

How can children learn about History in Early Years?

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum supports children to develop an awareness of the past and an understanding of how life changes over time. Children begin by talking about their own personal history, such as their family, past experiences, birthdays and special events, helping them to make sense of the passage of time. Through stories, photographs, artefacts and role play, children explore the lives of people in the past and compare them with the present. Festivals, traditions and significant events in their community and culture provide valuable opportunities to talk about continuity and change. Visits to local places of interest and discussions with older family or community members help children to recognise that history is about real people and real experiences. By asking questions, making observations and retelling stories, children start to develop the foundations of historical thinking and curiosity about the wider world.

Links to Development Matters: Birth to Three

Understanding the World

- Make connections between the features of their family and other families.

Key Vocabulary

Mum, mummy, dad, daddy, nanny, grandma, grandad, brother, sister, aunty, uncle, cousin

End Points

- Recognise at least 3 members of their family

Links to Development Matters: Three and Four Year Olds

Understanding the World

- Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history.

Key Vocabulary

born, birthday, baby, crawling, walking, first words, first teeth, family

End Points

- Talk about at least three things from their past

Links to Development Matters: Reception

Understanding the world

- Comment on images of familiar situations in the past.
- Compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past

Early Learning Goals

Understanding the World

Past & Present

- Talk about the lives of people around them and their roles in society
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling

Key Vocabulary

Past, present, future, the same, different, old, new, story, character, job, important

End Points

- Talk about at least three things in the past of their families
- Can explain at least one thing that is different about toys and games now and in the past

Links to National Curriculum: Year 1

Pupils should be taught about

- Changes within living memory- where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life.
- Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally
- The lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements. Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods (for example: Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, Rosa Parks, Florence Nightingale)
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.