

## HISTORY GCSE

Examination Board – EDEXCEL

5 periods per 2 weeks

History is a fascinating and varied subject. It is difficult to understand the world we live in today without a good grasp of what has come before and in a world of advertising and spin, the discipline of history is even more important to help students 'see beyond the headline' and question the information they are bombarded with on a daily basis. GCSE History seeks to excite and challenge pupils by taking them on a journey through our past whilst developing valuable skills such as logical thinking, analysis, and the construction of a persuasive argument. History allows students to come to their own conclusions and express their own opinions about the most important events that shaped where we find ourselves today. History is a highly regarded subject, valued by colleges, universities and employers for its academic rigour and for the transferable skills students develop whilst studying the discipline.

### Course content

GCSE History involves studying a wide variety of time periods and people. The course includes a thematic study looking at the theme of crime and punishment over a long period of time as well as depth studies which concentrate on different historical figures and specific shorter time periods. The GCSE consists of three exam papers.

#### Paper 1 – (30% of GCSE)

This paper has two topics:

Thematic study: Crime and Punishment in Britain, c1000-present

Historic environment: Whitechapel, c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city

In this part of the course pupils will look at how crime and the punishment of criminals has evolved in Britain since the middle ages to the present day. Highlights include studying trial by ordeal, the gunpowder plot, highwaymen, the treatment of WW1 conscientious objectors and the abolition of capital punishment. This part of the course also involves a study of Whitechapel during the time of the Jack the Ripper murders.

#### Paper 2 – (40% of GCSE)

This paper has two topics:

Period study: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

Elizabeth I is one of Britain's most iconic and interesting monarchs and this part of the course takes pupils back to a period where England was beginning to establish herself as a global power. Highlights include how Elizabeth came to the throne and maintained her position in a world ruled by men, Elizabethan explorations to America and the New World, the conflict between Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots and the successful defeat of the Spanish Armada.

#### Depth study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

This part of the course focuses on the period after the Second World War where the US and USSR negotiated a dangerous path which could have resulted in the end of the world. The legacy of the Cold War can still be felt today, especially in how the most powerful countries of the world interact with each other. Highlights include the debate surrounding the use of nuclear weapons, the Cuban missile crisis and the building and eventual fall of the Berlin wall.

### Paper 3 - (30% of GCSE)

This paper has one topic:  
Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939

This topic examines how Germany emerged from the ashes of defeat in the First World War and set itself on a course which would cause the Second World War. We look at how Germany experimented with democracy only for it to fail and be replaced by a Nazi dictatorship under Adolf Hitler. We study how Hitler changed Germany so that every aspect of German society was used to brainwash its people and ultimately how that power was used to persecute minorities, leading to the horrors of the Holocaust. The rise of Hitler and the Nazis is a fascinating part of history, one which everyone should study and learn from.

#### Assessment

Assessment consists of three written examination papers at the end of year 11. The papers require pupils to submit information in a range of long and short written answers as well as analyse historical sources.

#### Homework

Department policy is for at least 45 minutes -1 hour per week to be set aside for students to complete a homework task or consolidate and review their learning.

#### Progression

In a rapidly changing world the following historical skills are highly sought after by employers:

- independent analytical thinking;
- problem solving;
- evaluation of information;
- measured judgement.

History is a well-respected subject by further education institutions and employers alike and the pursuit of history through A-Level can lead to the opportunity to study a wide variety of degree courses. History students often go on to pursue careers in law, journalism, teaching, management, the civil service and politics as well as many others.