

INSIDE

PICK A CARD

The climate game where pupils run the world

THE 10.47PM EMAIL

Why school trip admin is broken – and how to fix it

PET TRACKERS ON A PUPIL?

What schools get wrong about DofE GPS devices

TOP SCHOOL TRIPS

#7

TAKING LIVE THEATRE TO ALL PUPILS

98%

THE SAME

WHY YOUR STUDENTS SEE THEMSELVES IN CHIMPS

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

ADD BUZZ TO MUSIC ED

WHERE WILL YOU TAKE THEM?

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Hello...

While working on Top School Trips, two things become clear. Firstly, students can make magical memories and learning breakthroughs during even the smallest of outings, as well as on grand adventures overseas. Secondly, what underpins everything is the work that goes into choosing, budgeting for and planning each trip.

From safeguarding concerns to visa worries, the administrative effort and mental load are both immense. So, all of you who have poured your hearts, minds and free time into planning the perfect trip for your students really need to take a bow.

In this issue, our contributors offer some great advice on how to safely reduce much of the effort and worry involved in trip planning – whether by harnessing more efficient processes and tech, or bringing in the experts.

On page 12, Adam Connolly shares a raft of invaluable advice on how to cut admin stress. Meanwhile, on page 26, Richard Weremiuk explores how GPS trackers can help you balance student safety and independence during Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

We always enjoy reading about the amazing experiences students have had on trips, and on page 48, Nikki Ball recounts a successful and hugely rewarding eco-project in Greece.

Closer to home, Kate Morgan explains how observing primates in captivity can provide a living window into behaviour, relationships and the evolutionary roots of what it means to be human (p39). Biology connects with psychology, environmental science intersects with ethics, and evolutionary history suddenly feels tangible.

And bringing learning to life is really what school trips are all about, isn't it, so we hope you find plenty of inspiration within these pages to do just that for your young learners. Happy travels!

The Top School Trips team



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GET INSPIRED

From the latest workshops and research to expert advice and topical comment, get your school trip news right here...

Inspiring CPD for trip organisers

Learn, connect and gain new perspectives

The National Educational Visits Conference 2026 is set to be an inspiring day of learning and development for anyone involved in planning and running educational visits. There'll be presentations and advice from legal experts and risk management specialists, as well as from school and trip leaders. Topics will include safety and safeguarding on overseas visits, and how to manage parents' perception of risk.

The theme of the conference is *6 million reasons. Each child. Every visit.* It was chosen to highlight the impact that EVCs and visit leaders have on the individual children and young people in their schools. Six million is the number of children and young people who participated in educational visits organised by schools that were supported by conference organisers EVOLVE Advice in 2025.

The conference will take place on 11 June at the British Library. Full-price tickets cost £174 including VAT, and all attendees will receive a digital badge of attendance to show CPD compliance.

Visit evolveadvice.co.uk/conference



"It's a must-attend event for EVCs and curriculum leaders"
EVOLVE ADVICE

UK travel grants

The RHS Travel Grant Scheme helps eligible state-funded schools with up to 100% of coach costs for one free educational visit to their local RHS Garden.

To be eligible, schools must meet certain criteria, including having elevated levels of FSM or Pupil Premium eligibility, and being located within eight to 25 miles of an RHS Garden (specific radius varies by garden).

To apply, visit your local RHS Garden's school visit page and indicate on your enquiry form or in your email that you may be eligible for an RHS Travel Grant.

Your local garden team will then confirm your eligibility – and whether funding is still available at your chosen garden – and guide you through the application process, including confirmation of your grant amount.

Find out more at tinyurl.com/tst-rhs





English focus

Two iconic theatres will be offering a range of Shakespeare courses this summer.

The On Stage Workshops and Young People's Workshops will take place either in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse or Globe Theatre. The plays available for study include *King Lear*, *The Tempest* and *Hamlet*. The sessions will combine discussion, practical drama activities and performance exercises to develop a deeper understanding of the plays.

For students revising for exams, Revision Boosts offer intensive, interactive workshops on *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*, providing practical tools for studying Shakespeare as a performed text. To book, visit tinyurl.com/tst-globe

HAF latest

Guidelines for the holiday activities and food programme (HAF) for the 2026/27 financial year are now available on the DfE website.

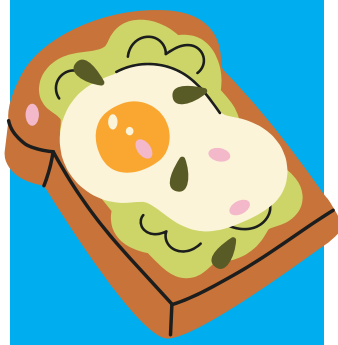
Although the scheme is aimed at children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, local authorities have discretion to use some funding to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for any school-age children they believe could benefit from HAF. They also have the option of awarding up to 5% of their total HAF spend to half-term programmes.

NEW RULES

HAF entitlement will be affected by the government's planned changes to FSM eligibility, which come into place in September this year. From the October half term, HAF's eligibility will remain at the existing FSM threshold, which means that it will not expand to all those on Universal Credit.

The programme's current £200 million per year settlement will run until the end of the 2027/28 fiscal year; the government is currently reviewing how it will allocate support for disadvantaged young people in the future.

To read the HAF guidance in full, visit tinyurl.com/tst-haf



The Harley Foundation

A place for creativity to flourish

An educational arts charity, The Harley Foundation (harleyfoundation.org.uk) is located on the historic Welbeck estate in Nottinghamshire. The free-entry gallery and museum host a world-class art collection and regular contemporary exhibitions, as well as events and workshops for young people.

The Foundation's Learning Team offers free introductions to the exhibitions for secondary groups who wish to plan their own time at Welbeck.

Alternatively, they will work with schools to develop bespoke trips, including gallery tours and creative workshops, to suit individual curriculums.



The Foundation offers coach bursaries to help with the cost of travel, and the Learning Team will share detailed timetables and risk assessments with teachers when booking.

Pre-visits can also be arranged for teachers to see the venue in advance of bringing a class on site.

Current artist-led workshops include printing, upcycling clothes, recycled sculpture, metalwork, jewellery and ceramics – availability and prices for these will vary.

Get in touch with the Learning Team via email at education@harleyfoundation.org.uk to find out more.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ON THE FARM...

A new offering of curriculum-linked educational workshops at Jimmy's Farm & Wildlife Park aims to further the enterprise's goal of enabling everyone to 'share the good life' and connect with nature around them. The programme caters to all ages, supports a diversity of topics and study areas, and can be adapted for specific needs. All workshops are led by experienced

and trained staff, and the ticket price includes a self-guided visit. Find out more at jimmysfarm.com/education



...AND OFF IT

The Great Yorkshire Show provides a wealth of opportunities for KS3–KS5 students to learn more about potential career paths, and to engage with prospective employers and industry specialists. This year's show will run from 14–17 July.

School tickets are available at greatyorkshireshow.co.uk/school-visits

MORE TOP TRIPS

If you want more advice on planning the perfect school trip, look no further than Teachwire's ultimate guide for teachers. Packed with advice on every stage of the process, from choosing the right destination to managing pupils on the day and maximising the educational value of the experience, it will help take the stress out of the process and ensure your visit is a success. Visit bit.ly/TWSchooltrips

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6 THINGS TO DO AT...

Paultons Park

Experience big thrills and short queues at the UK's number-one-rated theme park

DID YOU KNOW?

Visitors to Paultons Park can also explore beautiful gardens, birds and animals.



