

History Department

Key Stage 3

The aim of History at Key Stage 3 is to harness the girls' natural sense of curiosity about the past. We study many of the most important events and historical figures of the last thousand years of British History and we begin to explore the History of other nations and their peoples. Whilst the content of the course has its own fascination, we aim to engage and involve pupils further by exploring the past in a way which encourages them to empathise, offer their own opinions about key developments, to debate and to fully interact with the topics they study.

We believe that history is a living subject open to interpretation and reassessment. We aim to make its study enjoyable, enlightening, rewarding and to help the girls open their eyes to the history that is all around them. The course is complemented by visits to sites of historical interest. History lessons are taught to girls in their form groups. The girls have two History lessons and complete one homework in the subject each week.



Some of our KS3 enquiries and activities



Year 7:

Who was the rightful successor to Edward the Confessor?
Can you solve our Medieval Murder Mysteries?
Whose story does the Bayeux Tapestry really tell us?
How bad was 'Bad' king John?

'Apprentice' special – Contending for the throne 1066.
What kind of King was William the Conqueror? Bar chart
Design a Theme Park to reflect aspects of Medieval life.

Year 8:

Why did England ride a 'Religious Rollercoaster' between 1520 & 1560?
Interpretations: Was Elizabeth I our greatest ever monarch?
Who was to blame for the Civil war? Did Charles I deserve execution?
Why did Britain abolish the Slave Trade in 1803?



Year 9

Should we enclose our village? Roleplay/Debate
'Dragon's Den' – Industrial Revolution special.
How should the British Empire be remembered:
with pride or with shame?
Did the Suffragettes do more harm than good?
Court Case.
Why did Britain survive attack during WW2?
The Atomic Bomb: Was its use in 1945 justified?



Key Stage 4 / GCSE

History becomes an optional subject at Key Stage 4. The GCSE course presents girls with the opportunity to study the causes, key features and consequences of the major events of the last 100 years, which have shaped the modern world. It will help candidates to appreciate and judge for themselves the roles of historical figures, both great and infamous such as Emmeline Pankhurst, Field Marshall Haig, David Lloyd George, Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Franklin D Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill, John F Kennedy, Nikita Khrushchev, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. We follow the Edexcel Modern World History Course.



Course content

Britain in the Era of the First World War 25%

This includes study of the chaotic campaigns in which women sought to gain the vote, a look at the dramatic key events of the war, its massive impact on the Home Front in Britain and investigates how the country became very different as a result of the war.

Germany 1918-1939 25%

This is a fascinating study of how Germany emerged from the First World War. It looks at why the democratic system ultimately collapsed and Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party came to power. The unit also explores what life was like in Nazi Germany before the Second World War.

USA 1945-1970 Controlled Assessment 25%

This unit focuses on an inspiring period of American social and political History. It focuses on the Civil Rights movement and other protests movements such as Black power, women and student groups in the 1960's. It also explores the role of Presidents Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Johnson in shaping modern America.

International Relations 1929-69 25%

This unit studies the roles of Britain, Germany, Russia and America in shaping the 20th Century world. It explores why the search for peace collapsed in the 1930's and led to the outbreak of the Second World War. It looks at the reasons for the start of the Cold War in the 1940's and 1950's and how close the world came to a Nuclear war in the 1960's.

Some Comments from Saint Martin's Year 10's:

"Lessons are varied, activities change regularly and everyone gets involved. There is paired work, class discussions and debates, which are really fun and group role-plays and presentations!"

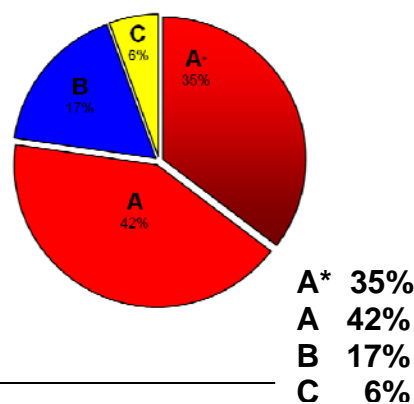
"The subject is very well resourced. There is a lot of really interesting video material, new textbooks and an e-textbook available on the school network."

"Don't worry about learning dates, there aren't as many as you think and you find that you learn and know them without realising it because you get really engrossed in the topics."

