



Historical Association

The voice for history

Historical Association Survey Report 2024

The status of history in English primary schools

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Executive summary

The Historical Association (HA) is a charity incorporated by Royal Charter, founded in 1906 to further the study and enjoyment of history. The HA currently has 9400 full members, largely made up of schools and individuals with a professional interest in history: teachers, academics, museum educators and archivists. Of these, 4200 are primary members.

This survey follows our pattern of biennial surveys which continue to build up an accurate picture of the status of history in English primary schools. The aim of both the 2017 and 2019 surveys was to find out how the 2014 curriculum had been embedded in primary schools, what impact it had made and any issues that still remained. The 2019 survey, while reported in 2020, was carried out before the new Ofsted Inspection Framework became statutory. However, responses indicated shifts that may have been a result of the draft framework. In 2022, the survey continued to monitor these shifts as well as the impact of Covid and the Black Lives Matter movement and subsequent debates about diversity in history. With 2024 being an election year, the primary survey was stripped back to a shorter, more concise snapshot of the status of history and key issues affecting history education in English primary schools to enable us to present an accurate picture to policy makers over the coming year.

The findings reported here are based on the responses of primary history teachers to an online survey sent to all schools in England teaching children in the 5-to-11 age range. The survey was conducted during the summer term of 2024. Responses were received from 554 individual primary history teachers and educators in total. Of these 287 answered a question about how long they had been teaching. 55% have at least 10 years of teaching experience and 78% identify themselves as the subject leader for history in their school. 44% of respondents have not studied history beyond GCSE level, slightly lower than the 46% reported in 2022. Independent schools account for 4% of responses, while the majority (89%) are from the maintained sector. The remaining 7% of responses come from free schools and those placing themselves in the 'other' category. The majority (79%) of respondents are schools offering mainstream provision from age 3 or 5 to 11. 8% of responses are from schools offering specifically designated infant school provision.

Of those 276 schools who responded to the question, 51% identify themselves as being part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). This is a rise from the 40% who indicated that they were part of a MAT in 2022.

The majority of schools responding have above-national-average levels of pupils eligible for free school meals and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, but below average numbers for other protected characteristics.

Of the 286 who responded to the question, one-third indicate that they hold either a degree or postgraduate qualification in history in 2024. This figure was lower in the 2022 survey, with 29% indicating a history degree or postgraduate qualification. This is unrepresentative of primary teachers more widely.

70% of the 281 who answered the question indicate that they are members of the HA and of the 279 who answered the question, 92% come from a White British background.

In order to make the survey as accessible and inclusive as possible, not all questions were mandatory; therefore, the findings expressed here have been calculated based upon the numbers (up to the maximum response set of 554) who actually answered that specific question. The numbers answering each question are given along with the commentary.

Key findings

- The features and patterns in primary history in 2024 are similar to those noted in the 2022 survey.
- The majority of schools follow the National Curriculum (NC) and history is taught discretely in most schools in Key Stage 1 and especially Key Stage 2. Less than 10% of respondents report not following it fully. Most devise their own curriculum but use any published schemes selectively.
- Some groups of schools have a common curriculum which can cause challenges when devising a curriculum that reflects the particular school cohort.
- Pupil views about history are generally very positive.
- Teachers have more mixed views about teaching the subject but sometimes this is due to not recognising opportunities and flexibility within the National Curriculum. Whereas some perceive it as it vague, others feel it to be prescriptive. There is some concern about the heavy concentration on early history and a desire for teaching more modern periods and themes. A fairly common view is that the amount that needs to be covered detracts from the enjoyment of the subject because of time pressures.
- There is a relatively high degree of confidence in teaching and assessing second-order/disciplinary concepts. As in 2022 similarity and difference has the highest confidence rate and interpretations the lowest.
- It is often felt that history is an accessible subject for all pupils, with strategies for making it comprehensible for all pupils especially those with SEND, but there was less feedback about challenges for the higher attainers.

- Aspects of historical diversity are common in many primary schools especially gender, ethnicity and different social groups often spread amongst local, national and global topics. However, a wider definition of diversity is missing in many schools with topics such as disability and LGBTQ+ histories less prominent.
- Schools refer to monitoring and assessing pupil progress and achievement especially using live and informal processes such as book looks and question and answer. Other assessment alternatives are under-utilised such as extended writing and through oracy.
- Many teachers report having some history CPD, but this was limited.
- Many schools report a good range of history enrichment activities especially visits and visitors. Pupil Premium is sometimes used to facilitate these activities.

Section 1: Survey qualification and context

1. Do you teach in a primary school in England?

Total responses: 600

Yes: 554

No: 46

Given that the 46 who answered no could not progress any further with the survey, the total possible response set was calculated as 554.

2. What type of school is it?

536 responses

Type of school	Number	Percent
Free School	6	1.1
Independent pre-prep	1	0.2
Independent prep	14	3
Independent through 3-18	7	1.3
Independent special	1	0.2
Maintained infant or junior	42	8
Maintained primary 5-11	193	36
Maintained primary 3-11	232	43
Maintained special	5	0.9
Maintained middle	2	0.4
Maintained through 3-18	5	0.9
Other	28	5

Of the 536 who answered the question, 89% were from schools in the maintained sector and 4.7% identified as independent sector schools.

Nearly half of respondents identified as offering provision across the 3-11 category, so including early years provision. When this is combined with all-through schools offering provision from 3-18 and pre-prep schools also offering education in the early phase, this shows that 45% of those responding to the survey have some kind of early years provision in their schools.

Only 1.1% of responses (6) came from special schools, either from the independent or state sector.

Potentially 5% of respondents to this question (29) are based in schools that have no requirement to follow the National Curriculum. However, it should be noted that those in maintained sector schools who have academised also do not have to follow the National Curriculum, although this is due to change. This is not what was shown in the responses to Question 7 where the vast majority of schools are shown to follow the National Curriculum. This perhaps indicates that the National Curriculum is followed in independent schools and that the NC document continues to hold a great deal of influence in schools.

Close to 8% of responses came from single phase schools (42).

Of the 5% who selected 'other', half of these selected this option to express that they were an academy or MAT. Eight responses (1.48%) specifically identified themselves as part of a MAT. This does not equate with the number of responses to Question 3 which is specifically related to being part of a MAT or federation (276/51.4%), suggesting that teachers identify initially with the school rather than the MAT/Federation/Academy.

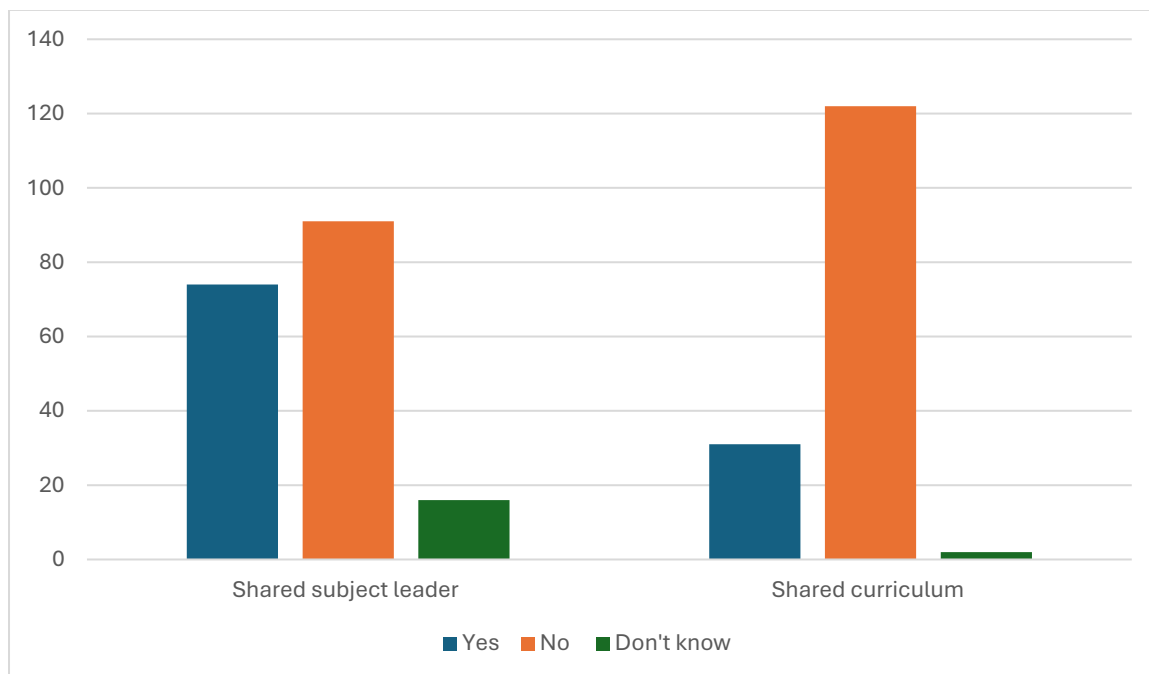
Other responses indicate faith schools or voluntary-aided status, as well as some 'first' schools and some saying they were 'state' schools. This shows that for some there are clear misunderstandings around the terminology relating to schools and how they are funded. For those in faith schools, it may be indicative of a higher importance placed upon the faith element of the school's status.

As the majority of all responses elicited were from the maintained sector (89%), any changes to the National Curriculum will affect them.

3. If your school is part of a Multi Academy Trust or federation, do schools in the trust share a common history curriculum and/or a subject leader for history?

Part A 180 responses, Part B 164 responses

This question contained two parts and was designed to elicit the extent to which those schools in MATs or federations share a subject leader or curriculum for history. Only 29-32% of respondents answered this question. This may be indicative of close to 70% of the total response set therefore either choosing to skip the question or not being part of a MAT or federation.



Just over 40% of those who responded to this question have a shared history curriculum. This suggests that a number of schools still function individually within MATs. The number sharing a curriculum raises questions about how individual local histories are accommodated within schools in disparate locations, as well as questions about the level of autonomy of history subject leaders in these schools, especially given that far fewer schools have a shared subject leader (19%) than a shared curriculum. It could also indicate further issues with shared planning and organisation in history. Relating to the needs of children with respect to ethnic and cultural diversity, and drawing out enthusiasm and expertise of staff within schools, may suffer from the stultifying effects of common planning across different school contexts.

This suggests that there is a potential need to find out how individual school subject leads across the MAT communicate to manage a shared curriculum or how leaders share ideas across the MAT where there are differences.

Between 10-15% of respondents did not know about either shared curriculum or subject leadership within their MAT, potentially raising questions about communication within those trusts.

Of those providing a response about a shared history curriculum, 17.2% (31%) also specifically identified that they do not have a shared subject leader. This number represented 41.8% of all answering 'yes' to having a shared curriculum.

Of those providing a response about the shared subject leader, 7.3% (12%) also specifically identified that they do not have a shared curriculum. This represented 38.7% of all answering 'yes' to having a shared subject lead.

Of those answering this question, only 13 responded that they share both a subject leader and a shared curriculum across the MAT.