1 Tornado Springs

Students will love Tornado Springs, which is top of many visitors' lists. The mighty Cyclonator spins and swings to a height of 25 metres and is a must for real thrill-seekers. Or experience the excitement of free-spinning cars on the exhilarating Storm Chaser rollercoaster, which reaches speeds of 37 mph. Every ride is different at this whirlwind attraction. For something different, grab a dinghy and race down Buffalo Falls!

2 Over 70 rides & attractions

Paultons Park is home to an amazing collection of rides and attractions, many aimed at secondary students. From thrilling rollercoasters such as

Velociraptor, Flight of the Pterosaur or Raven to stomach-churning drop rides such as Windmill Towers, there's a huge amount for your group to enjoy. Cool off with a soaking on Splash Lagoon, and then spin dry on the awesome SkySwinger!

3 Valgard – Realm of the Vikings

New for 2026 (opening 16 May) is a whole-new land that will test even the bravest of students. Standing 25 metres tall, "Drakon" is a custom rollercoaster with a beyond-vertical drop and two inversions. If this isn't enough, the park will also be introducing a UK-first ride – "Vild Swing", a swinging, 12-metre-high ride for those looking for a thrill!

4 All new maths workshops

Another new addition is the range of maths workshops, which offer the opportunity to see how maths is used at the park. Students will apply their classroom knowledge to this real-world setting and see how maths is not just a textbook exercise. The park also offers a

range of engaging, in-depth workshops covering customer service and marketing, or providing a business overview. There's always time for a Q&A with staff, too.

5 Stress-free planning

Reward trips happen at the end of the year, when teachers are super busy, so why make your trip complicated? Paultons Park is one of the only theme parks to offer a "pay after" facility. There's no deposit to pay and no charge if students can't make it. Tickets are sent in advance, free of charge, and there's even free parking. Risk assessments are available and pre-visits are encouraged.

6 A great time guaranteed

Paultons Park limits school groups on-site to keep queue time short. In fact, the wait for the park's biggest attractions averaged less than 15 minutes for school groups in July 2025. Huge lawns and shady spots under trees make it easy to arrange registration and meeting points. There's even superfast Wi-Fi available – great for completing those reports while your students are enjoying themselves!



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EXCEPTIONAL



OUR BIG DAY OUT



“These were once-in-a-lifetime opportunities”

How Halsbury Travel helped Royal Liberty School plan an unforgettable Canadian adventure



An alternative to the USA

By combining the city of Toronto with the natural wonders of Niagara Falls, the trip offered two very different atmospheres in one journey and therefore appealed to a wider range of students. The trip was designed to offer a balanced mix of cultural, educational and fun activities. It also served as an alternative to the traditional trip to the USA, providing a fresh destination that still offered excellent attractions and valuable learning opportunities.

Enriching experiences

One of the highlights of the trip was visiting Niagara Falls. The students enjoyed the Hornblower Cruise, which took them right up to the Falls, allowing them to experience the power and scale. Seeing the Falls lit up at night made the visit even more memorable. A friendly students-versus-teachers go-karting race added extra fun, giving a sense of enjoying two very different experiences in one trip: the natural wonder of Niagara and the urban excitement of Toronto.

Excellent value for money

Visits to the Toronto Zoo and Royal Ontario Museum provided engaging experiences, and at the CN Tower, students enjoyed panoramic views (many of them even stepped onto the glass floor!). The Hockey Hall of Fame combined culture and fun, with opportunities to try penalty shots and see the Stanley Cup up close. The mix of activities provided excellent value for money for parents while appealing to a wide range of interests.

Lasting memories

My lasting memories of this trip will be the “wow” moments that the students enjoyed. Seeing Niagara Falls up close and getting completely soaked on the Hornblower Cruise created unforgettable memories. For many students, this trip created once-in-a-lifetime experiences, and, for some, it was even their first time leaving the country. Watching their excitement and amazement throughout the trip will not just stay with me but all the staff who attended the trip.

{ PLANNING MADE EASY }

Working with Halsbury on this trip was, as always, a very smooth experience. We often book our future trips with them before even attending the current one, such is our confidence in Halsbury’s ability to provide excellent service.

Communication was excellent throughout, and the Halsbury team were always flexible in making any requested tweaks to the itinerary to suit our needs. They kept us fully informed at every stage, making planning straightforward and stress-free.

The focus is always on providing the best experience possible for those on the trip. Halsbury offer a personalised service, and we have a great deal of confidence in them providing excellent and well-organised visits for our students.

Reduce the ADMIN LOAD

Organising a school trip shouldn't feel harder than running one, says Halsbury Travel's **Adam Connolly**

It's three days before departure. Final numbers are confirmed. Rooming is sorted. Coach company is booked. And we're still missing one passenger's passport details. Not because anyone had been careless. Not because the trip leader didn't care. But because the information was sitting in three different places (some in a spreadsheet, some in emails, some scribbled on a printed form waiting to be typed up). And when one digit wrong on a passenger list is all it takes to grind airport check-in to a halt, you can feel the heat rising just thinking about it.

If you've led a school trip, you know that feeling. The bag may be packed, the itinerary may be watertight, but it's the invisible admin that keeps you awake. The real pressure isn't the airport, the coach journey or the accommodation. It's chasing medical forms at breaktime. It's checking that the name on the passenger list matches the passport exactly. It's updating spreadsheets after a last-minute dropout and then reshuffling rooms to make it work. It's the 10.47 pm email from a parent with a newly remembered dietary requirement.

We seem to have accepted that school trip admin has to be chaotic. But I don't think it does.

Information overload

Across hundreds of trips, the patterns are strikingly similar. The stress rarely comes from

the destination but from fragmented information. Half-completed forms. Data buried in inboxes. Version six of a spreadsheet saved as "final_final_USETHISONE". A waiting list that suddenly becomes relevant again when someone pulls out two weeks before travel. None of it sounds dramatic in isolation, but together it creates cognitive overload. And you're already managing lessons, marking, meetings, safeguarding responsibilities, behaviour issues and parents' evenings. A trip is meant to be enriching. It shouldn't feel like you've taken on a second job in data management.

Behind the scenes

What actually causes the stress is rarely complexity. It's duplication. Repetition. Lack of visibility. Medical and passport details are collected via email, then typed into a spreadsheet, then rechecked against another list.

The irony is that the educational side of school travel has evolved brilliantly. We talk confidently about cultural capital, character development, language immersion and careers insights. But the admin systems behind trips often look more or less the same as they did 15 years ago.

Recently, we stepped back and looked honestly at where trips were unravelling. It



“Small structural changes create significant calm – and calm leaders run better trips”

wasn't on the ski slopes or in the museum. It was consistently in the months before departure.

We kept seeing talented, organised teachers firefighting preventable admin problems.

So, we asked a simple question. What if the invisible workload felt structured, instead of scattered?

Finding a solution

It was this thinking that led us to My Trip Zone – not as a shiny add-on to our trips but

rather a response to stress points we were seeing again and again. Imagine sharing one secure link with parents. They input information directly themselves.

No retyping or forwarding sensitive information over email. You decide what to collect and when (medical info now, ski fit details later). Everything sits in one secure place, visible in real time.

