



Willingdon

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM BOOKLET

History

ACE Historians are Articulate,
Curious and Engaged.

September 2025

Our School Curriculum Intent

The curriculum at Willingdon Community School offers a broad, balanced, personalised and challenging educational experience, which builds on students' experiences in the primary phase of their education.

It aims to provide all students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes which are necessary if they are to become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve the best they are capable of.

Subject Vision

At Willingdon we aim to support students to become ACE historians, that is Articulate, Curious and Engaged.

We aim to empower our students by developing their literacy and oracy skills so that they can communicate effectively. We encourage and support students to be intellectually curious and ask questions because knowing about the past can help students to understand the world in which they live today, so that they can build a better future. We believe that History should support young people to be active citizens through developing critical minds that can use and weigh evidence to make considered judgements. Throughout their time at Willingdon, we also build student understanding that History is not just a narrative but can be interpreted and experienced in different ways.

One of our principal aims in the History department is also to develop engagement and a love of learning. Willingdon school follows the National Curriculum for History which continues to provide our students with a broad and balanced curriculum. Our current learning journey gives students a broadly chronological overview of British History since 1066, there are also several wider world studies that enrich student's understanding of other cultures.

We also ensure students build a mental map of the past and can make links between different topics to ensure real, deep knowledge and understanding. The themes of our curriculum are:

Power and Protest- who holds power in different periods? How can protest be used to challenge those in power?

Conflict- Why do Conflicts start? How do conflicts change and shape lives?

Beliefs and Ideas- How did religion shape Medieval Society? How did religion change in the Early Modern Period? How have new ideas such as democracy, equality and representation developed across time? How have ideas such as Socialism and Communism changed the world?

Social and 'Ordinary' lives- How have historical events affected those not in the political elite or 'ordinary' people? What impact did religious changes, industrialisation and war have on how people lived their lives?

Key Concepts In History

History lessons are enquiry led with students being encouraged to engage with a range of engaging questions about the past. We also encourage students to develop their understanding of History as a discipline.

In History lessons, students will be encouraged to develop their understanding of

- ✓ **Continuity and Change**- How and why does change happen?
- ✓ **Evidential understanding**- How can evidence be used to help us find out about the past? How useful are different types of evidence?
- ✓ **Interpretations**- Why do people have different interpretations of the same historical events? How is History constructed?
- ✓ **Causation**- What causes an event to happen? How can we categorise and understand the different causes?
- ✓ **Significance**- Are some historical events more important than others? How do we judge the significance of different events?
- ✓ **Similarity and difference**- How did people in the past experience the same events in different ways? How do people's beliefs and values in different periods compare to the world today?
- ✓ **Chronological understanding**- Students are encouraged to develop their subject specific vocabulary and a sense of the scale of time.



Programme of Study

Key Stage 3

Year 7

At Willingdon each term students engage with an exciting enquiry into a historical question. The first enquiry focuses on the year 1066 and **‘Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?’** Students will explore the key causes of William’s victory and make a judgement on how and why he won.

Students will then move on to look at the theme of Power in the Medieval period. They will explore the question **‘Who held Power in the Middle Ages?’** and will judge the influence of the Monarchy and the Church on ordinary lives at this time. Students will then compare this to power in the 14th century Empire of Mali.

In term 3 students will move into the Early Modern period and consider **‘Why was Tudor England a religious rollercoaster?’** They will investigate the impact of changing religion and consider different interpretations of Mary I.

In the final term, students will explore the changing relationship of King and Parliament as they study the English Civil War. Students will consider the social changes of the period, considering **‘Why did people feel the world was turned upside down during the English Civil War?’**

Year 8

During Year 8, students will investigate the making of the modern world. Through a study of the Transatlantic slave trade students will engage with the theme of power and protest. The students will explore the impact of protest by enslaved people and abolitionists and how this led to greater equality in Britain and the wider world finally making their own judgement on the question **‘How was slavery finally abolished in the British Empire?’**

Students will then move on to an enquiry into **‘How did the Industrial Revolution change people’s lives?’** They will study the religious, social, political and economic changes of this period and consider how these changes affected different groups of people within society

Students will also investigate the impact of the British Empire on India and challenge themselves to consider **How did Indian people view the British Empire?**

Finally, Year 8 students will delve into the twentieth century world exploring different methods of protest in the campaign for female suffrage, they will explore the question **How significant were the WSPU in the campaign for female suffrage?** followed by an enquiry into the impact of World War 1 and Interpretations of Douglas Haig.