	Responding to question re: shared curriculum/subject lead	Responding yes	Responding yes to one and specifically no to the other	Percentage of those responding yes who had specific response for the other
Shared history curriculum	180/100%	74/41.1%	31/17%	31>74 41.8%>100%
Shared subject lead	164/100%	31/ 18.9%	12/7.31%	12>31 38.7%.100%

4. Approximately how many pupils are in the school?

430 responses

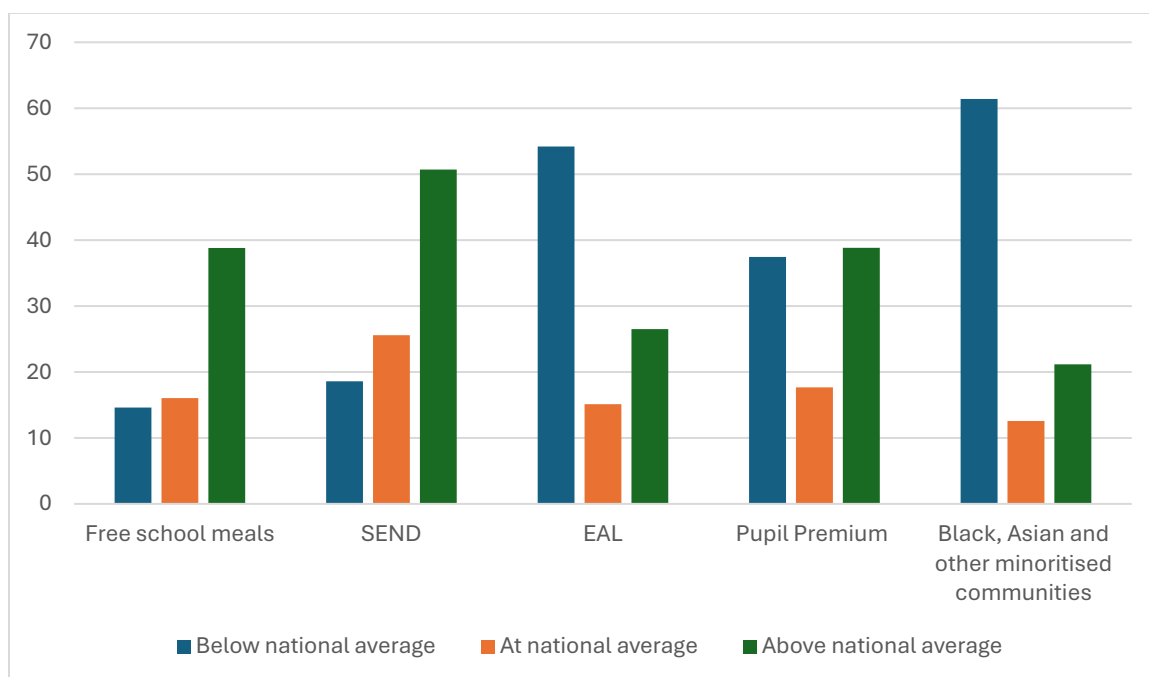
Number on roll	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Less than 50	3	0.7
50-100	24	5.58
101-200	95	22.09
201-300	127	29.53
301-400	70	16.28
401-500	70	16.28
More than 500	41	9.35

Less than 10% of respondents come from small schools (fewer than 100 pupils). Conversely, close to 10% of respondents are based in very large schools. The greatest number of school respondents are in schools between 100-300 pupils (51.6%/222), suggesting one form or one-and-a-half form entry (with 30 per class). This suggests that the norm for primary schools is still for smaller schools, although it is interesting to note that 42% of responses reflect schools of over 300 pupils (two-form entry and above). This is an increase on the data from 2022 when 31% were in this bracket, suggesting a growing trend for larger school sizes. This could have implications for both school and subject leadership across multiple parallel classes.

5. What are the proportions of the following groups in your school?

430 responses

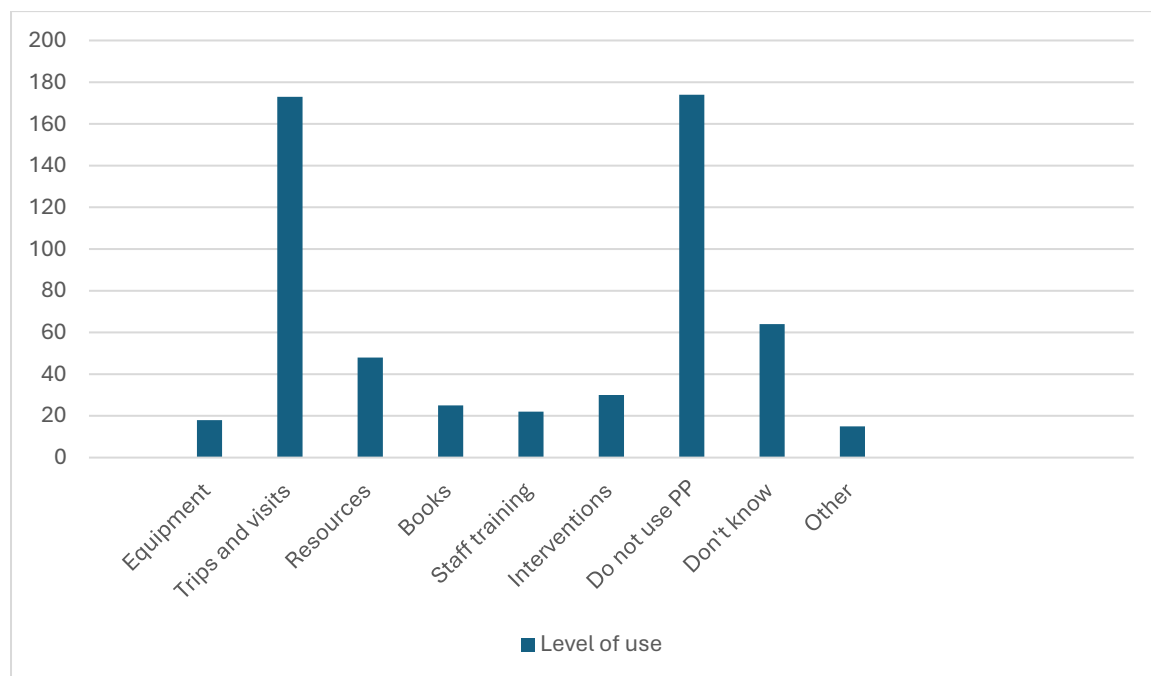
Category	Below national average	At national average	Above national average	Well above national average	Don't know
Free School Meals (national average 24%)	117 14.16%	69 16.05%	117 27.21%	48 11.16%	19 4.42%
Special Educational Needs (national average 17.3%)	80 18.60%	110 25.58%	167 38.84%	51 11.86%	22 5.12%
Black, Asian and other minoritised communities (33.5%)	264 61.40%	54 12.56%	54 12.56%	37 8.60%	21 4.88%
Pupil Premium (national average 24.8%)	161 37.44%	76 17.67%	117 27.21%	50 11.63%	26 6.05%
English as an Additional Language (national average 22%)	234 54.42%	65 15.12%	68 15.81%	46 10.70%	17 3.95%



Within the responses, only SEND and Free School Meals do not show a large response for ‘below national average’ with 51% of respondents stating that their cohorts reflected numbers above or well above the national average for SEND and 39% for Free School Meals. The highest response rate for all categories except for SEND and Free School Meals was reporting numbers below the national average. It is notable within the response set that 61.4% report below national average numbers of children from Black, Asian and other minoritised communities. This may be indicative of a correlation with the geographical range of responses, perhaps reflecting fewer inner-city schools. 54.42% also report below-average numbers of EAL students and 37.44% report below-average Pupil Premium (PP). Conversely, 38.84% report above or well above the national average for Pupil Premium (38.84%) with few responses sitting at the average. While 39% report above or well above proportions of pupils on free school meals, only 14% indicate numbers below the national average. This may be indicative of a sizeable proportion of responses coming from schools in more challenging economic environments.

6. If you use some Pupil Premium funding to engage disadvantaged pupils in history, how is it used?

430 responses



Respondents were asked to tick as many options as applied. This means that some respondents selected more than one option. The graph represents the frequency of selection.

40% make use of Pupil Premium funding in history for trips and visits, a key element in history teaching to develop understanding both of the history being taught, but also of the role of museums and sites in history education. This is an important element considering wider cultural engagement for those children in areas of social deprivation. It is unclear if this funding is used for all children within a class or just for those pupils qualifying.

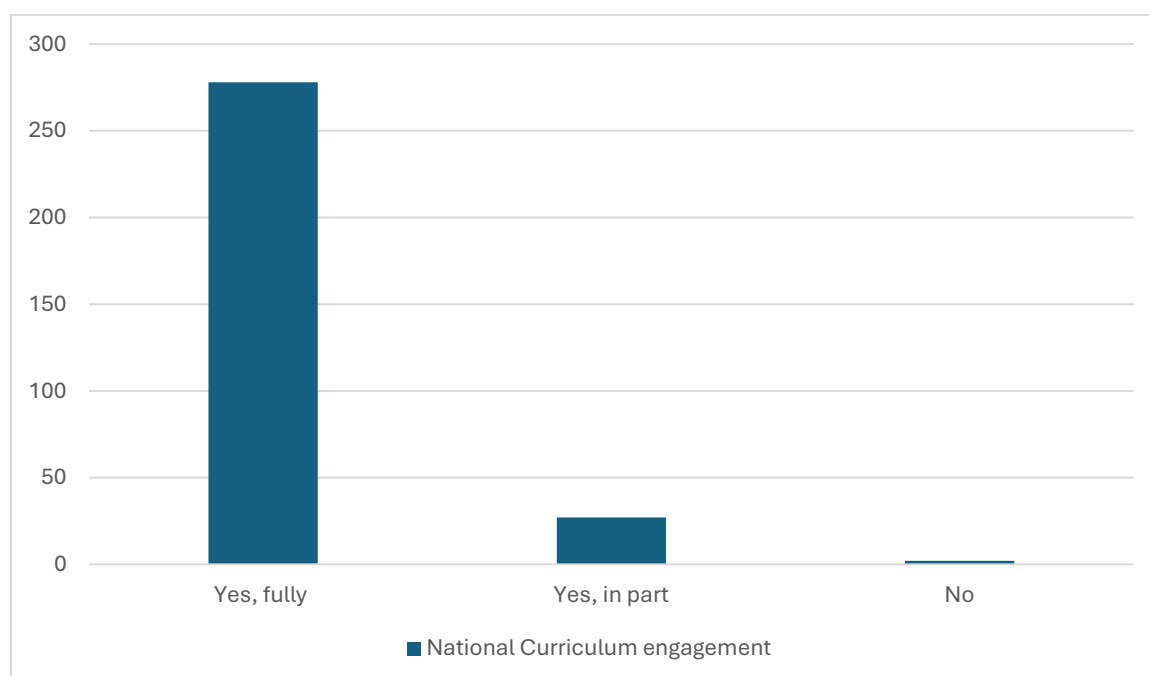
Sadly, over 40% do not use Pupil Premium funding to support history at all. While this is not surprising, especially given current literacy and numeracy levels and in the context of accountability measures, it is saddening to see that in a broad and balanced curriculum, funding for the education of the whole child is diverted to a small collection of subjects.

124 did not respond to this question which may suggest a lack of knowledge of how Pupil Premium funding is being used.

Section 2: The National Curriculum

7. Do you follow the current National Curriculum for history?

307 responses



Less than 1% of respondents to this question do not follow the National Curriculum at all. Given the numbers that stated they were part of a MAT in question 3, this is perhaps indicative of most MATS following the National Curriculum despite the fact that, at present, this is not mandatory.