Cutting out careless errors

Passport details can be scanned directly into the system. Names align exactly with the document and expiry dates are flagged early (long before you're standing in an airport queue hoping everything matches and is valid). That one digit

that used to cause heart palpitations becomes a non-issue. When a pupil drops out (because there's always one), you're not rebuilding a spreadsheet from scratch. Passenger lists update cleanly and rooming can be adjusted (without unravelling everything else). Waiting lists are visible and manageable. There's also a personalised timeline that reflects your specific trip. Deadlines are clear, tasks are visible and you're not relying on memory or a handwritten note to keep everything moving. The mental load reduces because the system holds the structure for you.

Safe and secure

Safeguarding threads through all of this. Secure data handling isn't a luxury, it's a responsibility. When parents input medical information directly into a secure system, you reduce the risk of sensitive details getting lost in inboxes or printed unnecessarily. When dietary needs and medical flags are clearly visible, the chance of something being overlooked drops significantly. Visibility supports duty of care.

That said, I really feel that technology is the support act here. No portal can replace a dedicated trip coordinator who knows your group, understands your objectives and anticipates pressure points before they become problems. No dashboard can substitute for experienced guidance when plans change (because they do sometimes in travel). Experience matters. Operational knowledge

matters. And choosing a school tour operator with a robust safety management system, membership of the School Travel Forum and the LOTC Quality Badge matters.

These frameworks aren't badges for a brochure, they're structures that protect you and your students.

More time for adventure

The difference now is that experienced human support can sit alongside smarter systems. The conversations become more strategic and instead of constantly chasing paperwork you can discuss learning outcomes, behaviour management strategies on tour and contingency planning. When the admin feels under control, you lead differently. You notice the student who's trying a new language for the first time. You spot the quiet confidence boost on the ski slope. You focus on the moments that justify the paperwork in the first place.

School trips will always involve moving parts – and they should, because they're ambitious and transformative. But the ambition should sit in the experience, not in how many spreadsheets you can juggle simultaneously.

We don't need to accept chaos as part of the process. We can structure it, we can secure it and we can simplify it. Your trip should be everything you asked for –including a better way to manage it.



Adam Connolly is Head of Operations & Customer Experience at Halsbury Travel

www.halsbury.com

FIVE WAYS TO CUT TRIP ADMIN STRESS

1 COLLECT INFORMATION ONCE – AND ONLY ONCE

Avoid retyping data from paper to spreadsheet. Wherever possible, have parents input information directly into a secure system (fewer transfers mean fewer errors).

2 SEPARATE COLLECTION INTO STAGES

You don't need everything on day one. Gather essential medical and passport details first and collect kit sizes and rooming preferences later. Staging reduces overwhelm for everyone.

3 FLAG EXPIRY DATES AND REQUIREMENTS EARLY ON

Passport validity, EHIC/GHIC cards, visa requirements – they all need to be checked months in advance. Early visibility turns potential emergencies into simple reminders.

4 KEEP ONE LIVE PASSENGER LIST

Multiple versions create confusion. Work from a single, up-to-date source of truth, so that dropouts, additions and waiting lists don't trigger unnecessary duplication.

5 BUILD IN BREATHING SPACE

Set internal deadlines a week before supplier deadlines. That buffer absorbs late responses and protects your evenings in the final run-up to departure.

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HOLOGRAM

Experience the birth of the Ptolemaic dynasty in three dimensions right before your eyes. From Alexander the Great's rise to the final days of Ancient Egypt, this epic visual narrative will immerse you in the historical context in which Cleopatra exercised her power, beginning with the fascinating Hellenistic period.

METVERSE

Travel back in time to witness key moments of the Hellenistic period in an interactive environment. See Alexander the Great's coronation at the Siwa Oasis, explore the catacombs of Alexandria, and enter Mark Antony's tent during the Battle of Actium. Live the history as though you were there for every one of these pivotal moments.

EGYPTIAN ARTEFACTS

Discover a curated selection of artefacts from the reign of Queen Cleopatra that contextualise her life and reveal the richness of her historical world, along with a number of information panels which guide you through the experience.



TICKETS

Special rates are available for schools, with tickets available from £10. To find out more visit the 'groups' section of the website.

PALACE CHAMBERS

Learn about the history and eternal legacy of Cleopatra in a room that evokes her own private chamber, overlooking the Mediterranean. Inspired by the royal palaces of Hellenistic Egypt, this space combines technological and scenographic elements to invite you to discover and explore Cleopatra's greatness through a huge interactive map and mirrors.

IMMERSIVE ROOM

In this thrilling and immersive audiovisual production, soar over the city of Alexandria and witness Cleopatra's coronation, enter the

enigmatic Temple of Isis, and explore the city's legendary Library. Relive her alliance with Julius Caesar and her story with Mark Antony, and accompany her to the epic Battle of Actium, which sealed her fate.

VIRTUAL REALITY

Experience the catastrophe that submerged part of Alexandria beneath the sea with Virtual Reality. Become a deep-sea diver and join the search for Cleopatra's tomb. Explore sunken ruins among sphinxes and forgotten temples, until you reach the majestic Temple of Isis, where you will encounter Cleopatra's burial ritual.

{ BEFORE YOU GO }

Review the educational resource and brochure provided for schools to get an understanding of the experience and identify areas or activities that will be of particular interest.

Plan to be at the experience for a minimum of 90 minutes while the students learn not just about Cleopatra but also the broader geopolitical context of Rome and Ptolemaic Egypt.

Consider providing the children with notepads and paper to bring to the experience so that they can make notes of what they see and learn during the visit.

Cleopatra: The Experience is open until 12 July. Book now at cleopatraexperience.co.uk



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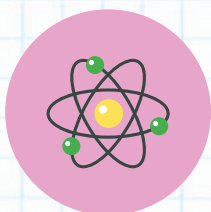
A visit to *Technicians: The David Sainsbury Gallery* at the Science Museum in London supports productive careers conversations with young people

Recreating the workplaces of technicians across the health science, creative arts, manufacturing and renewable energy sectors, the *Technicians* gallery at the Science Museum enables pupils to get hands-on with a variety of interactive exhibits that simulate job-related tasks. The Science Museum has collaborated with Marvel Studios, the NHS, the National Grid and others to create this unique careers experience. During a school trip, your class will experience

what it's like to create visual effects on a blockbuster film set, analyse blood samples in a medical laboratory, fix a fault on a wind turbine, and much more.

The gallery is aligned with science, design, technology, art and computer science curriculums and supports productive career conversations spanning a range of sectors. Hands-on activities offer those leading school groups even more opportunities to expand their pupils' horizons.

CURRICULUM LINKS



SCIENCE

This Science careers gallery showcases a range of scientific career pathways. Visiting students are encouraged to think scientifically and methodically through interactive exhibits.



CAREERS

In the free *Careers Uncovered* sessions, students meet technicians and take part in a series of job-related activities relating to a variety of industries.



D&T

From learning how to operate a robot in a manufacturer's workshop to creating visual effects for a blockbuster film, the gallery is filled with inspiring career options.

LEARNING JOURNEYS

Technicians Gallery

At the *Technicians* gallery, your class will learn how technicians work behind the scenes to save lives, make energy greener, provide entertainment, create everyday items we couldn't live without and much more. They'll have the chance to operate a robotic arm, to solve the problems on top of a wind turbine and to create lifesaving medicine.

Careers Uncovered

KS3 and KS4 groups can book onto a free, hands-on workshop held in the *Technicians* gallery. Pupils will meet real-life technicians from top organisations and use their existing skills to problem-solve a variety of job-related activities.

Careers Trails

To support your visit, the Science Museum has created a fun, careers-themed activity trail that leads pupils around the museum. They'll explore *Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries* and *Mathematics: The Winton Gallery* and learn how real-life technicians helped design and build the world around us.

