



KING EDWARD VI HANDSWORTH SCHOOL

History and Politics Department

Staffing

Miss J E Smith	Head of Department
Mrs U Cole	Teacher of History/Politics (also Head of Year 9)
Miss A Kelly	Teacher of History (also DofE Coordinator and Head of Year 8)
Mrs L Polke	Teacher of History/Politics (also Head of Year 11, part-time)
Mr S Ramsey	Assistant Head and Teacher of History
Mrs E Jones	Assistant Head and Teacher of History
Mr D Goodwin	Headteacher and Teacher of History

History is taught as a discrete subject from Key Stage 3 through to A Level.
Government and Politics is taught at A Level only.

Examinations

Students follow the AQA specifications for both A Level History and Politics, also for GCSE History.
Please see details below.

Examination Results

It is compulsory for students to study at least one humanities subject at KS4, with many studying two. History is a very popular option at GCSE with five groups in Year 10 this year. Results are excellent: 70-80% achieve 7-9 grades each year.

History and Politics also have a healthy take-up and strong results at A Level. A lot of our students apply to read History, Politics, International Relations and Law at top universities. Many have gone on to prestigious careers in politics, the civil service and the legal profession.

Trips and Enrichment

Trips and enrichment are seen as an essential part of our curriculum and the successful candidate would be expected to contribute to the organising and running of these.

Key Stage 3

Year 9 visit the Black Country Living Museum as part of their local study of Birmingham c1900. We have a thriving KS3 History Film Club and year group resource libraries on Teams where we post suggestions for extra reading or viewing. One member of the department also oversees our Afro-Caribbean Society (ACS).

Key Stage 4

Trips and enrichment activities vary from year to year, with visits or speakers often dependent on the site chosen by AQA for the historical environment question. We have recently been to Shakespeare's Globe in London with Year 11 and last year we took students to visit Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire.

Key Stage 5

Again, we arrange visits according to interest and what is on offer. Past trips abroad have included Berlin, the First World War Battlefields and Poland. Closer to home, Y12s have been to Hampton Court Palace and the Cold War Museum at RAF Cosford. We also participate in the Lessons from Auschwitz Project and this year six of our Y12 students took part. Several of our students have then gone on to wider ambassadorial roles with the Holocaust Educational Trust. We have a thriving Politics Society, who are currently running a mock election to coincide with local elections, and a Law Society. In the spring term we hosted a Model United Nations Conference for local schools, in which many of our Y10, 11 and 12 students were delegates.

Timetable

We operate a fortnightly timetable and lessons are 50 minutes long. At KS3 we have three lessons a fortnight, we have five at KS4 and eleven at KS5. The successful applicant will be expected to teach across the key stages. Politics is available for the right candidate but this is by no means a prerequisite. Many of the department also teach PSHE, the Extended Project Qualification and university test preparation lessons.

Accommodation

The History/Politics department has three full size classrooms, all equipped with screens and visualisers. We have a fantastic range of textbooks for all key stages, including an extensive collection in the library for use by the sixth form and our own resource room. As well as facilities in the History department, we also have access to bookable ICT suites across the school.

Courses Taught

KS3

During KS3, pupils learn about significant individuals and events in the history of Britain, from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century, and aspects of European and world history. Lessons, we hope, are interesting and varied! They may involve group or pair work as well as individual study. Highlights of KS3 include a re-enactment of the trial of Guido Fawkes (Y8) and designing a commemorative plate, positive or negative, to reflect their work on industry and empire (Y9).

Our intention is for pupils to see KS3 as both engaging and academically challenging in preparation for GCSE. We believe that this is reflected in our selection of topics, which is in line with the National Curriculum for History. We often draw out similarities and differences to the modern day in the interests of encouraging pupils to be well informed citizens, for example in our study of democracy and dictatorship. We have also been working hard to diversify our curriculum, particularly in Year 9 with a unit on the British Empire (including a case study of India) and the 'forgotten heroes' of the First World War.

Year 7:

Historical Skills

Roman Britain

England 1066-1500, with a depth focus on the Norman Conquest

Year 8:

The Tudors and Stuarts, with a focus on the Reformation and the Civil War

Slavery to Civil Rights

Year 9:

Britain 1750-1900, with a focus on empire, industrial changes and their impact

The 20th Century, with a focus on 'experiences of war'

GCSE History

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Section A – Germany, 1890-1945

Section B – Conflict and Tension, 1918-1939

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Section A - Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day

Section B – British Depth Study: Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

A Level History

Breadth Study. The Tudors: England, 1485-1603

Depth Study. The Cold War, c1945-1991

Historical Investigation: Russia, 1855-1953: From Tsars to Commissars

A Level Government and Politics

Government and Politics of the UK

Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics

Political Ideas

As we enter an important time of curriculum change, following the recent government review, the successful candidate will be expected to contribute to departmental planning and the renewing of lessons and schemes of work.

Further Information

As a department, our vision is:

- To foster a genuine interest in and enthusiasm for History/Politics; to bring the past 'to life' through consistently interesting and challenging lessons.
- To encourage pupils to pursue this interest **beyond** the classroom and the specification, through visits, television programmes, wider reading etc. We are not just interested in the exam!
- To provide a firm foundation for the future. Our subjects are academically rigorous and encourage a wide range of skills as well as informed citizenship.

Any questions about the role can be directed to Miss Julie Smith, Head of History and Politics: jsmith@han.kevibham.org

1st May 2026