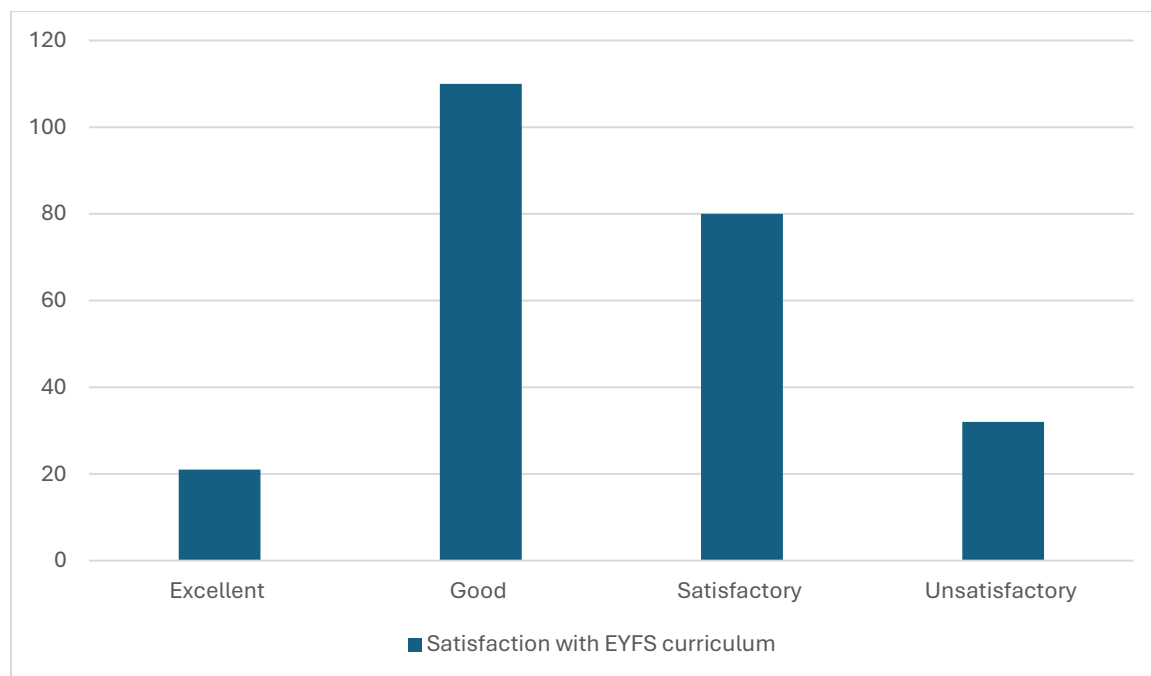
The current National Curriculum is used fully in over 90% of schools that responded. This suggests that it provides a structure that has become embedded in school practice. Only 8.79% of schools choose not to follow it completely and there may be some correlation here with those independent schools (and some MATS and free schools) responding who often follow the National Curriculum by adopting parts of it.

There were, however, 293 people who did not respond to this question, suggesting perhaps that they are not sure about what happens across the school.

These results mirror the response to this question in the 2022 survey, demonstrating the continued influence of the National Curriculum despite its current non-statutory status (albeit due to change).

8. How far do you think the current EYFS framework provides a good foundation for understanding history?

307 responses



Just under half of respondents to this question (49.19%/131 respondents) feel that the EYFS framework provides a good or excellent foundation for understanding history. Of these, 6.84% (21 respondents) feel it provides an excellent foundation. 26% (80 respondents) believe it provides a satisfactory foundation and a further 10.42% (32) do not consider the EYFS framework to provide a good foundation for understanding history.

Of those who responded that foundations are positive, typical comments include:

“It sets the bedrock for learning in KS1 - communication, observing, describing, researching and the development of the concept of chronology. All these elements are further reinforced throughout KS1 and KS2.”

Other positive comments relate to the high emphasis placed on children focusing on their family history and their own past:

“It helps the children to begin to look at the past from their own perspective.”

Some responses are positive about the flexibility of the EYFS framework and its ability to be linked to continuous provision and thematic learning. Those which are more negative tend

to feel that the EYFS framework lacks specificity and would benefit from more explicit links to the National Curriculum:

“There is discontinuity between EYFS and KS1, especially regarding teacher assessment, pedagogy and practice.”

Some respondents also feel that successful implementation of the EYFS framework is too *“dependent on teacher input”* and that EYFS teachers would benefit from further guidance.

9. How far do you think the current National Curriculum for history meets the needs of pupils aged 5-11? Please explain your answer with reference to both Key Stages 1 and 2.

307 responses

This was an open-ended question inviting written responses.

Positive and negative responses were counted up and only 25% (61) of respondents gave fully positive comments, feeling that the current National Curriculum for history did meet the needs of pupils across the primary phase, finding it to be broad and balanced and with a good range of coverage.

The comments provided about what should change were categorised according to the main emphasis of responses. These categorisations and the most frequent types of comments are given below.

General observations

- Some respondents do not seem to want flexibility and choice but prefer to be directed with limited diversity of options in coverage (these kinds of comments came from MATs particularly).
- Skills and concepts are often intermingled and non-specific.
- The relative openness of Key Stage 1 requirements is seen by some as positive and others as too vague.
- There is general acceptance that the Key Stage 2 programme offers a solid structure to history teaching in this phase.
- The curriculum is seen as too full and too generalised in relation particularly to knowledge and content.

Content

- The greatest number of responses relate to what is felt to be too much content: *“The current National Curriculum tries to cram too much into too short a time”*.
- Content has been described as both too vague and too prescriptive by different responders.
- Some content is described as inaccessible for children due to complexity of conceptual understanding or the amount of content to be covered.
- Content is also felt to be inaccessible or inappropriate for children with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who lacked wider historical literacy.
- Content is described as too broad in terms of content identified but also vague in relation to how this should be developed or taught e.g. the focus on Key Stage 1 stories/significant individuals.
- Coherence between Key Stage 1 and 2 has been highlighted as an issue, with a jump from open content guidance in Key Stage 1 to prescribed periods in Key Stage 2.
- Missing options or gaps in curriculum content were identified, particularly in relation to more opportunities for modern history that were previously within the pre-2014 National Curriculum.
- Covering content within small schools with mixed age range classes continues to be difficult and schools would like support with this.
- The amount of content to be covered in relation to the amount of teaching time has led to superficial coverage with little depth. *“I think there are too many periods of history to cover which results in a superficial teaching of them as there is limited time to deepen understanding.”*
- Quite a bit of content is seen as too long ago and too far away from children (Stone Age to Iron Age/Greece/Shang all mentioned in this respect).

Chronology

- National Curriculum requirements could be easily used to create framework and structure given the sequenced chronology.
- The chronological coverage provides difficulties in moving from Key Stage 1 to 2 with a jump from more recent history back to prehistory.
- Several comments suggest difficulties in teaching Key Stage 2 in chronological order beginning with prehistory in Year 3, linked to children’s mathematical understanding at this age. More joined-up thinking across subjects is needed. This is of course indicative of a misconception that the Key Stage 2 curriculum must be taught in chronological order, which is not in fact specified, but is a situation which where possible might be desirable.

- Questions continue in relation to the focus on British history pre-1066 and ancient history that precludes links to pupils' own experiences.
- The time span of Stone to Iron Age is felt to be too great and difficult for pupils to encompass conceptually and cognitively.

Enjoyment and interest

- There were a small number who raised points in this area.
- Children enjoy history but require more time and there needs to be time to investigate and undertake historical enquiry.
- Interest and excitement have been taken from the curriculum by too much content and knowledge overload.

Diversity

- Content is seen as too westernised or British focused: *"Very orientated to a western viewpoint. Would like objectives incorporated that meet needs of our multicultural society. 'Home' influence and National Curriculum do not necessarily combine well."*
- Comments indicate that there is not enough cultural diversity and different stories that speak to children.
- The relevance of the content particularly through the focus on ancient and prehistory topics is felt to be a hindrance in making valid links with children's own lived experiences.
- There is not felt to be enough space for indigenous voices and individual school contexts within content.

Parity

- There are a number of responses highlighting concerns about parity of experience between different schools. This is generally linked to schools within a MAT. Comments are sometimes linked to concepts/objectives or sometimes the order of or coverage of content. Local history and units with option choices are seen as divisive rather than positive: *"This focus on compliance and uniformity is rather disappointing. It negates the need to reference and celebrate the individual contexts of schools."*

Ofsted

- Expectations that Ofsted introduced in the 2019 framework are seen as shaping and potentially limiting what schools do: *"A recent Ofsted inspection focused on provision for*

SEND students and in history, required exact dates of certain civilisations and British history. Is that what we are supposed to be teaching?"

- There were some views reported considering the importance of focusing on primary as a precursor to secondary and what needs to be done to ensure this relationship and transition is strong. This is linked to Ofsted commentary. *"The filtering down from secondary school level of historical concepts and themes is making Key Stage 1 and 2 history harder for children to access, especially for some EAL children who don't have access to some of the vocabulary being used. The content is getting too hard for Primary school."*

Local history

- While some comments find local history to be divisive because it did not provide parity for some schools in MATs, overall, local history is perceived as a strength of the National Curriculum, although more support is requested for planning and development of resources.
- Local history is seen as important for linking children to their own place and contexts.

Skills and concepts

- Comments on these are few and far between – which in itself is notable. Comments that were given belie a continued lack of general understanding among primary teachers who are often non-specialists.
- Substantive concepts were not discussed except for chronology.
- 'Concepts' (unspecified) in general are described as too complex.

Assessment and progression

- Very little reference was made to this aside from occasional references to progression between Key Stages 1 and 2, and progression within small schools/mixed-age classes. Again, this perhaps highlights an area where there is less understanding and a need for training.

Overall, comments about the curriculum reflect a very mixed picture of positive and negative feelings regarding the suitability, effectiveness and engagement of the National Curriculum, as highlighted by the two sample comments below:

"The KS1 curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to develop a real love and curiosity around history. There is scope to design the curriculum to meet the contextual needs and

interest levels of pupils. The KS2 curriculum doesn't offer as much flexibility and many of the aspects required to be taught are inaccessible to pupils, have limited sources appropriate to the age range and, due to its complexity, often turns children off history, giving them the impression that it is dry, hard work and irrelevant. The local history studies are the only units that really have potential to be designed in an engaging way." **Respondent 1**

"I think it has some great topics. Some schemes of work my colleagues and I have seen or used in other schools are a little too high brow and written almost for secondary-aged pupils... I think it's important to make history fun for primary. Children love artefacts, dressing up and experiencing life from the past but if the vocabulary is too demanding they're just swamped and overloaded. We are dealing with increasing numbers of children who don't read and spend lots of time staring at screens so if we bamboozle them too much with tricky history about obscure regions then we destroy their motivation to learn."

Respondent 2

10. Are there any areas of history that you feel should be part of a required Primary National Curriculum but are not currently covered? Please explain below. Please enter 'don't know' or 'none' if you do not have any comment to make.

307 responses

This was an open-ended question with the aim of eliciting what changes (if any) respondents would like to see made to the National Curriculum in terms of content coverage or the teaching of concepts and skills.

The majority of those who outlined particular areas of content that they would like to see, feel that there should be a much greater focus on modern history than the current curriculum allows. The Tudors, the Industrial Revolution, Victorians and World War II were mentioned repeatedly as options by 51 respondents:

"I know it can be included under events beyond 1066, but I think the Victorians and WW2 must be statutory, especially as they [are] significant for the whole world as well as the UK."

Another key theme to emerge from comments is a desire for the inclusion of more diverse content which was mentioned by 44 respondents. This included a range of dimensions: Black history, women's history, and disability history among others. Many respondents suggest that Black history should be included within a specific focus on themes such as empire, civil rights, Commonwealth and migration:

"I feel that more modern elements of history should be included which develop the understanding of diversity for ALL our children. Events such as the Windrush generation

should be compulsory. This would also benefit white mono-ethnic pupils from an anti-racist perspective.”

With respect to overall British history, several respondents feel there should be a greater focus on these islands (beyond the English dimension to include Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Channel Islands), while others want more focus on developing children’s understanding of monarchy and parliament.

With respect to other regions of the world, there were suggestions for more African, American, Australian (First Nations), European and Asian history. The focus for the latter is specifically linked to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Some respondents also feel that there needs to be more local history embedded within the curriculum.