Gatsby Benchmarks

A visit to the gallery will support productive careers conversations with young people by offering an informal yet educational encounter with a huge range of technical career pathways. A visit could also help in meeting Gatsby's Good Career Guidance benchmarks by providing opportunities for pupils to experience workplace environments.



Making the world go round

Helen Wickens details how the Science Museum is giving technical careers some long-overdue time in the spotlight

Whenever you flick a light switch, watch a West End show or get a test result back from the hospital, you're probably not thinking about the technicians who make those things possible. Yet without them, life in the UK would likely come to a quick stop. From laboratories and airports, to film sets and flood defences, technicians are those with the skilled hands and sharp minds who keep our society running.

Government figures show that the country needs hundreds of thousands more skilled technicians to meet future demand and the Department for Education has put technical careers at the heart of its skills strategy, championing T-Levels, apprenticeships and employer-led training – we want to ensure that young people are aware of the opportunities these roles can provide.

Tangible, exciting, accessible

It's a challenge that the Science Museum set out to tackle in 2022, with the launch of *Technicians: The David Sainsbury Gallery* funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation. Free to visit, and designed with young people in mind, the gallery is bursting with interactive displays, bold storytelling and hands-on activities that showcase the real lives of technicians. Via a series of interactive exhibits, students can programme a robotic arm, analyse samples using medical technologies and discover the part that technical skills play in

putting on stage shows and live gigs.

The gallery gives young people the chance to see themselves in roles they might never have considered before. Too often, technical careers are seen as hidden, academic, or 'not for me'. At *Technicians*, they are tangible, exciting and accessible.

Upon entering the *Technicians gallery*, visitors are greeted by a large sculpture of a beautifully crafted kit of parts, showcasing the critical tools and equipment technicians need to do their work. As visitors move around the five areas of the gallery, the world of technicians is brought to life through large-scale illustrations featuring technicians in a wide range of workplaces.

Face-to-face workshops

Students can also touch various objects made and used by technicians – from a safety harness worn by technicians while working high up on a wind turbine, to a prosthetic leg made for a ballet dancer by engineering manufacturing technicians at Imperial College London.

The excitement of the gallery is further amplified by our free, 60-minute *Careers Uncovered* sessions, where real technicians working for major companies get to meet students face-to-face. At past sessions organised by Heathrow Airport, for example, students could discover how, every day, thousands of staff work behind the scenes to keep one of the world's busiest airports operating



safely and efficiently.

Other sessions have seen the Environment Agency demonstrating the role of technicians in tackling flooding and climate change, and IBM showing students the skills that go into cutting-edge computing and artificial intelligence. For young visitors, these encounters aren't just eye-opening, but transformative. As one Y9 student previously put it to us, "I didn't know jobs like this even existed. Now I want to find out how to get into it."

Tackling misconceptions

It's precisely this kind of shift that employers and educators alike are hoping for. The misconception that STEM careers are solitary or suited only to the most academic students, continues to discourage otherwise capable young people from venturing further. Yet the skills required for such roles are creative, collaborative and transferable across many different industries.

Teachers are seeing the benefits, too. Evaluations show that the gallery helps

schools meet The Gatsby Good Career Guidance benchmarks, by providing students with direct employer encounters as required under the Baker Clause. For employers, it's a chance to engage with the next generation of technicians at a critical time.

At the *Technicians gallery*, young people get the chance to gain unique insights into the crucial, yet often hidden world of technical careers. They can try out essential tasks performed by technicians, and discover remarkable stories that could change their perception of STEM careers. At the Science Museum, technicians are no longer hidden. Instead, they're centre stage, showing the next generation how their skills could power the future.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helen Wickens is Programme Manager (Careers) at the Science Museum; for more information, visit [science-museum.org.uk](https://www.science-museum.org.uk)

Where learning IS LIVED

How one family of school travel specialists supports every step of a student's journey

From first residential to global expeditions, Experience

Education brings together six specialist school travel brands to support teachers through every stage of their students' learning. Here's how the UK's leading family of educational travel companies helps you make learning lived.

The challenge every teacher knows

Ask any teacher what students remember most from school and they'll tell you it's the moments lived: the first time they zipped down a slope, stood before a world-famous landmark, or shared a cabin with friends on that first-night-away adventure.

John Upton, Managing Director of Experience Education, puts it simply:

"Teachers tell us that these experiences change how young people see the world and themselves. Our job is to make those experiences easier to plan, safer to run and richer in learning than ever before."

For over 50 years, the Experience Education family has been doing exactly that. Today, the group brings together six trusted school travel brands, each a specialist in its field, but all united by one purpose: to make learning lived.

One group, endless possibilities

What makes Experience Education different is the ecosystem sitting behind every trip. While each brand operates with its own expertise, schools benefit from:

- Specialist teams who understand the pressures teachers face
- Streamlined booking and planning, saving hours of admin
- Coordinated logistics managed by experts
- Robust safety and safeguarding standards across the group
- 50 years of lived experience designing trips that work for schools

Teachers tell us it feels like the perfect balance: the reassurance of a large, expert group, with the personal, human support of a smaller company. Here's how each brand plays its part in a student's learning journey.

Travelbound

Where learning is being there (curriculum tours) – travelbound.co.uk

Whether you're teaching History, Geography, MFL or the Arts, nothing sparks understanding like seeing the real places behind the textbook. From the battlefields of Ypres to the geothermal wonders of Iceland, Travelbound's curriculum tours bring learning into vivid focus.

Travelbound specialises in curriculum-designed school trips, tailor-made around your subjects, timetable and budget. Schools rely on Travelbound for:

- High-quality, safe educational itineraries
- Strong curriculum links across KS3–KS5
- Subject-specific support and guidance
- Trusted global networks
- Smooth, teacher-friendly planning

As John Upton explains, "Travelbound is where students step into the world they've been studying, and where teachers get the support to make it all run smoothly."

SkiBound

Where learning is carving memories (school ski trips) – skibound.co.uk

For many students, a ski trip is the defining adventure of their school years – a chance to try something new, push limits and gain confidence on the slopes.

SkiBound has spent decades helping schools deliver safe, memorable ski experiences in France, Italy, Austria, Andorra, Canada, America and now Japan. With exclusive Clubhotels in France and

resort partnerships across destinations, teachers get:

- Comfortable, school-friendly accommodation
- British-trained rep support
- Full safety management and piste-side reassurance
- Resorts suitable for all abilities
- Excellent value packages

It's where learning leaps off the page and onto the mountain.

Edwin Doran Sports Tours

Where learning is teamwork celebrated (sports tours) – edwindoran.com

For over 50 years, Edwin Doran has helped girls' and boys' school teams develop their skills, build team spirit and compete across the world. Think rugby in South Africa, netball in Australia or cricket in Sri Lanka.

Teachers choose Edwin Doran because they offer:

- Unmatched global sporting links
- High-quality fixtures and training
- Professional coaching opportunities
- Brilliant cultural add-ons that deepen the experience
- Dedicated sports travel experts



A sports tour isn't just about the match, it's about confidence, camaraderie and connection. Edwin Doran ensures those moments happen.

“They genuinely cared and the trip was a great success as a result!”
Group Leader feedback

- independence
- Fun, energetic schedules perfect for bonding
- Friendly and supportive instructors who understand school needs

It's often the start of a lifelong love of learning outdoors.