"When it came to the January exam, I felt quite relaxed. You are really well prepared, and have plenty of advice on how to approach questions. You get a lot of individual support with exam technique."

"I like the way that you get to reach your own point of view on a topic and that you are always right! (As long as you are not being totally one-sided and you back up your ideas with evidence.)"

History GCSE Results 2002-2010



"We are really looking forward to the trip to the Battlefields in France and Belgium in the Summer! We particularly enjoyed the First World War topic."

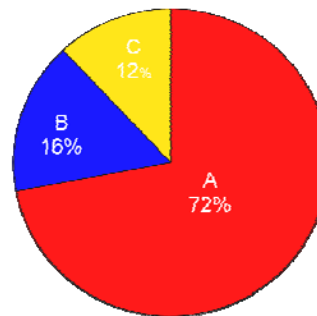
History is a very popular option at GCSE we currently have 53 pupils studying the subject in Years 10 and 11.

A Level History

The focus of both the AS and A2 History courses is British and Modern World History. We concentrate on fast-moving, dramatic and controversial events, which have greatly influenced the world in which we live. At A Level students are able to fully immerse themselves in the past; to debate, interpret and reach their own independent conclusions.

A Level Results 2002-2010

A 72%
B 16%
C 12%

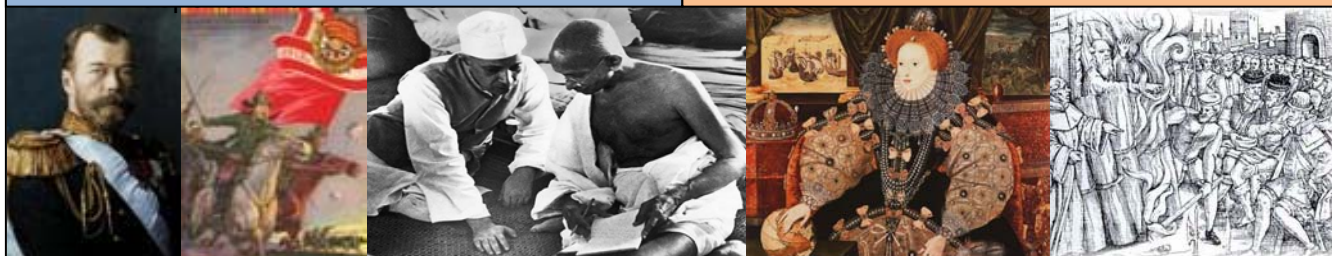


Unit 1 – Russia 1881-1953

This course charts an extraordinary journey, which takes the Russia from Tsarist Autocracy, through short-lived democracy to Communist dictatorship via 3 Revolutions! It explores the impact of Communist rule on Russia during a period of tremendous change and the emergence of the Soviet Union as a superpower under Stalin's violent and radical leadership.

Unit 3 – Tudor England 1536-1588

This gives students the chance to study an earlier period of history in greater depth. The unit charts the brief but extremely turbulent reigns of Edward VI and Mary I, before turning to the lengthier but no less dramatic reign of Elizabeth I. The course explores how & why deep-set religious, political & social conflicts continuously boiled over during the period.



Unit 2 – Britain and India 1900-1947

This course explores the nature of British rule of India, the birth of the nationalist and independence movements and the challenge they presented the British authorities before, during and after the Second World War. It considers the reasons behind British withdrawal after 1945, why India was Partitioned in 1947 and the roles of key individuals from the period such as Nehru, Gandhi, Jinnah & Mountbatten.

Unit 4 – Coursework

Our final focus is on a 100-year period of history, in which we explore how and why themes & issues change over time. There is some flexibility over our choice of topic, we currently study Germany from 1848-1848. However those who followed the new GCSE may choose to study China in the 20th Century instead. The topic is taught, but students then research and write up a personal enquiry.

History Outside the Classroom

To complement and enrich the History curriculum, the department is very keen to give the girls every opportunity to visit historical sites of interest both locally and much further afield. Below is a list of our current annual trips.

Year 7 Trip to Goodrich Castle and Kempeley Church

Year 8 Tudor England Day at Baddesley Clinton



Year 9 Trip to Imperial War Museum and the Cabinet War Rooms in London

Year 10 Trip to First World War Battlefields in France and Belgium