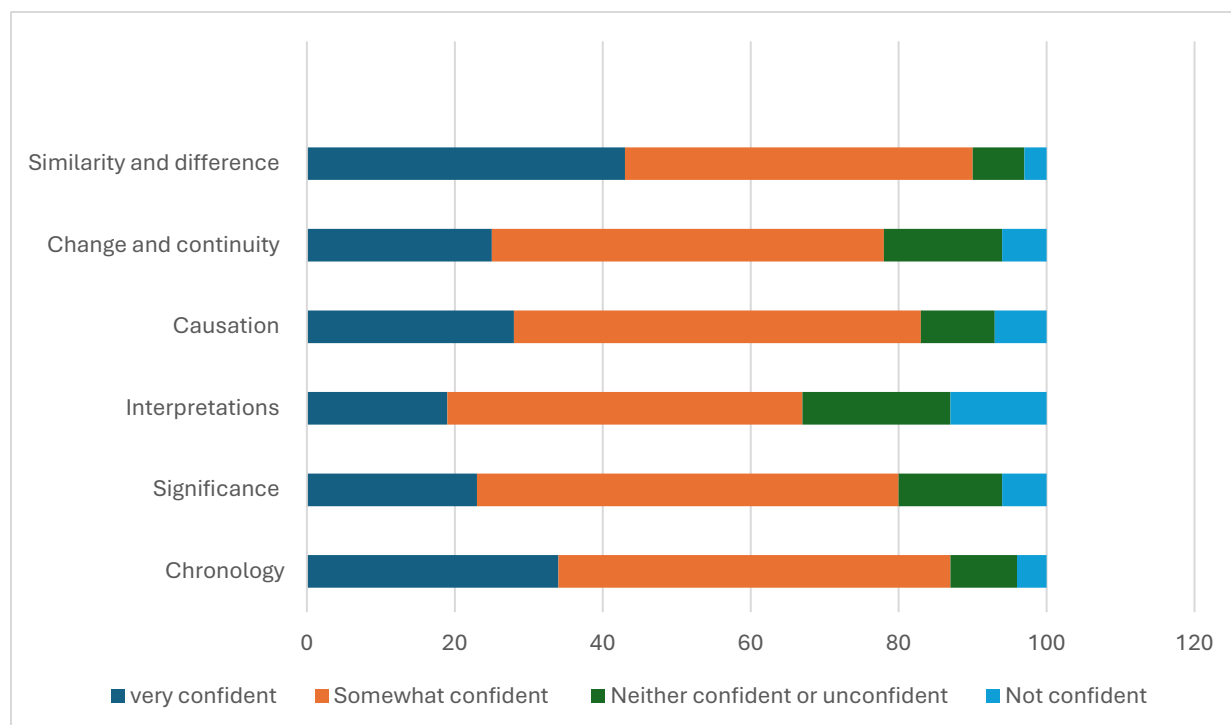
Some also feel that there should be fewer prescribed topics on the National Curriculum:

“I feel there should be more scope to teach topics that are not listed on the curriculum. We do a topic on the history of our school, which the children really enjoy... more time to do that would be great.”

Section 3: Assessing history

11. How confident do you feel in identifying when and how children are getting better at history?

302 responses



Most respondents said they feel 'very' or 'somewhat' confident in identifying when and how children get better at history. The strongest areas where primary teachers feel this is in the concept of *similarity and difference* (90.07% very or somewhat confident), followed by *chronology* (87.42% very or somewhat confident) and *cause and consequence* (83.35% very or somewhat confident).

The area of least confidence is *historical interpretations* (66.55% very or somewhat confident). 13.25% of respondents (40) stated they are not confident in this area, suggesting this is an area of relative weakness in relation to planning for progression in primary history. These findings broadly mirror the results of the 2022 survey which also found that teachers felt most confident in relation to similarity and difference and least confident in relation to historical interpretations.

12. What are the main/most common ways in which history is assessed? Please tick all that apply.

297 responses

Assessment type	Number of responses	Percentage
Question and answer	246	83%
Book looks	240	81%
Extended writing	85	29%
Targeted shorter written exercises.	120	40%
Presentations	49	16%
Project task	64	22%
Group work.	73	25%
We do not assess history.	16	5%
Other (please specify)	75	25%

This question allowed respondents to tick as many options as they felt appropriate so as to gauge which the most popular forms of assessment in primary history are.

Virtually all respondents use several assessment approaches. The question-and-answer approach is the most commonly used, followed by book looks – both are undertaken by a very high proportion of respondents. This is unsurprising as both are informal types of assessment that can take place during the course of lessons.

Less than half of respondents use extended writing, targeted written tasks, presentations, group work, or projects. This suggests that there continues to be less formal assessment of history in primary schools, with 5% (16) going so far as to say they don't assess history at all. Having said that, 40% (120) indicate that they assess short written answer exercises and 25% (75) said they used 'other' methods. Within these, a range of activities such as quizzes, drama and analysing artefacts were cited as vehicles for assessment. It is interesting to note

in the light of the recent Oracy Commission report [We Need to Talk](#) that only 16% (49) of respondents to this question indicate that they assess history through pupil presentations and oral assessment was not picked up frequently in 'other' comments either.

Overall, very few respondents indicate that they do not assess history. When compared with the 2022 survey both indicate that most respondents continue to use a mixture of approaches and methods. Overall, the percentage of respondents undertaking projects and extended writing assessments has reduced to 30% in 2024 from 41% in the last survey, with a greater emphasis on book looks and question-and-answer in 2024. However, the use of question-and-answer was not identified in 2022, yet it has become the most important form of assessment at 83% in this year's survey (246).

13. How do you ensure that teaching is effectively adapted for all learners?

287 responses

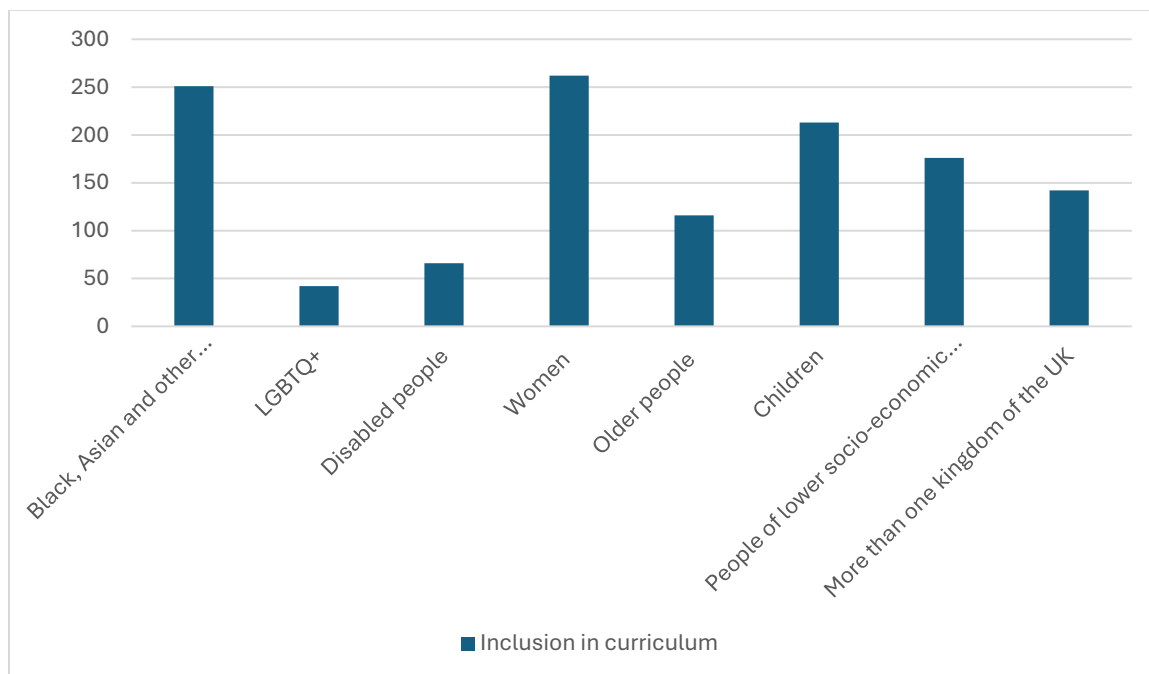
This was an open-ended question inviting written responses. Several trends emerged from this; notably that 21.6% (62 respondents) specifically say that they adapt lessons for all learners. In addition to this, 16% (46 responses) make specific reference to adapting lessons and/or resources to meet pupil needs. A further 6.9% (20) specify that they use a range of resources to adapt learning (e.g. pictures, artefacts) and go beyond written tasks to meet different pupil needs, including drama and practical activities.

In addition to key trends which have been specified it is interesting to note specific comments made to support these, including: the use of pre-learning tasks such as word banks to enhance access; pair/group work; splitting lessons into small steps and providing additional adult support. On occasion respondents refer to stretching some children (e.g. by asking them to justify decisions) but this response was the exception to the rule and most responses were focused on adaptations for lower attainers or those with SEND.

Some respondents focus on how this area is managed in their school, with 25 references to managing monitoring/observing lessons as well reference to whole school policy. Eleven respondents indicate that staff training has been provided to deal with this area. Ten respondents indicate that they require help with respect to meeting the needs of all learners in history.

14. Which of the following voices from the past are included in your curriculum? These may include (but may not be limited to) the list below. Please tick all apply and use the other box option to include any voices not listed.

304 responses



In this question, respondents were encouraged to select all that applied to their history curriculum.

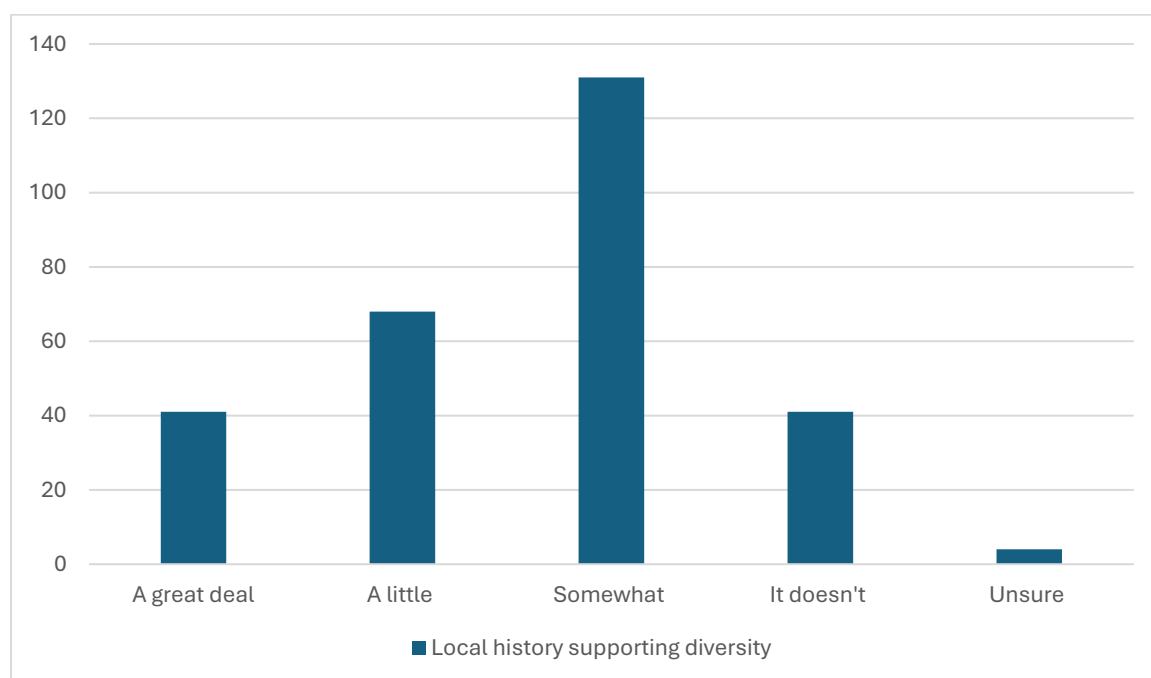
The responses reveal that there are significant differences between responses about teaching various aspects of diversity. A high number of teachers who responded to this question indicate that they teach about women, together with Black, Asian and minority communities. Over two-thirds of those who responded to this question also indicate that they include teaching about children in the past. Only 56% of teachers who responded to this question indicate that they teach people of lower economic and social status. This is perhaps indicative of a need to develop knowledge and resourcing of ordinary lives in the past. Almost half (47%) indicate that they taught about more than one of the countries within the United Kingdom. The other categories are taught by only a small number of teachers with only 22% including disabled people and 14% teaching LGBTQ+ stories. Most responses to the 'other' section are very general, although two responses specify teaching about Gypsy and Traveller communities, which is included in the 'Black, Asian and other minoritised communities' category, perhaps indicating some confusion over terminologies in this area.