Why teachers choose Experience Education

Teachers returning year after year tell us the same things:

- 1. Planning feels easier**
Quick quotes, clear itineraries, and specialist support lighten the load.
- 2. Support feels stronger**
Whether you're running a ski trip or an expedition, the group-wide safety framework and behind-the-scenes coordination provide true peace of mind.
- 3. Students gain more than memories**
Trips across the Experience Education family build confidence, curiosity, resilience and global awareness, skills that last far beyond the journey home.
- 4. Every brand feels personal**
Although the group is large, the support is human, direct and tailored: exactly what teachers are looking for.

Where learning becomes a turning-point

Every trip you run, whether it's a first residential in the UK, a European football tour, a ski week in the Alps, a curriculum adventure with Travelbound or a far-flung World Challenge expedition, has the power to shift a young person's view of what's possible.

Experience Education exists to help you create those moments: experiences

point where they're ready to test themselves in the wider world, World Challenge offers life-changing expeditions that build resilience, leadership and independence.

From trekking in the High Atlas Mountains, to community-led projects in Asia or South America, World Challenge gives students:

- Real responsibility and team decision-making
- Skills in budgeting, leadership and planning
- Safe, expertly supported expedition frameworks
- Experiences that create lasting personal growth

As John says, “This is where young people discover what they're capable of”.

JCA

Where learning is looking back in amazement (UK activity centres) – jca-adventure.co.uk

For many students, the first big step begins closer to home, with their first residential. JCA's UK activity centres provide safe, confidence-building adventures ideal for KS2 and early KS3.

- Teachers value:
- Safe, well-equipped adventure centres
 - Classic activities: climbing, archery, fencing, canoeing
 - A focus on teamwork, communication and

MasterClass

Where learning is achieving goals (European sports tournaments and football tours) – masterclasstours.co.uk

MasterClass brings high-energy sports travel to life through brilliantly organised festivals, tournaments and European sports tours, including hugely popular football experiences across Europe. Whether you're taking a squad to Amsterdam, Paris or Barcelona, MasterClass combines competitive fixtures with an experience that students never forget.

Schools can confidently choose MasterClass for:

- Professionally run multi-sport festivals and large scale events
- European football tours offering excellent value
- Well-matched fixtures designed for development and confidence-building
- Smooth organisation ideal for large groups and busy PE staff

It's sport, culture, teamwork and sheer excitement, all wrapped into one truly memorable sporting experience.

World Challenge

Where learning is rising to the challenge (student expeditions) – weareworldchallenge.com

When students reach the

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masterclass
sports tours

masterclasstours.co.uk

World Challenge

weareworldchallenge.com

JCA Let the adventure begin...

jca-adventure.co.uk

Where learning is lived, and where every adventure becomes part of who your students will become.

they'll remember in years to come; the moments that make teaching feel bigger than the classroom.

As John Upton puts it: “Teachers carry the weight of a school community on their shoulders. If we can make planning a trip easier, safer and more inspiring — that's our job done.”

Experience Education
Student Travel Group

experienceeducation.com

5 THINGS TO DO // TRAVELBOUND

Unforgettable learning experiences

Travelbound's curriculum-rich school trips help students see the world differently.



1 Explore the story of 1066 in Normandy

Follow the footsteps of William the Conqueror on Travelbound's brand-new Normans & Conquest tour. Students walk medieval streets, examine the Bayeux Tapestry, and connect English history with the landscapes where it unfolded.

2 Discover China's ancient and modern worlds

Travelbound's China programmes blend history, culture, business and geography, from the Great Wall to Shanghai's financial district. An inspirational way to spark cross-curricular thinking and global awareness.

3 Bring geography to life around the world

Whether investigating volcanic forces in Iceland, coastal processes in the Mediterranean, or sustainability projects in the Netherlands, Travelbound helps students experience the world as geographers – outdoors, hands-on and unforgettable.

4 Unlock immersive MFL learning in real contexts

Students practise language skills with native speakers, from ordering food in Paris to exploring markets in Barcelona. Learning becomes lived, and confidence grows naturally.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

From cross-curricular adventures to subject-specific discovery.

travelbound
Worldwide Educational Tours

5 Experience unforgettable cross-curricular adventures worldwide

Travelbound offers a huge variety of trips that combine subjects in meaningful ways, from politics and business in Washington, to art and culture in Barcelona, to STEM-focused journeys across Europe. Students explore real places where subjects naturally intersect, helping them see how classroom learning connects to the wider world.

travelbound.co.uk | E: info@travelbound.co.uk T: 01273 244 572

travelbound

Where learning is seeing for yourself

Through our range of curriculum-friendly trips, Travelbound brings learning to life in key places where history happened and innovation is evolving.

We do the planning, so you can take care of the teaching.

When learning is lived, *it lasts a lifetime*

Plan your next trip at travelbound.co.uk



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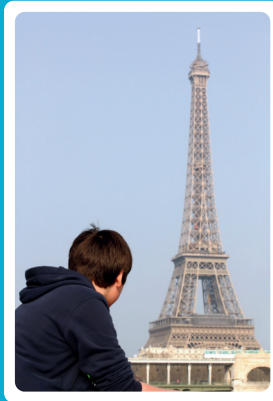
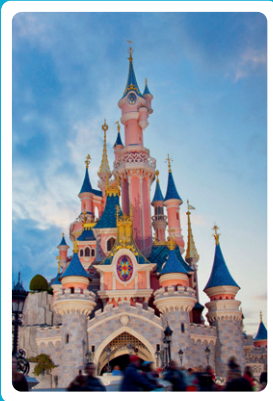


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WE'RE THE EXPERTS

“We take away all the stress”

The School Travel Company’s Max Bevin runs through the benefits of booking school trips through a tour operator

Why should schools book through a tour operator?

We take away all the stress involved in planning and running a school trip. For peace of mind, teachers have one contact, all the way through. All elements of the trip are booked through us, so teachers don’t need to worry about arranging individual components or meeting deadlines. We are approved members of the STF and hold the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, which shows that all suppliers are vetted and safety checked in line with regulations. We make organising a school trip simple, allowing teachers to focus on what really matters – their pupils.

Can trips be tailored to suit specific subject or curriculum needs?

Yes, all our trips can be tailored to suit specific subjects or curriculum needs, alongside ready-made itineraries that align with the curriculum. We provide ongoing support and always aim to accommodate school budgets.



EXPERT PROFILE

Name: Max Bevin

Job Title: Tour Organiser

Area of expertise: Travel around the UK and France.

Best part of my job: Working with different schools across the country and worldwide, running a variety of trips with each one.

What financial protection is in place?

We are members of ABTA, and hold an ATOL licence, ensuring you are financially protected. As part of the Package Travel Regulations, your money is protected by law, and we are legally responsible for safeguarding your deposits.

Where can we take students on a school trip?

We offer a wide range of destinations across the UK and Europe, as well as trips of a lifetime to places such as New York and Washington, D.C. in the USA, or even India and Nepal.

What does the booking process involve?

Our booking process begins with a no-obligation quotation based on your needs, which we automatically hold for three weeks while you seek approval from your school. We then liaise with you throughout the process to finalise the itinerary and accommodation before receiving a deposit to confirm your booking.

What kind of support does a school leader have in an emergency?

You’ll have 24/7 emergency support, with a dedicated contact available at all times. We provide clear emergency procedures, local supplier support, and step-by-step guidance, so you’re never dealing with a situation alone and can focus on your group.

