



# History A Level at St Francis

Understand the past – equip  
yourself for the future

# History – what's the point?

- ▶ Was Henry Ford right when he said “History is Bunk?”
- ▶ Or is it more accurate to think of what it says at the gates of Dachau – that those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it?
- ▶ Studying History will help you make sense of modern day events in Britain, in Ireland, in Europe and the world



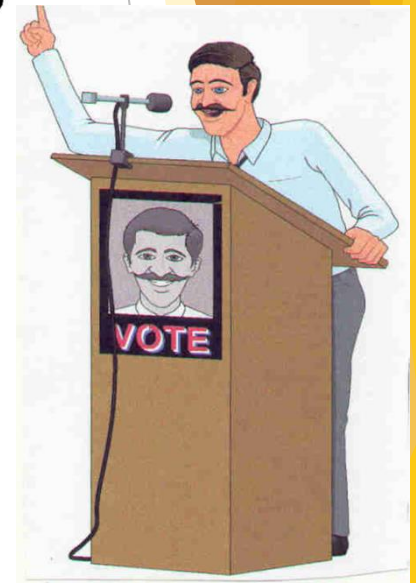
## History and your future

- ▶ Maybe you won't need to know about the Long Parliament, or the Night of Long Knives to get a successful career. But the skills you gain from History are applicable to a wide range of professions



# History and your future

- ▶ Historians can reason and argue. Historians examine and evaluate evidence. Historians present a case based on their evidence. Historians can argue a case, but understand and respect the views of others.



**So do people in a range  
of professions, from lawyers  
to politicians to journalists**

# What will you study?



History has a huge range of options, but...

- ▶ Like the GCSE you are doing, History has to cover a roughly even mixture of British and non British history
- ▶ It also has to cover a range of at least 200 years overall, which means that we have to cover at least one period of History from before the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. So...

## Board and specification details

- ▶ Our Board is OCR –
- ▶ On the next slide is the summary that you also have in your prospectus





- The Early Stuarts and the Civil War 1603 – 1660 (Y108)  
*The most explosive period in British History – rebellion and revolution, the bloody Civil War and its republican aftermath, muskets at Edgehill, axes in Whitehall, the imitation of Christ on the rutted road into Bristol...*
- Democracy & Dictatorships in Germany 1919-1963 (Y221)  
*The Nazi dictatorship – why did it happen? What impact did it make? What were the consequences?*
- Britain & Ireland 1791 – 1921 (Y316) *The relationship between Britain and its “half alien dependency”. Rebellion from Wolfe Tone to the Easter Rising, reform from the Act of Union to Home Rule, the era of O’Connell, Gladstone and Parnell*
- Coursework on USSR 1917 to 1991 (Y100) *The rise and fall of Soviet Communism – questions can vary from the rise of Lenin to the fall of Gorbachev, from the 5 Year Plans to glasnost and perestroika, from the role of women to the misery of the peasants.*

## Assessment

- ▶ The Britain exam is worth 25%, Germany 15%, Ireland 40%, and the NEA (coursework) 20%
- ▶ Assessment will mostly be through essay questions – the Britain paper includes one question based on sources, and the Ireland paper one question based on two extracts from historians
- ▶ The NEA is between 3,500 and 4,000 words (trust me, you will struggle to write that little!)





# The European part in Year 12

- ▶ Will be on Germany 1919 to 1963 – Nazi Germany, and the governments either side of it. The causes, course and consequences of Nazism for Germany and its impact on the world. How did Hitler come to power? Did all Germans agree with him? Why did Nazi Germany commit such terrible crimes, and with what results?



This is currently taught by Mr Wisniewski

## And for Britain..

- ▶ Britain 1603 to 1660 with Mr Garrett – the era of the British Civil Wars



## But that's really old stuff...

- ▶ Well, maybe (the clue is in the word “History”)
- ▶ But you couldn't study a more exciting, fascinating, controversial, opinionated period, that has as much to say about society today as a more modern period



## If you want to know about...

Some of the greatest set pieces in British history

- ▶ “Terrorists” concealing their gunpowder under Westminster
- ▶ The King striding into the Commons to find his birds have flown
- ▶ “Edgehill fight” – families rent apart as Englishman takes arms against Englishman
- ▶ The anointed King on trial for his life
- ▶ The greatest political debate in British history
- ▶ Then this is the period of History for you!