The lack of LGBTQ+ and disabled people featuring in the primary history curriculum is a continuation of findings from 2022 and indicates that very little has changed in the last 2 years since the previous survey. What is not clear from this question is the frequency of

inclusion of the different groups identified, so it is impossible to draw any conclusions about how diverse the primary curriculum is now beyond what we know from previous surveys. We know that the inclusion of people from all of the categories identified has grown since 2019, apart from LGBTQ+ and disabled people, perhaps indicative of growth in understanding and inclusion of at least some areas of diversity from a lower starting point. However, the lack of development in the inclusion of LGBTQ+ or disability and the frequency of inclusion among other groups is something the HA will monitor in future surveys.

15. How far does your teaching of local history support an understanding of the diverse range of people in your local community?

286 responses



Most respondents to this question rated themselves between the two extremes of 'a great deal' and 'not at all'. However, the qualitative statements indicate a more nuanced picture. Equally as many indicate that their local study does not support understanding of the diversity of their local community as indicate that it supports understanding of diversity a great deal.

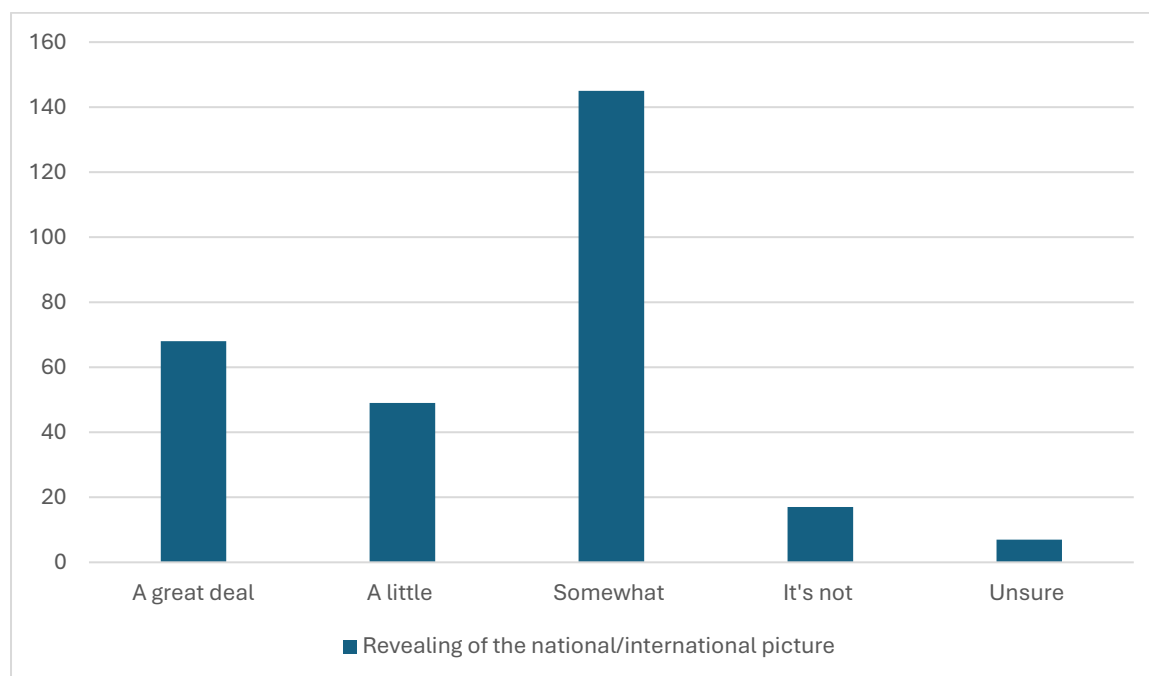
Respondents who indicate that a great deal is made of diversity in their local study included reference to how people have come to the local area, making links to industry and the transatlantic slave trade, for example. Respondents who indicate that little reference is made to diversity in their local study typically said that there is limited evidence of diversity in their locality. This perhaps reveals a continued lack of understanding of the broad nature of diversity by some.

Respondents who stated that diversity is 'somewhat taught in the local study' include those who address this by reference to different people who have come to the local area in the past, significant women within the history of their local community, and by including specific events such as the Bristol Bus Boycott. Respondents who said that they were unsure about how they addressed diversity in their local study typically cited lack of ethnic diversity in their local area.

The general pattern which emerges is that a considerable number of respondents have developed diversity in their local study. However, this does appear to have related more to ethnic diversity, with limited reference to other aspects of diversity. Respondents who considered that they had not developed diversity also typically related this to lack of ethnic diversity in their locality. This suggests a need to provide guidance related to what diversity includes when planning a local study.

16. How far does your teaching of local history relate to its broader national or world context?

286 responses



The overall impression from the quantitative data is an overwhelming proportion of respondents to this question making at least some links between their local study and its wider British and global context, albeit to varying degrees and extents. Matching qualitative and quantitative responses in each category provides a more nuanced insight into what they reflect.

Some respondents who said that they made great links between their locality and its wider national and global context specified specific topics, such as relating Manchester to the cotton industry and railways. Some respondents identified how people have migrated to their local area providing broader links to its wider global context. However, a few respondents related their local study to the history curriculum as a whole; for example, one teacher designed their curriculum so that each topic was related to their local context. Another respondent indicates that topics such as the Shang and Islam were selected so that they could relate them to their local community.

Respondents who indicate that 'little links' are made between the locality and its wider national and global context include a teacher who makes links between Oxford and transport to London and the north, or between the Romans in Colchester and the rest of

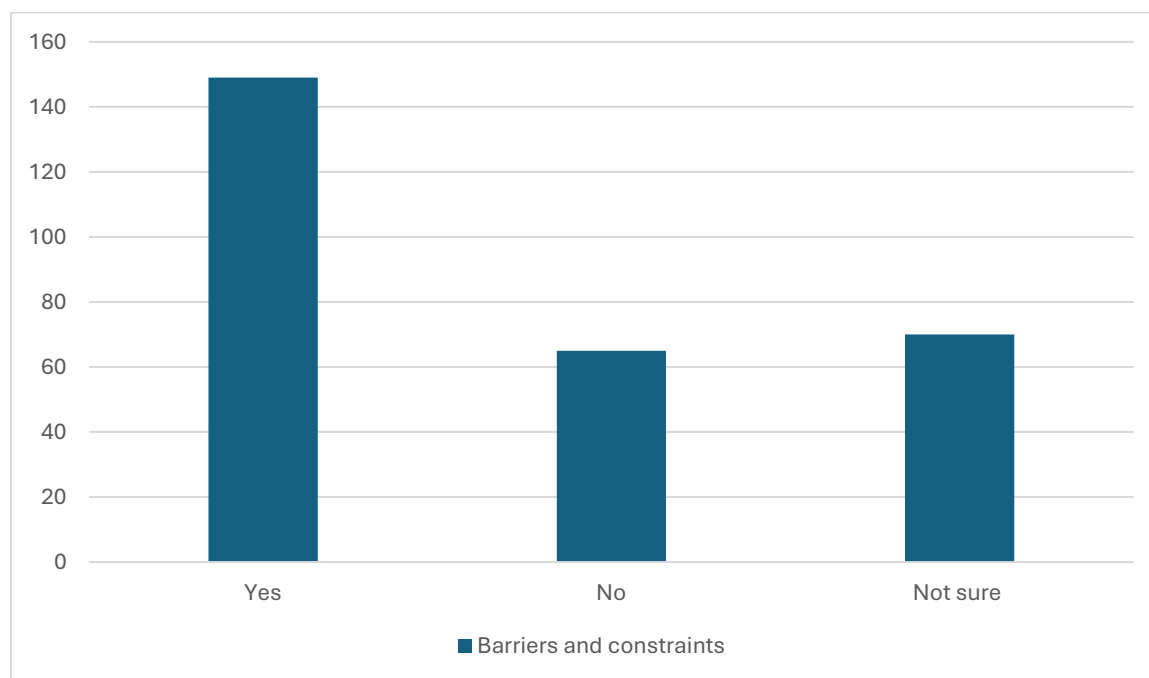
Britain. However, some respondents in this category said that they found making wider links challenging.

Respondents who said that they do not make links between their locality and a wider national or global context were limited in number. However, they typically feel that a local study should focus only on the local context or find it difficult to make wider links.

Respondents who indicate that they ‘somewhat’ make links between their locality and a wider national or global context include teachers who make specific links in a British context, for example a local dimension to topics such as the Romans, Tudors, and World Wars. However, some respondents drew links between local context and a global context, for example relating local cotton mills to Africa, America, and the Transatlantic slave trade, or using Walter Tull as a focus for exploring human rights.

17. Do you feel there are any barriers or challenges to making history more inclusive and diverse?

284 responses



Overall, less than a quarter (23%) of respondents indicate that they do not consider there to be any barriers or constraints to making history more inclusive and diverse. This a slight

decline on the responses in 2022 where over 30% considered that there were no barriers or constraints.

When viewed alongside comments, teacher perceptions of barriers/constraints affecting the implementation of a more diverse and inclusive curriculum are overwhelmingly around a perceived lack of resources available. This is comparable to teacher responses in 2022, indicating that this perception or the availability of resources has not improved.

Other comments indicate inadequate teacher knowledge, lack of teacher confidence and access to CPD, funding constraints and some citing perceived restrictions of the National Curriculum, especially given its focus on British history. This is also comparable to comments made in 2022. There were also a small number of comments about top-down management restricting implementation opportunities in some academy trusts.

A small minority of respondents felt that the limited diversity in their schools means that it is not relevant to them or that the community would react adversely. This is comparable to some comments made in 2022 by teachers in predominantly white schools – again, perhaps indicating a perception of diversity as only being about race and ethnicity. There is work to do to help teachers in all schools across the country to understand the need for a diverse history education.