Year 9

In Year 9 students will start with **‘Why did Russia have a Revolution in 1917?’** Through this study they will explore the impact of Communism in Russia and the wider world. This will support students in being able to compare differing forms of government, dictatorship and democracy, communism and capitalism as they gain an understanding of the geopolitics of the twentieth century world.

Through studies of World War 2 and the Holocaust students will gain further insight into the themes of conflict, power and persecution. Students will explore important questions of the period such as **‘Why did Britain declare war in 1939?’**

‘How did people resist the Holocaust?’ and **‘How did WW2 impact Britain and the world?’**

Finally, students will explore the post war world and how that set the stage for the world the students live in today.

Assessment Plan for Key Stage 3

At the end of each unit, students will be set an assessment which aims to check their understanding of the topic and gives them a chance to show off their brilliant knowledge and understanding. This assessment will be given a GCSE style grade as well as providing quality feedback for students to understand how they did.

Throughout Key Stage 3 students will be given an opportunity to engage with assessments on the key concepts in History i.e.- causation, interpretations, significance, change and continuity, using evidence and similarity and difference. Students will be supported in building up the subject specific skills they need in order to be successful at GCSE and beyond.

Assessment topics for the academic year 2025/6 are outlined below:

Year 7

- Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?
- Who held the most power over peasants' life in the Middle Ages- the King or the Church?
- Does Mary I deserve her bloody reputation?
- Why did people feel the world was upside down during the English Civil War?

Year 8

- How and why was slavery abolished?
- How did the Industrial Revolution change people's lives?
- How significant were the WSPU in the campaign for female suffrage?
- Does Douglas Haig deserve to be known as the Butcher of the Somme?

Year 9-

- Why was there a revolution in Russia in 1917?
- Why Did World War 2 start?
- How did people resist the Holocaust?
- How did WW2 impact Britain and the world?



Options Booklet Entry

Study the past, build a better future.

The study of History is central to our understanding of the world in which we live. The roots of so many of today's news stories can be found in the past and the insights gained may shed light on the solutions to many of the issues that face us both now and in the future. This course will provide you with a deeper understanding of important social issues; encourage you to think independently and to develop opinions based on evidence.

Why study History GCSE?

The study of History involves developing transferable skills. The ability to evaluate different sources of information with a critical eye, to empathise with others and to communicate ideas and information are all central to this subject and are valued in all areas of education, employment and life.

Students who chose History say...

'I love talking and am very opinionated so History suits me down to the ground'

'I chose History because you learn about real events that still affect the world today.'

'It is challenging... but I like that, I think it's important to push yourself. History is a great subject for people who want to go into journalism or law because it's all about weighing up the evidence and making supported arguments.'

The AQA History GCSE covers 1,000 years of British and World History. There are two papers sat in the summer of Year 11.

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World The USA 1919 – 1973: Opportunity and inequality

- The economic boom and the 'Roaring 20s'.
- The Depression and the New Deal.
- Post war America – including Rock and Roll, Civil Rights.

Conflict and Tension in Asia 1950-1975

- The Korean war
- The Vietnam war

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Britain: Power and the people c1170 to the present day

- A thematic study looking at how the power of the Monarchy and governments has changed across 800 years. We study key protests against those in charge, such as the Peasants Revolt, the English Revolution and Chartism which will help students to understand the formation of our modern democracy.

Norman England c1066-c1100

- Conquest and control.
- Life under the Normans.
- The Norman Church and monasticism.
- The Historic environment - a study of a specific historical site in depth (in 2026 this will be Pevensey Castle).

Assessment – Both papers are 2 hours and worth 50% of the GCSE. 5% of the marks awarded are for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Programme of Study

Key Stage 4

Students at Willingdon study the AQA History GCSE. The course covers 1,000 years of British and World History. There are two papers sat in the summer of Year 11.

In Year 10 students will prepare for Paper 1 of the GCSE, with two twentieth century studies.

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World **The USA 1920 – 1973: Opportunity and Inequality**

- The economic boom and the 'Roaring 20s'.
- The Depression and the New Deal.
- Post war America – including Rock and Roll, Civil Rights.