ASK ME ABOUT

- How to plan and organise a successful school trip
- Top destination recommendations, including Liverpool and Disneyland Paris
- Where to go for the best school sports tours

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TECH IN ACTION



TrackTrail® GPS tracking

Discover a cost-effective, award-winning way to ensure student safety during outdoor activities

How it started

For Duke of Edinburgh leaders, the anxiety is familiar. A group is late to a checkpoint. You don't know if they're dawdling, off-route, or in genuine difficulty. You're making decisions based on guesswork. Bromfords School Duke of Edinburgh coordinator, Niamh Moran, understands that feeling from both sides. On her own Gold expedition in Betws-y-Coed, her group spent eight hours walking in circles through two named storms. Path diversions sent them back to where they'd started. Mountain rescue was minutes away from being called before staff finally located them. She knows what it means for a student to be in difficulty in remote terrain and to trust that someone can see where you are. When she became the coordinator responsible for other people's children, she wanted that certainty to be beyond any doubt.

Implementation

Bromfords implemented TrackTrail® to safeguard their students on expeditions. Each group carries a GPS tracking device. Staff can see the group's location in real time on TrackTrail®'s web-based platform, accessible from any phone, tablet or laptop. The tracking link goes straight into the expedition WhatsApp group, giving every volunteer instant visibility without needing specialist software or separate accounts.

As an Ordnance Survey licensed partner, TrackTrail® gives leaders access to fully up-to-date OS mapping directly within the platform. Niamh uses the OS leisure view as standard, reading contour lines to judge terrain and calculate

interception routes. "For Bronze I can see how far I've got to run," she says. When a group needs to be reached by vehicle, the platform links directly to Google Maps. Staff can navigate from the tracker's last known position to the nearest road.

The outcome

Bromfords runs Bronze expeditions with up to 60 students and has grown Silver provision to 46 participants this season. GPS tracking is embedded in how the whole team operates, from coordinator to volunteers on the ground. The unique colour-coded markers on the tracking platform show at a glance when a group has paused. Grid references are available instantly when staff need to move. "I use it so I can see their direction, their last location. The staff are amazing with it," says Niamh. Parent confidence has followed. Knowing a leader can locate their child at any point removes the anxiety that might otherwise prevent consent.

TrackTrail® won the Safeguarding Solutions Award at BETT 2026, and Bromfords were there to see it. Niamh's verdict is unambiguous: "It's a safeguarding addition. We'd be lost without it."



THE PLACE

A secondary school running high-volume Duke of Edinburgh expeditions to remote areas, including North Wales, using TrackTrail® GPS tracking at Bronze, Silver and Gold level.



THE CHALLENGE

Meeting safeguarding responsibilities for students on Duke of Edinburgh expeditions across remote terrain, while keeping staff deployed efficiently and parents reassured.

KEY DETAILS

The TrackTrail® GPS tracking platform requires no software download and works on any internet-connected device. Trackers arrive fully charged with pre-paid return packaging. The platform features OS mapping, real-time direction-of-travel indicators, and grid reference lookup. Trackers include an SOS button that sends an alert to up to three nominated contacts. Hire starts at £15 per tracker per weekend. Trackers can be purchased from £125, with running costs of approximately £50 per year.

Keeping TRACK

GPS trackers help you balance student safety and independence during Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, but what actually works?

Richard Weremiuk outlines the options

Scotland passed its Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) Bill in December 2025, placing a legal duty on local authorities to provide every student with a residential outdoor experience. In Westminster, Tim Farron is pursuing the same goal for England. Researchers confirm that risky outdoor play develops independent mobility, decision-making, physical activity, and resilience. Duke of Edinburgh expeditions sit at the heart of this, but balancing student independence with safety, whilst navigation skills are still developing, is a genuine challenge. Many teachers are exploring GPS tracking as part of their safeguarding solution. The device market is confusing, and the wrong choice can leave you worse off than before.

App-based trackers

Some schools ask students to share their location via a smartphone app. It seems simple, but tracking apps drain phone batteries rapidly, and many expedition areas have patchy or absent mobile signals. A flat device gives you nothing when you need it most. Phones also introduce distraction, and the facility to contact parents or navigate via Google Maps, undermining what the Duke of Edinburgh Award is designed to develop.

Air Tag-type devices

These are cheap, familiar, and marketed as location trackers.

The problem is they work via Bluetooth, not GPS; they detect location by connecting to nearby smartphones in a manufacturer's device network. In remote terrain with no other users within range, they cannot update reliably enough to safeguard children.

Pet trackers

Pet trackers appear to offer GPS functionality at low cost. These devices are also designed to track animals, not children. Their privacy policies are written for pet owners, and schools should satisfy themselves that any device used to track children's location data meets their GDPR obligations before use. Many rely on a single cellular network, and that coverage fails in exactly the terrain where you need it most.

Cheap uncertified trackers

Some GPS trackers carry no CE or UKCA marking. These certifications confirm a device has been independently tested against UK and EU standards for electrical safety and electromagnetic compatibility.

A device without them has an uncertain legal status under UK product safety law. Before you hire or buy any tracker for use with pupils, check that it carries the appropriate marking.

Satellite trackers

Devices like the Garmin inReach and SPOT are designed for the task of tracking people. They communicate directly with satellites, making them the right tool in areas with no mobile coverage, such as parts of the Cairngorms, Cape Wrath, or certain Lake District valleys. Note that satellite trackers have limited capability to transmit under tree cover and in deep valleys, resulting in incomplete coverage.

LTE multi-network trackers

For most Duke of Edinburgh expeditions in England, Wales, and much of Scotland, LTE trackers that connect to whichever network has the strongest local signal offer the most reliable performance. Battery life runs to several days, and data processed on UK-based servers keeps schools on the right side of their GDPR obligations.

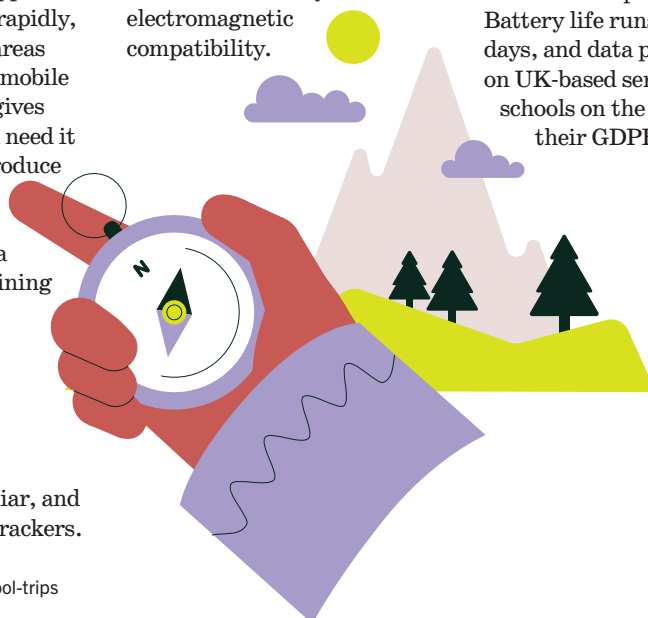
What works?

No single device works perfectly everywhere. For most Bronze and Silver expeditions in England, an LTE multi-network device covers the majority of situations. For Gold expeditions in remote terrain, a satellite device may be more appropriate. Many providers offer hire options so you can trial before committing.

Before you hire or buy, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the device carry a CE or UKCA marking?
- Can the supplier confirm it meets UK product safety regulations?
- Does the device connect to multiple mobile networks, and have you confirmed coverage for your specific expedition area?
- Will the battery last the full duration of your expedition?
- Where is location data stored – on UK- or EU-based servers?
- Does the supplier have a privacy policy appropriate for use with children's data?
- Is the device purpose-built for expedition use?