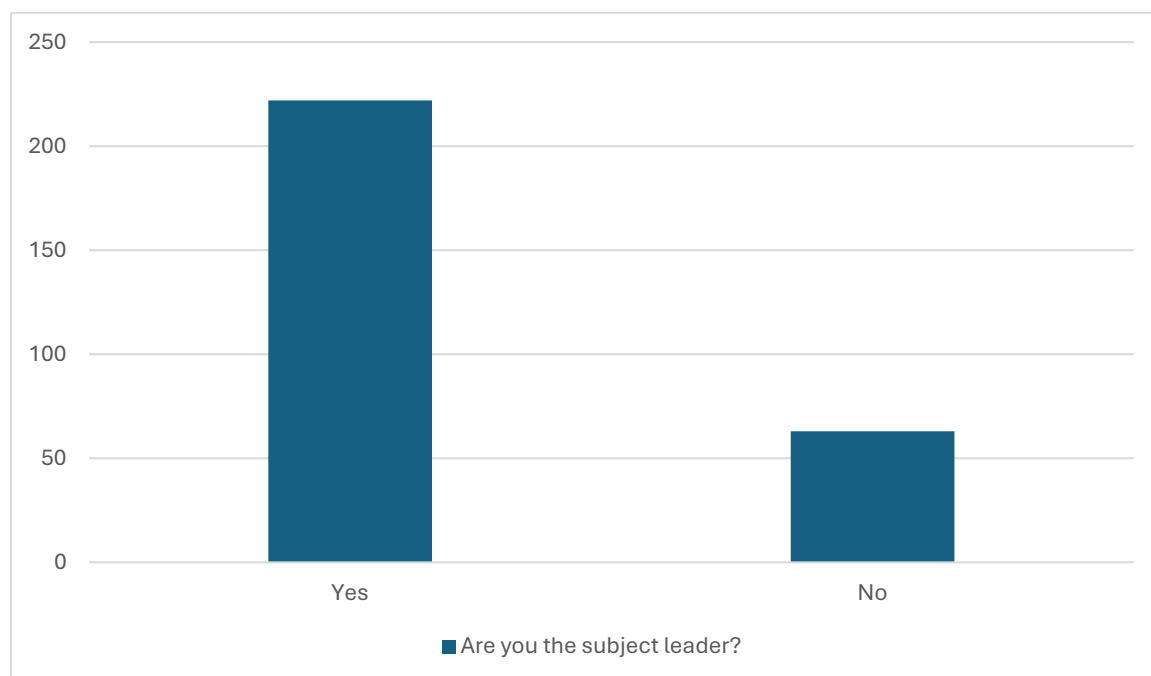
A small number of respondents were concerned that parents in their school would not want LGBTQ+ history to be taught. This was an issue also raised in 2022.

Some teachers feel that the curriculum is overcrowded and there is not space in the history curriculum to include diverse histories. This compares with concerns raised by some teachers in 2022 who felt that the curriculum is overcrowded and also compares to comments made about the suitability of the national Curriculum in question 9 of this survey.

Section 5: About you

18. Are you the subject leader for history?

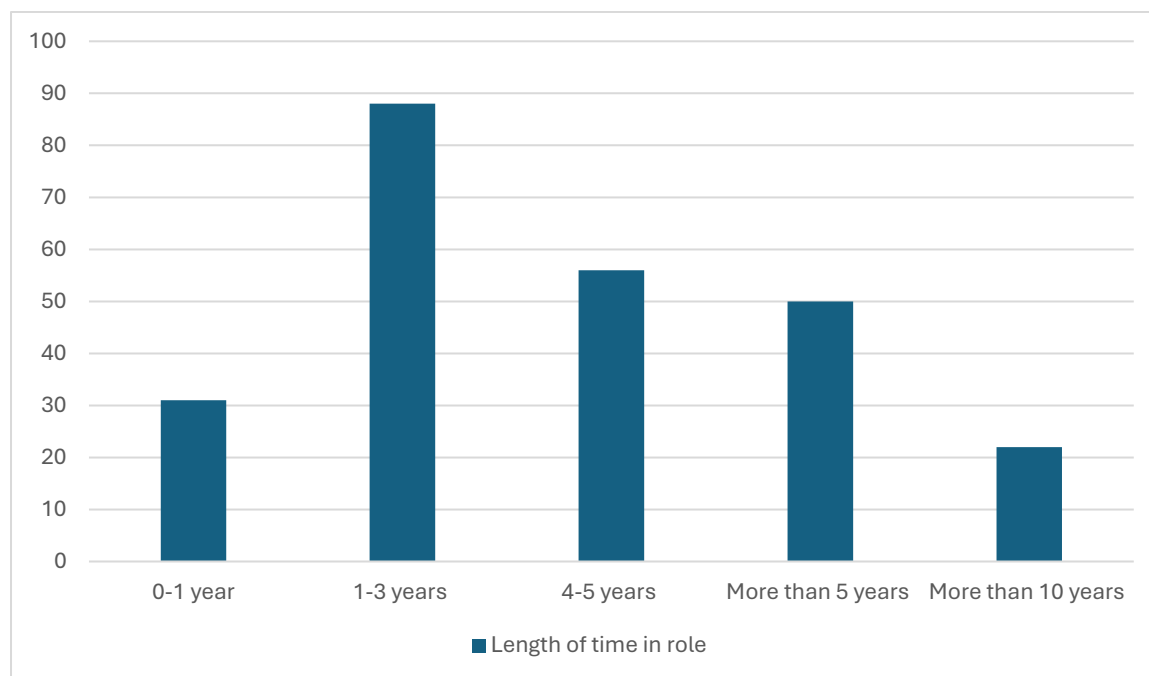
285 responses



The majority of respondents to this question report being the subject lead (77.9%/222) as against 22.1% (63) who were not. The proportion is similar to the 2022 survey when 76% reported themselves to be subject leaders, but higher than the 58% who reported as such in 2019.

19. How long have you been the subject leader?

247 responses



This question was only applicable to the 222 who had answered the previous question to indicate that they were the subject leader. However, 247 people answered the question, meaning that there is a small discrepancy in that 25 people who were subject leaders answered who had not chosen to answer the previous question.

The majority of respondents (71%) have had 5 years or less experience in the role of subject leader. In 2022, 75% of respondents had been in the role for 5 years or fewer. In 2019, this figure was 58%.

When viewed alongside answers to question 20, most appear to have had reasonable teaching experience before becoming the subject leader. 17.8% (40 respondents) seem to have had no more than 3 years teaching experience before becoming subject leader and another 8.9% (20) around 5-6 years before becoming history subject leader.

As in 2019 and 2022 the figures for long tenures of 10 years or more remain relatively few, suggesting that history subject leadership is not seen as a career-long role.

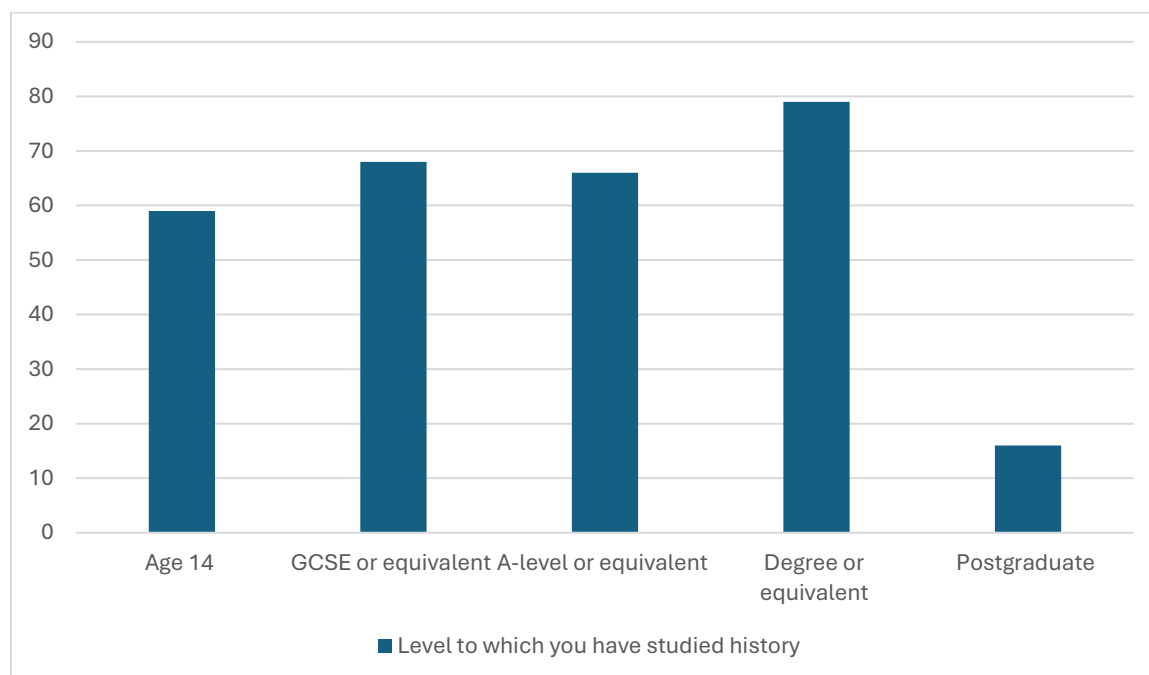
20. How long have you been teaching?

287 responses

Most respondents to this question had extensive teaching experience with 25.2% (101 respondents) having more than 20 years of experience as a teacher. This compares with 8.4% (24) who have taught for up to 3 years. Some two thirds (65.5% or 188) have taught for at least 10 years. In 2022 approximately 50% had taught for at least 10 years.

21. To what age/level have you studied history?

288 responses

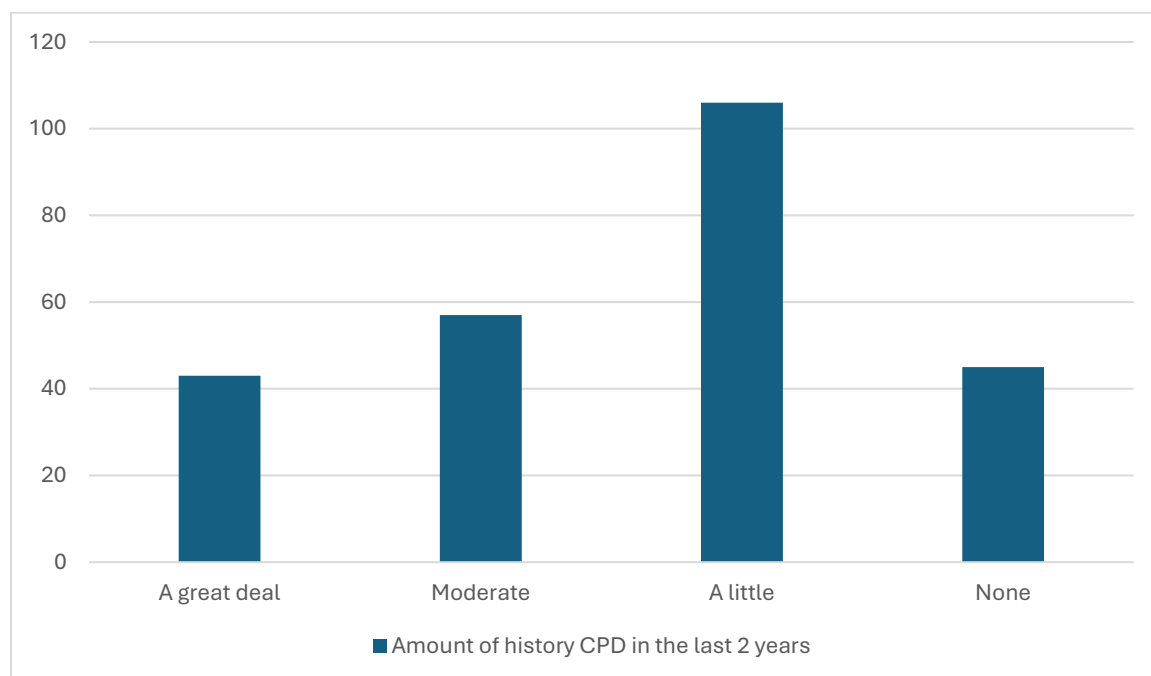


Overall results show a fairly balanced profile across the different levels of qualification in history, with a majority having either a GCSE or A-level in the subject (47% combined). 20% (59) had not studied history beyond the age of 14, and 44% had not taken history beyond GCSE. 33% (95) have either a degree or a postgraduate qualification in history. This latter statistic is probably not representative of the primary teacher workforce as a whole and is possibly indicative of a cohort of respondents who are more interested in history. When considered alongside responses to question 18, 36 of those 59 (61%) without a GCSE in history were the subject leader. 14 of the 16 with a postgraduate qualification in history were subject leaders. In 2024, 44% of respondents had nothing higher than a GCSE in

history, slightly lower than the 46% in 2022.

