias useful and reliable (for something) rather than intrinsically useless/unreliable. Constructive has two senses here – not trashing biased sources, and pupils engaging in synthesis not just atomising analysis.

Pupils should be familiar with (remember) the way the past is analysed by historians through regularly planned opportunities to encounter and deploy historical (disciplinary or second order) concepts.

Note: it is important to distinguish between “interpretations” (by historians) and pupils understanding modes of argumentation and conditions under which valid claims can be made.

‘Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses.’

*\*Knowledge (or learning) requires retention in long-term memory and a carefully selected, memorised chronology and secure substantive knowledge should then be used for the purpose of constructing historical arguments.*

*\*\*Pupils in maintained schools are required to know a coherent chronological narrative of the British Isles and significant aspects of history from the wider world. For other schools (such as academies, free schools or independent schools) curriculum coverage, both in terms of intent and implementation, can be judged using the notion of ‘cumulative sufficiency’ (see glossary).*

## **What does this mean for how progress can be understood in history?**

At the forefront of inspectors’ minds should be the insight that desirable outcomes do not necessarily resemble the means of their nurture. When considering progress in history, this means appreciating that performance in disciplinary tasks such as writing an essay (e.g. a causation essay) or analysing sources requires carefully identified, requisite, secure prior knowledge – both substantive and disciplinary knowledge - as outlined in the aims above.

For example, if pupils attempt an essay on the causes of the Reformation they will need very secure substantive knowledge of religion, foreign policy, government and power in Tudor times. It will also be crucially important to teach disciplinary knowledge, i.e. how to construct causal arguments, but the time needed for this will be slight by comparison with the investment of time needed to build a secure grasp of the events.



The aims above suggest progress should be in substantive and disciplinary knowledge of:

- A cumulatively sufficient curriculum\* in which the content learned (remembered), provides coherent, chronological narratives with a growing knowledge (memory) of significant aspects of the history of Britain and the wider world.
- A cumulatively sufficient curriculum which provides an historically grounded understanding (remembered) of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'. Examples to illustrate these concepts are planned into the curriculum to build more detailed understanding of these terms, to show pupils significant variations in their meaning across time and space and to provide opportunities for deployment in new contexts.
- Different contexts: understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales. These connections should be taught, and opportunities provided for pupils to demonstrate their understanding of these connections.
- Historical (second order) concepts: the kinds of questions that historians ask, the types of account that such questions command and the conditions under which valid claims can be made within such accounts.
- The methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.

\*A cumulatively sufficient curriculum provides sufficient coverage of the overall intended content e.g. while schools may differ over the specific topics they cover when teaching 'significant aspects of the history of Britain', cumulatively the sum of these topics should amount to sufficient coverage of British history. While in some subjects it is possible to identify the curricular content which is individually necessary, in history this is not possible, but the range of topics chosen should be 'cumulatively sufficient'. This judgement will always have a degree of subjectivity.