Conflict and Tension in Asia 1950-1975

- The Korean war
- Escalation of Conflict in Vietnam
- The ending of the Conflict in Vietnam.

Students will then start studying Paper 2 by Term 5 of Year 10 and will complete the course in Year 11.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation **Britain: Power and the people c1170 to the present day**

- A thematic study looking at the development of the relationship between the citizen and the state over a long period of time.

Norman England c1066-c1100

- Conquest and Control- 1066
- Life under the Normans.
- The Norman Church
- The Historic Environment - a study of a specific historical site in depth (in 2026 this will be Pevensey Castle).

Assessment – both papers are 2 hours and worth 50% of the GCSE. 5% of the marks awarded are for spelling, punctuation and grammar.



Assessment Plan for Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 we are preparing students for their final GCSE assessments –

The AQA History GCSE has two examination papers. Both papers are 2 hours long and worth 50% of the GCSE. 5% of the marks awarded are for spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are 4 main areas on which students are assessed, these are known as Assessment Objectives (AOs)

AO1: demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied.

AO2: explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order historical concepts.

AO3: analyse, evaluate and use sources (contemporary to the period) to make substantiated judgements, in the context of historical events studied

AO4: analyse, evaluate and make substantiated judgements about interpretations (including how and why interpretations may differ) in the context of historical events studied

In order to fully prepare students, teachers will regularly set exam style questions in class and for homework. At the end of each unit the students' progress will be assessed with an end of unit test.

Further to this, there are opportunities to sit full examinations as part of the school's mock exam calendar. Student's progress is carefully tracked by their teachers and they will be provided with regular oral and written feedback.

Literacy in History

Literacy is central to the work of the History department. In History we regularly give student's opportunities to develop their extended writing skills, through responding to historical enquiry questions and through formal assessment pieces and homework. Through our marking and feedback, we ensure students reflect on their own writing style and improve their spelling punctuation and grammar.

Students also develop their reading skills in History as they are exposed to a wide range of fiction and non fiction texts. We also encourage students to engage with enrichment texts through a list of recommended books that link to the History curriculum.

Students develop their vocabulary each lesson as key words are written down and then applied in context. We believe that good oracy supports literacy and History offers many opportunities for students to debate, present and explain their ideas verbally before putting it into writing.

Raising aspirations in History

The History department is keen to ensure the highest aspirations for students of all abilities. We strive to ensure that our students are kept engaged through enquiry led learning and high-level questioning and debate in the classroom.

In addition to this, we encourage students to complete a wide range of homework which supports them in developing the knowledge, reading skills, extended writing and research skills they will need for a wide range of careers.

Numeracy in History

The History department work to ensure that the importance of numeracy is recognised and its applications in everyday life. We seize opportunities to integrate numeracy into the History curriculum wherever possible.

We also promote Maths in History as appropriate, for example through the exploration of the role of Alan Turing in breaking the Enigma code during World War 2.

Broadening horizons in History

The History department is passionate about giving students a wide range of experiences and opportunities. As part of our commitment to 'broadening horizons' we run yearly trips to Hampton Court Palace for Year 7 as part of their study of the Tudors and the English Reformation and an Imperial War Museum trip for Year 9