Make the right choice, and tracking becomes the invisible safety net that lets students navigate, make decisions, and face genuine challenge, exactly as intended.



Richard Weremiuk is the founder of TrackTrail®, a BETT Award-winning GPS tracking service for educational expeditions and outdoor events.



5 THINGS TO DO // AIRHOP

AirHop Adventure & Trampoline Parks

Jump, learn, and grow with active school visits

1 High-flying thrills

AirHop Adventure Parks make your school trips soar, with high-energy attractions that get students moving. From trampoline courts to obstacle challenges and interactive activities (attractions vary by park), children can bounce, race, and explore while building confidence and enjoying an unforgettable active adventure.

2 Teamwork and friendship

AirHop Adventure Parks are the perfect place for students to connect beyond the classroom. Group games and relay-style challenges encourage communication, cooperation, and plenty of cheering from the sidelines. As they tackle activities together, friendships grow stronger and students return to school with a positive shared experience.

3 A reward that really feels like one

A visit to an AirHop Park feels like a genuine treat. Whether celebrating achievements or rewarding good behaviour, the excitement of jumping through adventure zones makes it memorable. Students leave feeling proud, energised, and motivated – a reward they will truly look forward to.

4 Active bodies, active minds

Jumping, climbing, balancing and racing through activities provides a powerful boost for students' physical health. These dynamic movements help develop coordination, balance, agility, and core strength while improving cardiovascular fitness. It's a refreshing

GOOD TO KNOW

AirHop Adventure Parks can host groups of up to **250 students**, (depending on location).

break from desks and screens that supports both wellbeing and concentration, encouraging active play that strengthens motor skills and keeps young bodies and minds fully engaged.

5 Safe, guided exploration

Safety is at the heart of every AirHop Adventure Park visit. Fully trained staff supervise activities and guide students throughout their experience, creating a secure environment where everyone can try something new, build confidence, and enjoy the adventure safely, with qualified first aiders always on hand should any assistance be needed.



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WE'RE THE EXPERTS

“There is no compromise on adventure!”

Maria McQuillan explains how The Conway Centres Bursary Scheme makes residentials more accessible than ever before

Tell us about The Conway Centres Bursary Scheme and why it was introduced. . .

We see every day the emotional, physical, mental, social and academic benefits that young people take away with them from a residential, and we want to make these opportunities more accessible than ever before. We are committed to ensuring as many young people as possible have the opportunity to take part in life-changing residential trips in the great outdoors, which is why we have introduced this new funding initiative.

Who can benefit from the bursary and how does it work?

At Conway Centres, we've removed the usual barriers. The bursary is available to any young person or school, with no eligibility restrictions or lengthy application processes to complete. Simply get in touch with our team, share your requirements and our team will guide you through the next steps!

What kind of experiences can secondary schools expect from Conway Centres during their residential trip?

With The Conway Centres Bursary Scheme, there is no compromise on adventure! We offer a range of activities: high-ropes, water sports, land-based challenges, off-site adventures, art and exploration. So, from the thrill-seeker of the group who enjoys adrenaline-filled high-adventure, to the student who gets more of a thrill taking paint to paper – we pride ourselves that every child will leave having taken part in something they love.



EXPERT PROFILE

Name: Maria McQuillan

Job title: Head of Centres, Conway Centres

Area of expertise: Ensuring an unforgettable, unique and life-changing experience for schools and young people.

Best part of my job: Watching how young people grow and thrive.



What time of year should secondary schools visit?

I will let you in to a secret, the autumn term is the best time for a residential visit! After a long summer, students can reconnect after the school holidays, you can set your goals for the year ahead and prepare young people for the new academic year. Plus the shared experience of being in the outdoors in challenging weather conditions helps young people build resilience and confidence whilst working together as a team.

Why should secondary schools choose Conway Centres for their residential destination?

Whether they attend a residential for their Year 7 bonding trip, take part in one of our arts exam support courses or use our centre as a base for field studies to discover North Wales – secondary schools love the wide range of programmes, activities and experiences we can offer every year group in their school.

If you are ready for your next residential trip, just get in touch and our team will work on building your perfect adventure!

DON'T FORGET!

GET SUPPORT – The team at Conway Centres know schools are busy, so they will do the work for you. Just get in touch!

FUNDING AMOUNT – You could receive funding of up to £89 per pupil!

SECURE YOUR DATES – Funding is available on new bookings, all year round, but be quick, as dates are running out fast!

conwaycentres.co.uk | E: conwaycentres@edsential.co.uk

A day to REMEMBER

Make sure learning outside the classroom doesn't stay there, and extend experiences with six simple steps

HANNAH DAY

You know the drill: plan the trip, go on the trip, forget the trip. Or at least that's how it so often feels. But how do you make sure learning outside of the classroom can be used once you're back inside the school gates? Try these simple memory-embedding techniques to make sure your time away creates a lasting impression.

Memory games

Research suggests that in order for information to be embedded in the long term it needs to be revisited several times. A break between information learnt and information retrieved can make it harder to remember. This means that pupils need to do more cognitive work to re-access information. This harder work means stronger neuro pathways, and an increased likelihood of the information being remembered in the longer term.

This has led to ideas such as the 1-3-5-7 rule. Simply put, you revisit information on the day, then on the third, fifth and seventh days after the initial learning. If this feels like too much time to invest, then simplify it. A recap on the day and then a few days later can be a great way to get started.

The following memory-enhancing approaches can help ingrain learning into long-term storage:



Information swap

Ask children to bullet point the key things they remember. Once they have a few elements written down, they can start the information swap.

Moving around the room, pupils will join into pairs, each giving and receiving one piece of knowledge based on what they've learnt on the trip. Once their new fact is written down, they go onto the next person. Within a short time, they should have been able to swap information with five to 10 people, meaning, hopefully, five to 10 new pieces of information.

Clarify the lists

Make a class list of all the facts shared. This will allow you to make sure everyone has the same information, and for you to correct any mistakes in understanding. Have this list displayed on your smart board. Share out the facts to pairs or small groups.

Words to images

Next, using modelling clay or playdoh, ask pupils to show their assigned piece of information visually. Give children five to 10 minutes to create their playdoh infographics, then recap their fact using only what they have made. As they recap, ask them what in their infographics communicates each fact. For example, if one element is that Romans came to Britain in 55 BC, ask how their image shows this.

A good variation is a 'facts relay'. Everyone has the same facts. Once the infographics are completed, one group starts to communicate the information back to the group. Each time an element is forgotten or is incorrect, another group can pick up the 'baton'. Whichever group is communicating the last of the facts wins the task.

Music to my ears

The musical world is awash with factual songs; from *Hamilton* to *Six* and *Epic*, the power of music to support information retention is clear.

In this activity, give each pair or group part of the learning from the trip. Ask them to pick a well-known tune, and write lyrics to match, explaining the information that they need to include. We are not looking for whole show tunes, but instead perhaps four to six lines that can be easily remembered.

Get them to teach their song to the group. You can put the lyrics up on the board, and as long as everyone knows the tune, the rest of the class should be able to pick it up easily.

A variation of this is to pick one song, and ask each group to fit their facts to either a verse or chorus, according to the order the facts need to be in. When pieced together, you have a song covering all the key elements you want your group to remember.

However you choose to do it, just make sure you always recap, cementing a valuable off-site experience into long-term educational gain.