22. How much history CPD have you undertaken in the last 2 years?

289 responses



For the purposes of this question, 'A great deal' was defined as more than 36 hours, 'a lot' as more than 24 hours, a 'moderate' amount as 13-24 hours and 'a little' as up to 12 hours over the last 2 years.

There were a balanced range of answers with about the same number having had a great deal of CPD (14.9% or 43) and those having had none (15.6% or 45).

As expected, the most common response was a little CPD (106 or 36.7%) followed by a moderate amount (19.7% or 57). 13.2% of respondents said they have undertaken a lot of history CPD (38). While it is encouraging to see that the majority of respondents have undertaken at least some history CPD in the last 2 years, other questions in the survey reveal clear training needs which are not being met.

The situation seems to have improved since 2019 when those indicating they had undertaken little or no training in history was 57%, compared with 52% in 2024. However, in 2022 this figure was 43%. Comparisons need to be judged cautiously but do strongly suggest that subject-specific history CPD is not extensive and variable in consistency depending upon school/government funding and policy drivers as well as teacher workload issues.

23. What challenges are there for participating in history CPD?

236 responses

This was an open-ended question inviting written answers. Responses reveal a range of connected issues identified as barriers – easily the most cited barrier was ‘time’ with 54.7% (129 of the 236 responses) specifically mentioning time, sometimes without any other comment. This can be correlated with teacher workload issues. Some clarified what the time issue was – 27 referred to the resulting challenge of leaving classrooms and getting supply cover. As one respondent noted:

“Time out of class is like gold dust”

This was also often linked to the overall cost of CPD including cover and travel. In a number of cases it was the cumulative time demands of the primary teacher:

“The curriculum is too full for teachers to teach and assess properly”

“Time and energy with 13 subjects being taught”

“All subject leaders clamouring for CPD time for the whole staff.”

Several cite their roles in small schools which give them multiple roles to juggle. A few refer to the particular challenges of part-time staff.

A number note the lack of suitable face-to-face CPD locally. One or two feel that just using online CPD is limiting. Not everyone knew where to access CPD and although there was limited criticism there was some comment provided. One asked where they could find a good history adviser, but another complained that trainers *“just throw a bunch of websites at you”*. Access to suitable, stimulating and quality provision was sometimes referred to although others commented that there was too much.

A minor but still valid comment that appeared a couple of times concerns the difficulty providing CPD to other staff in the school. One noted the challenge of *“developing the same passion with other staff”* and another noted that *“many teachers and adults find it uninteresting.”*

Another impediment related to history within the whole school context is the lack of history as a priority either through its absence from the School Development Plan or through a concentration on core subjects, particularly English and Maths. The person responsible for approving CPD was raised on a few occasions. In one or two cases the trust or MAT clearly

determines what happens, but in other instances the subject leader clearly has had influence over CPD choices.

“I honestly don’t know where to start in pursuing CPD and I haven’t been encouraged to by my SLT.”

It is apparent from responses that several want more CPD but feel it unfair that they have to pay for it themselves and do it in their own time as it was not supported by their schools. One issue that emerged a number of times is the timing of CPD which coincides with family and childcare duties.

Others have noted other challenges such as that the role of subject leader keeps changing or the expectation that their subject leader time involves monitoring rather than CPD, the absence of local networks and support groups, worsening financial budgets since Covid and the unfairness of justifying CPD when staff are being made redundant.

The survey in 2022 had the same open-ended question and responses were dominated by budget and time. With budget excluded from the question this year (with an expectation that this was a given) not surprisingly a large number referred to time (sometimes masquerading as budget). Budget was clearly a dominant issue as a fair number of respondents referred to it even though it was excluded from the question. Overall, similar issues were identified in both the 2022 and 2024 report.

Section 6: History in your school

24. How is history organised in your school?

282 responses

The majority of respondents to this question (88%/247) are based in schools teaching all phases, whereas only 2%/7 are in schools that only cater for EYFS/Key Stage 1, 2%/6 are from schools catering only for Key Stages 1 and 2 and 8%/22 are in schools serving only Key Stage 2.

253 responses covered EYFS. Responses indicate that in EYFS, the majority (77%) teach the learning goals related to history as part of topic work, with 14% as part of discrete weekly/fortnightly slots and a small number (5%) as part of a discrete timetabled termly slot.

259 of the 282 responses referred to Key Stage 1. Over 80% respondents report a discrete timetabled slot for history with 59% reporting this as a weekly or fortnightly slot and a further 22% with a discrete timetabled termly slot. Compared with early years, just 16% cover history as part of topic or project work at Key Stage 1.

The trend towards discrete teaching is even more pronounced in Key Stage 2. Of the 275 responses covering Key Stage 2, 64% of respondents teach history as a timetabled weekly or fortnightly slot and 23% as a discrete timetabled termly slot. Just 9% teach history through a topic or project approach. Several responses mention alternating slots with geography.

This move towards more discrete teaching of the subject with older pupils continues the trend picked up in surveys since 2019. The organisation of history through topic or project work has declined throughout the primary curriculum in recent years. This can probably be seen largely as a response to the Ofsted 2019 framework. In the 2019 survey 53% of respondents used project or topic work for history in Key Stages 1 and 2 but by 2022 this had declined to 26% in Key Stage 1 and 21% in Key Stage 2. In 2024 this has fallen further to 16% and 9% in Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively.

Across all phases hardly any schools have reported teaching history as part of drop-down days or weeks which has been seen in past surveys.

25. How far do you make use of a published programme or scheme?

272 responses

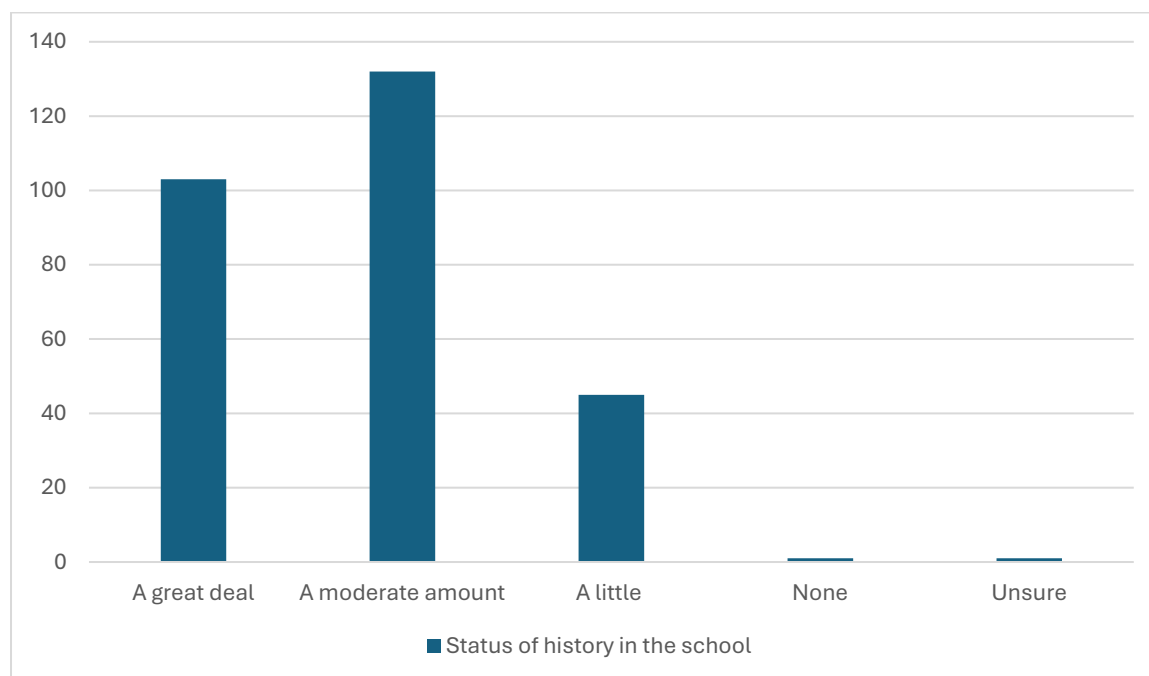
Programme/ Scheme	Total number of responses	A great deal	Regularly	Some- times	Rarely	Don't use	Never heard of it
Historical Association	272	28 (10.3%)	62 (22.8%)	103 (37.8%)	42 (17.0%)	30 (11.0%)	7 (2.6%)
Twinkl	260	11 (4.2%)	29 (11.2%)	105 (40.4%)	54 (20.8%)	61 (23.5%)	0
Cornerstones	250	8 (3.2%)	3 (1.2%)	4 (1.6%)	8 (3.2%)	176 (70.4%)	51 (20.4%)
Rising Stars	247	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.4%)	12 (4.9%)	204 (82.6%)	22 (8.9%)
Kapow	252	13 (5.1%)	4 (1.6%)	7 (2.8%)	11 (4.4%)	192 (76.2%)	25 (9.9%)

The overall picture from responses is that commercially available programmes and schemes are used in primary school history teaching, but not excessively. Only the Historical Association schemes of work seem to generate a sizeable amount of regular or very regular use (33%); however, this may be due to the fact that this is a Historical Association survey and the number of HA members responding to it would inevitably be significant. Answers to question 30 of the survey indicate that 70% of respondents are HA members. This largely corroborates the picture in 2022 where limited use was made of commercial schemes and that even when cited they were used selectively. The majority of schools planned their own curriculum and this still seems to be the case. A sizeable number of respondents in 2024 are not familiar with many of the commercial schemes available.

The question also provided an 'other' category for respondents to cite schemes and programmes not listed. 137 respondents cited use of other schemes and programmes. Several of these were cited by more than 10 respondents including Key Stage History (22); Plan B (19); Grammarsaurus (18); Mr T Does History (16), with 15 claiming to use the local authority, trust or devise their own. Nearly 40 different publishers were listed – including one claiming to make use of Horrible Histories.

26. How much of a profile does history have in your school?

282 responses



Perhaps reflective of the cohort responding, over a third consider that history has a high status in their school with nearly half (47%) claiming a moderate profile. Only 16% assessed history as having little status. No directly similar question was asked in the 2022 survey although respondents answers to questions about the role of the subject leader and time for training suggested an increasing profile for history.

27. If you gather pupil voice data, what do pupils say about history in your school?

230 responses

This was an open-ended question inviting written responses. Overall opinion is very positive with statements such as *“they enjoy it and look forward to lessons”*, *“have a passion”*, *“many say it is their favourite subject”*, *“they are engaged”*, *“history is magical”*, *“it is overwhelmingly popular”*, *“almost universally positive”*, *“fun and interesting”*, *“would like to do more.”* Sometimes these comments relate to the quality of teaching of the subject. Where parental views are also mentioned, these are also positive.