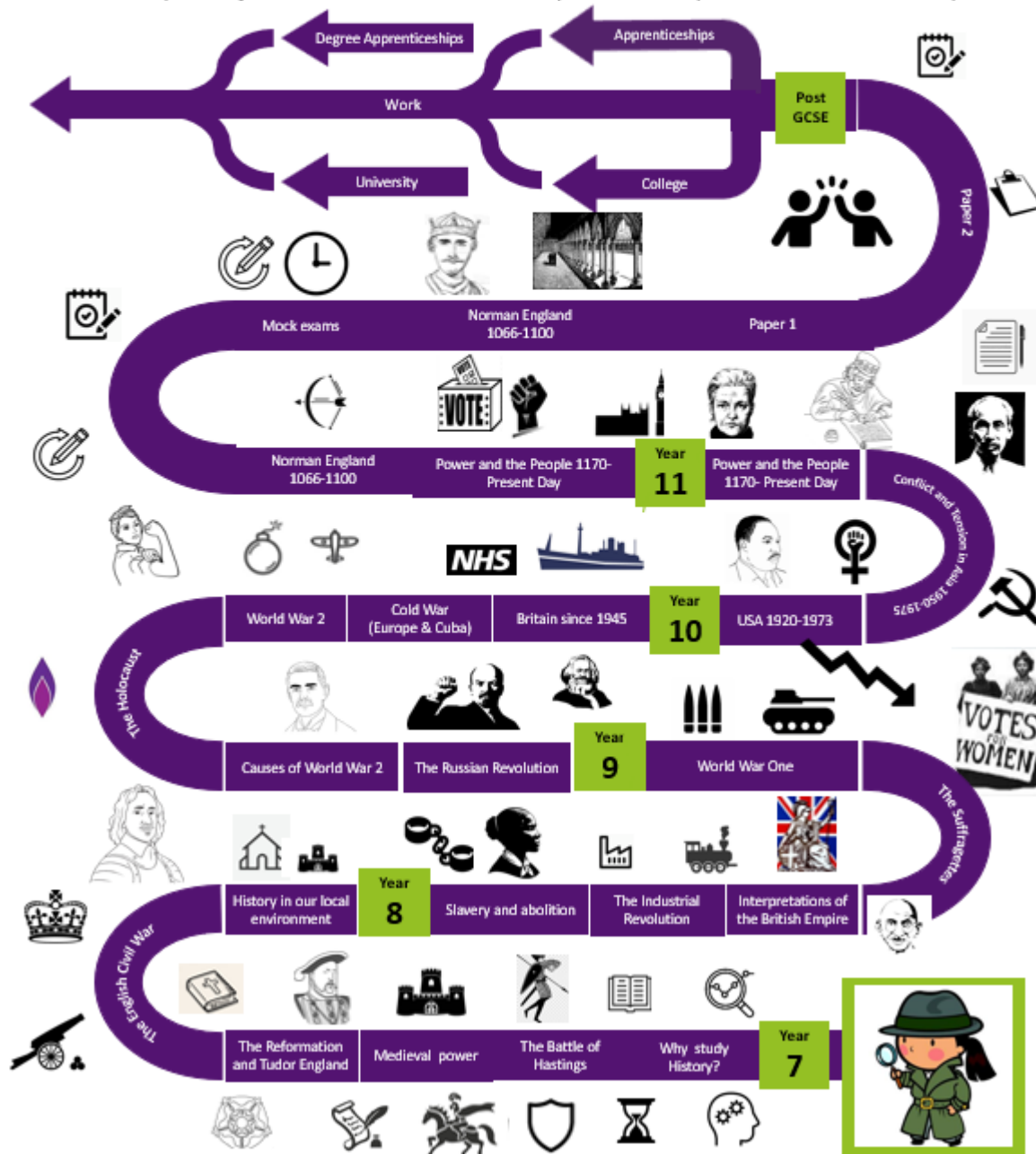
In addition to this, the History department have run regular trips to Ypres and the World War One Battlefields. Students have been given the opportunity to visit Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world, as well as the German cemetery at Langemark. Students have had an opportunity to visit the Passchendaele Museum, the Menin gate and the beautiful city of Ypres to visit the many chocolate shops on offer!

We have also run trips to Poland for students to experience the beautiful city of Krakow and to engage with Auschwitz, the site of Nazi concentration and extermination camps during World War 2.

History Learning Journey

ACE historians are **A**rticulate, **C**urious and **E**ngaged

They ask questions because they know that understanding the past helps them understand the world they live in today. **ACE** historians use and weigh evidence to make considered judgements. They know that history is not just a narrative but can be interpreted and experienced in different ways.



What Students Say...

Year 9 student:

"I think History is really important because it helps me understand the world today."

Year 7 student:

"I really enjoyed History this year, especially doing my local History presentation on Lewes Castle. I was nervous presenting to my class mates but everyone was really supportive."

Year 11 GCSE History student:

History is a challenging GCSE but the topics are really interesting, I particularly liked learning about the Vietnam war.

Parents can help students at KS3 and KS4 by...

Get students involved in conversations about the world around them. What is in the news?

Buying revision guides from parent pay for GCSE students.

Helping them revise by checking their knowledge of key terms and key ideas.

Supporting with homework and asking them what they are doing in lessons- the more they talk about their learning the better!

Visiting sites of historical interest in their free time.

Encouraging them to attend History trips.

Encouraging them to read, confident readers make excellent historians.



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