And that's without mentioning the most controversial person in our whole History



## Year 13

- ▶ A depth study on Ireland from 1791 to 1921 – from Wolfe Tone's Rebellion to independence and partition
- ▶ Issues that still divide the Island of Ireland today – and resonate with many of our students





# NEA (Coursework)

- ▶ Is on Russia / the USSR in the twentieth century. There are a range of questions, so every student should study the overall period, but then focus on their own individual task
- ▶ Tasks range from how the Bolsheviks won power to the rise of Stalin, to the fall of Gorbachev and the collapse of the USSR itself
- ▶ Students have in recent years looked at the role of women, the impact of the 5 Year Plans or Collectivisation, and why the Soviets defeated the Nazis

This is currently taught by Mrs Somerville



# Resources and Opportunities

- ▶ Each student has an individual textbook for each part of the course
- ▶ There are already a range of resources for each part of the course in the two history rooms, and this is developed further every year
- ▶ We have often attended conferences at Carrs Lane in Birmingham



# History A level – a record of success



- ▶ In the three years after this exam was introduced from 2017, 48 students sat the new A Level in History – all of them passed and 37 (77%) with at least a Grade C
- ▶ In 2019, we were particularly successful, with 2 A\* grades, 4 A grades and 6 B grades from our 21 students
- ▶ In 2022/23, from 30 candidates, all again passed, with 26 gaining at least a C grade, and four A\* or A grades.
- ▶ In 2024, of 14 candidates, we had 3 As, 7 Bs and 4 Cs
- ▶ So in six examination years from 2017, 92 students have sat History A Level, with 77 (84%) getting at least a Grade C, and 14 (15%) an A or A\* grade.

## And going on to University

- ▶ Members of recent History A level groups have studied History at Universities including Durham, Manchester, Liverpool, Exeter, Nottingham and Lancaster
- ▶ Two of our previous History students got First Class degrees in 2015 at Hull and Sheffield, and two other past students were awarded distinctions in Masters at Medieval History at Oxford. Two of those have now completed Ph.Ds
- ▶ One of our former students got a First at Durham in History in 2022, and another achieved a prize winning First at Exeter in 2023 (see the display board in the corridor)



# Lizzie at Hull – First Class Degree



Lizzie also got a Distinction in her Master's, and has recently completed a Ph.D.

She blogs at

<https://historylizzie.co.uk/>

She is a regular writer for BBC History magazine, and the related publication, BBC History Revealed





15 Oxford graduate students – two of them from SFA!





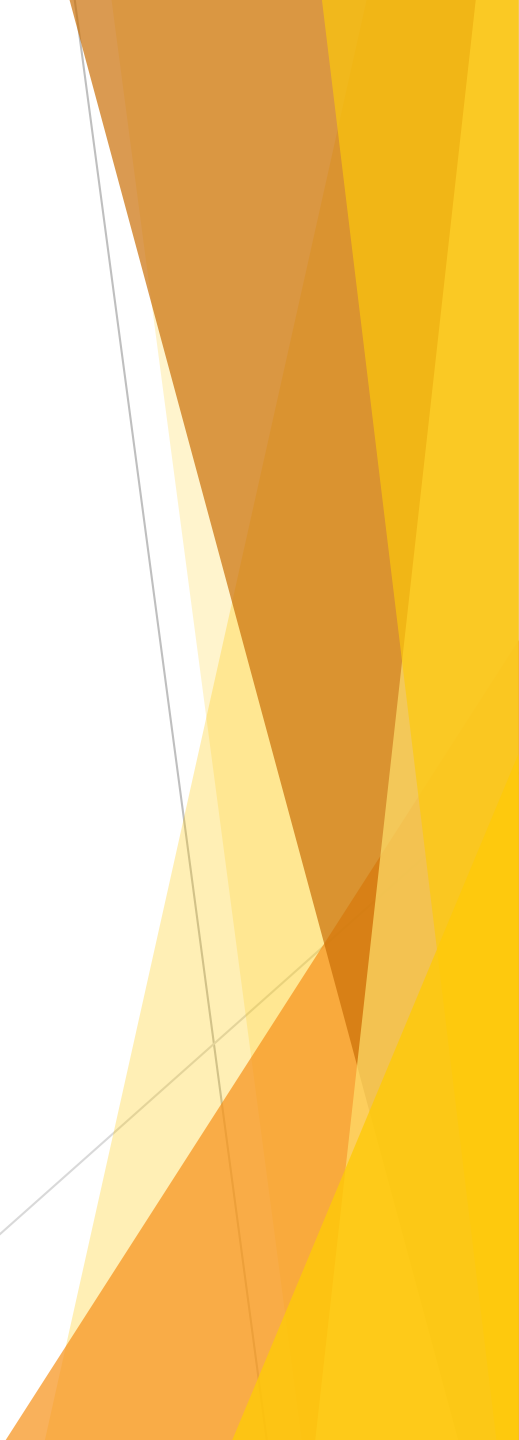

And two of 2022's Year 13 students now studying History at Oxford



# Why History?

- ▶ A record of outstanding exam success
- ▶ A well resourced and well taught course
- ▶ Teaches skills that are crucial to a range of professions
- ▶ Understand the future by understanding the past





Does anyone have  
any questions?