Some respondents state that there are particular aspects highlighted by pupils as enjoyable, for example visits (regularly cited), visitors into school, role play, practical sessions, special

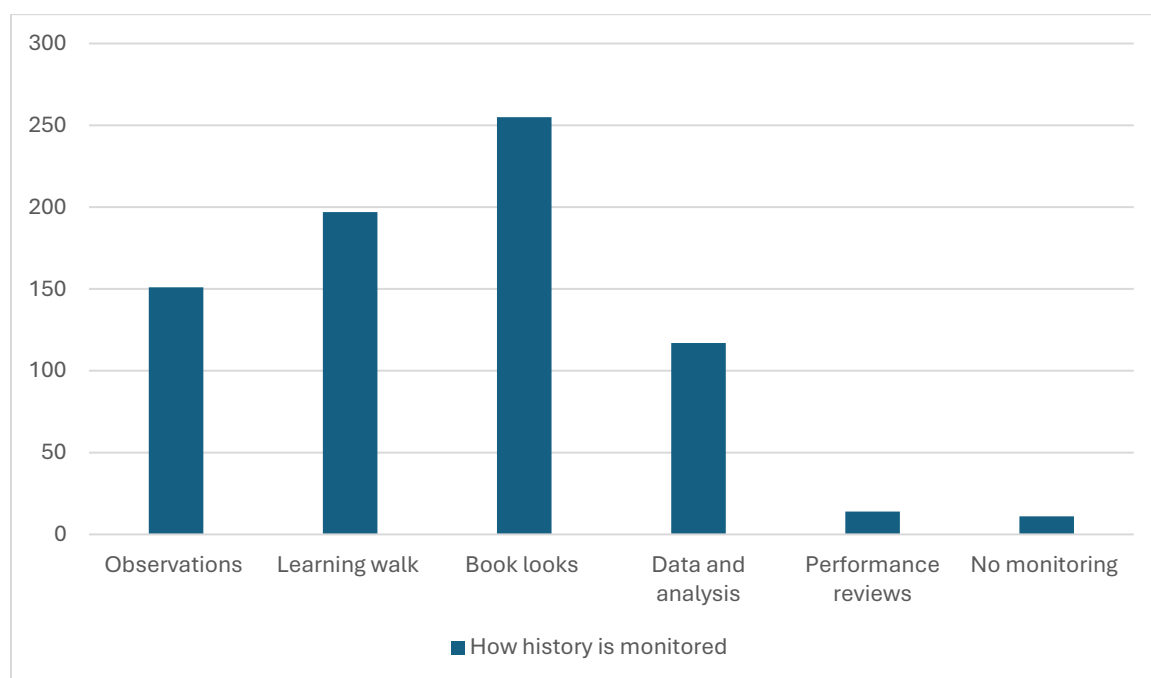
history days and handling artefacts, but there was is the occasional comment about too much writing and having to remember too much.

A small number of respondents reported that some pupils doubt history’s relevance to their lives but this was rare.

No one topic stands out especially as highly rated by pupils, but amongst those mentioned are the Great Fire of London, the Victorians, local history, children in the past and conflicts such as World War II.

28. How is history teaching and attainment monitored across the school?

282 responses

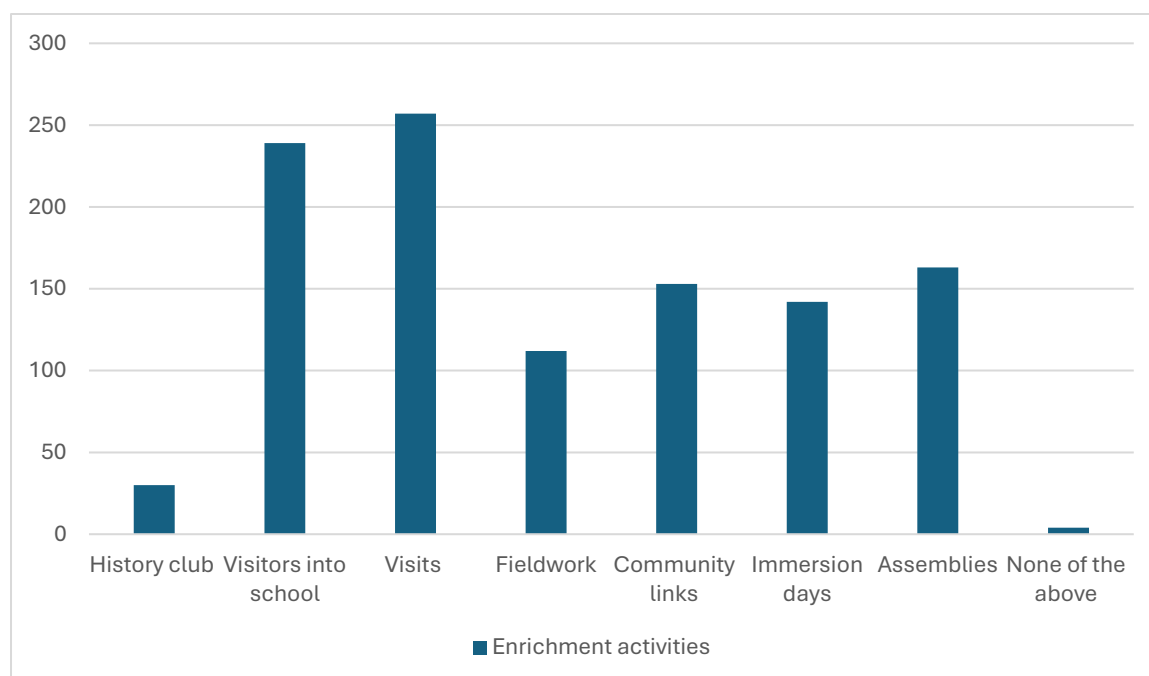


This question was also asked in 2022 and results in 2024 largely corroborate the 2022 survey results where a range of methods were reported, with book looks/scrutinies continuing to be the main method in which history is monitored. There is a decline in 2024 in the number who confess to doing no monitoring, a trend that was starting to become apparent in 2022. In 2022, 18% of responses indicated that teaching and learning in history was not monitored at all, or they were uncertain how, with a further small number claiming that it was meant to be monitored but was not being done properly. This has dropped to 4% in 2024.

Comments left by a small number of respondents indicate other parallel approaches especially the use of pupil and staff voice. Others refer to monitoring of assessments such as end of unit tests, retrieval questions and occasionally something more formal such as deep dives, subject monitoring afternoons, using a SIP or Trust inspections.

29. What does history provision in your school include?

281 responses

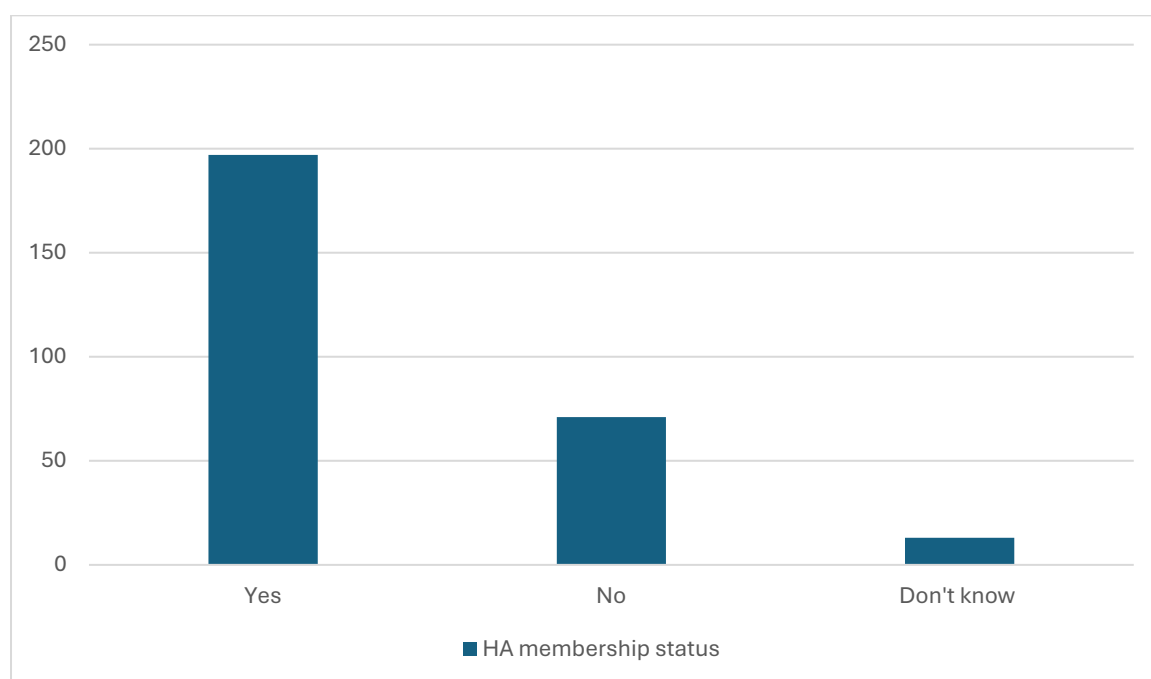


Many primary schools engage in a range of history enrichment activities often of different types. The restrictions caused by Covid and financial pressures do not seem to have dented visits where nearly 9 in 10 schools responding to this question cite undertaking outside visits. Visitors coming into school were also frequently cited by over 80% of respondents. Over 50% also cite making community links as part of history enrichment – a pleasing development. A range of other enrichment activities were also cited in comments, such as celebration events, a ‘history in the news’ monthly event, a young archaeologists club, an archaeological dig in the school, Black History Month events, an annual humanities day, links with academics and participation in Historical Association competitions, but these were individual isolated references.

Section 7: The HA and you

30. Are you or your school a member of the Historical Association?

281 responses



Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents are members of the Historical Association, representing 70% of those who answered the question. However, 273 of the total respondents did not answer the question.

31. If you are a member, please tell us how your HA membership supports you

166 responses

This was an open-ended question inviting written responses. Of the 197 who indicate that they were members in the previous question, 166 gave comments in this follow up question indicating a variety of ways that they feel supported by their HA membership. Comments are wide ranging but frequently cited are HA resources (50), HA CPD (37), support with

planning (31), articles (36) and another 23 specifically mentioning *Primary History* magazine. A sample of responses can be found below.

"I access CPD which has been amazing for my subject knowledge and subject leadership."

"The CPD - the recent one with Edith Hall for Greece was brilliant."

"Resources are fantastic across the board."

"It is invaluable in keeping my subject knowledge up to date and in providing ideas about how to teach aspects of the curriculum in different ways."

"Primary Magazine is excellent."

"Great articles in the magazine and emails. Have really helped with EYFS."

Recommendations

1. Improve guidance and resources to primary schools to help ensure a broad, balanced and manageable curriculum that pupils find rewarding, teachers enjoy teaching, and which reflects the composition of the school cohort and avoids a formulaic curriculum. This needs to be based on interest and a wide range of learning approaches including enquiry.
2. Provide support for teaching different topics beyond the National Curriculum including more modern history.
3. Ensure local history is given enough prominence and is relevant to the school context seeing the importance of diversity and its links to the wider world and other periods of history.
4. Identify and support teacher knowledge of the substantive and disciplinary concepts that allow them to be effectively incorporated in the curriculum to improve coherence, continuity and progression.
5. Develop time-efficient but effective methods of monitoring and assessment to improve information about pupil progress in history such as some formal tasks and oral assessment.
6. Provide further guidance and resources to support diversity in a broader sense.
7. Support the effective teaching of history to all pupils including those of all ethnicities, pupils with SEND, high-attainers, pupils on Pupil Premium.
8. Consider more efficient CPD recognising the many constraints, e.g. local networks, draft CPD agendas for subject leaders. Given constraints such as time, resources, small schools and other subject areas, schools might benefit from looking at how to get the best from history CPD.
9. Attempt to extend history enrichment opportunities such as more targeted use of Pupil Premium, history clubs, use of local expertise in community.
10. Give encouragement and support to all subject leaders and especially to those who wish to develop it as a long-term role.