Hannah Day is a teacher in the West Midlands with a specialism in art and design.

A day at the palace

Choose from four fascinating sites and a range of interactive school sessions to help your students get hands-on with history...

GOOD TO KNOW

Visit the Historic Royal Palaces website to plan your educational visit, search for learning resources, and take advantage of CPD and training opportunities for teachers.

1 Visit incredible palaces

With 1,000 years of evidence to interpret, Historic Royal Palaces' interactive sessions for KS3–5 students are designed to encourage them to delve deeper, consider historical concepts, and engage in discussion and debate in the very spaces where history happened.

2 The Tower of London

Investigate the Tower as a hotbed of protest and rebellion, consider the consequences of religious turmoil during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and examine primary evidence to

complement the study of the Wars of the Roses and Henry VIII's reign.

3 Hampton Court Palace

Investigate the English Reformation, the challenges facing Elizabeth I, and more. New for summer 2025: visit the "Henry VIII on Tour" Schools Tudor Festival, and explore hidden spaces and lesser-known stories in a brand-new KS3 session, "Secrets of the Palace".

4 Kensington Palace

Interpret historical evidence to explore the role William III, Queen Anne and George II played in the development of the British Empire,



with a focus on enslavement and the colonisation of North America.

5 Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

Uncover the role the Castle played in Northern Irish history, use evidence to balance competing historical narratives, and explore the Castle's collection of art and objects to create historically inspired textile designs.



www.hrp.org.uk/schools




HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

Book one of our KS4 Elizabeth I sessions and step inside some of the most significant locations from Elizabeth's reign to uncover the tensions, triumphs and challenges of this complex queen.

Students will explore key historic spaces and examine onsite evidence to evaluate the impact and legacy of Elizabeth's rule.

For more information and to book your school trip, visit: www.hrp.org.uk/schools

Company information: Historic Royal Palaces

OUR BIG DAY OUT

“Our students had the most wonderful time”

The Royal Albert Hall looks back on last year’s Future Makers competition to find young music talent ahead of the 2026 show



Inspiring the next generation

Starting out with nationwide open applications from young musicians aged 14–19, leading up to the opportunity to perform on the main stage at the Royal Albert Hall to an audience of Key Stage 2 and 3 students, Future Makers focuses on inspiring young musicians to create their own music. Schools from across the UK bring their classes to watch the show, filling the auditorium with an audience of thousands of lively young voices.

Bring Future Makers into the classroom

The concert will be supported by a specially produced resource pack intended to help your pupils create their own music. Watching the young musicians in the Future Makers final round of live auditions has been inspiring the audiences of students to make their own music since 2022 when the competition first began. It’s a great way to get your classes envisioning themselves on the stage, and to encourage them to pick up different instruments!

Making music accessible

Tickets to watch the live final Future Makers event are priced at £3 each, with the aim to make the show accessible to students who might not yet have experienced the wonder of live music for themselves. The purpose of Future Makers is to make sure that every student is able to get a taste of how inspiring live music can be, and – even better – is able to see themselves represented on stage.

Experience the Hall

Future Makers takes place in the Royal Albert Hall’s auditorium, in which a multitude of world-renowned musicians have previously performed. It’s a great chance for students to visit a landmark music venue and feel like they’re part of music history. The Hall offers a welcoming space where young people can explore, learn, and be inspired by live music. Future Makers strives to create a space where school children can build confidence through shared creative experiences together.

{ FUTURE MAKERS AT A GLANCE }

Future Makers is an annual schools concert held at the Royal Albert Hall, aiming to inspire KS2 and KS3 students to make their own music.

A teacher resource pack is available to bring the joy of music making into classrooms and encourage the next generation of Future Makers in your schools.

Praise from teachers: “Our students had the most wonderful time visiting yesterday. It was a privilege to witness the awe in their eyes of the very talented musicians performing.”

Tickets are priced at £3 per student to watch the show on Wednesday 4 November 2026, 12:50pm, with booking open now.

royalalberthall.com E: engagement@royalalberthall.com

Battle of the (school) BANDS

The Albert Hall's Future Makers initiative is bringing the buzz back to live music

In a mission to turn the Royal Albert Hall auditorium into one huge music classroom made up of the cheers, stomps and shouts of Key Stage 2 and 3 students, the Engagement team at the Hall imagined up Future Makers back in 2022, and they haven't looked back since.

Designed to celebrate creativity and introduce young audiences to the excitement of live performance, the programme brings together aspiring musicians and school pupils in a concert that places music-making centre stage.

How it works

Future Makers (the show) doubles up as the live final of Future Makers (the competition), where up to eight acts – made up of young musicians aged 14 to 19 – perform their original music to a panel of industry judges and thousands of students for a chance to win a year of music support.

With performers selected from nationwide open auditions in April and shortlisted from a second round of auditions in June, the live final platforms a variety of young talent, ranging from folk singers to punk bands to – last year's winners – grime-inspired rap performers, demonstrating the breadth of creativity emerging from young musicians across the UK.

The finals are a great opportunity to bring classes together and unite schools from across the UK to experience how inspirational live

music can be. The ultimate goal of Future Makers is, primarily, to immerse schoolchildren in live music spanning across a wide range of genres from a diverse range of musical voices, and encourage them to create music of their own.

For classes booked to attend, the show will be supported by a specially produced resource pack intended to help pupils create their own music and bring the Future Makers ethos into the classroom. These activities encourage pupils to experiment with songwriting, rhythm and collaboration.

The impact on students has been inspiring, as one teacher reflected, "Our students had the most wonderful time... it was a privilege to witness the

awe in their eyes at the very talented musicians performing."

Getting bigger

Having expanded its applications and audience nationally, 2025 saw new heights for the programme, with 335 acts made up of 772 talented young musicians applying to become the next Future Makers champion, and a sold-out auditorium of primary schoolers cheering them on, proving just how powerful live music can be in inspiring the next generation.

The programme has built a returning audience of loyal schools who are eager to bring their students back year after year. In recent years, part of the Future Makers experience

has included the chance to see the previous year's winner return to the stage to perform again, giving students the opportunity to see how the artist has developed after their year of support. 2024's winner, Graceé, returned for the 2025 show with a team of backing dancers, bringing a fully choreographed medley of her infectious gospel and soul songs to the stage.

2025's winners were grime-inspired rap duo GeeOne x Zachariyah SOL, whose high-energy performance and dynamic stage presence won over both judges and audience – the primary schoolers on their feet and singing along by the third chorus. It will be exciting to see how they develop and grow over the coming year in the lead up to their Future Makers return and additional performance in the Hall's more intimate performance space, the Elgar Room.

The future

As the competition continues to grow in 2026, it is quickly becoming a highlight of the Hall's Engagement programme, championing

the next generation of performers while encouraging thousands of young people to find their own musical voice.



Tickets are priced at £3 per student to watch the show, with booking open now.

Visit royalalberthall.com or email engagement@royalalberthall.com

10 TO CONSIDER: INSPIRING IDEAS

From thrilling adventures and language immersion to palaces and exhibitions, you're guaranteed to find something for your group here...



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But what teachers really notice when they return is this: pupils speaking up more, joining in more and having discovered that languages can be genuinely fun.

Visit voyagerschooltravel.com



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TrackTrail® is the UK's leading GPS tracking system for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and educational off-site activities. Our trackers work in remote areas where mobile phones typically fail, giving teachers real-time student location data. Students navigate traditionally with map and compass whilst teachers maintain oversight and ability to respond to any emergencies with precise coordinates.

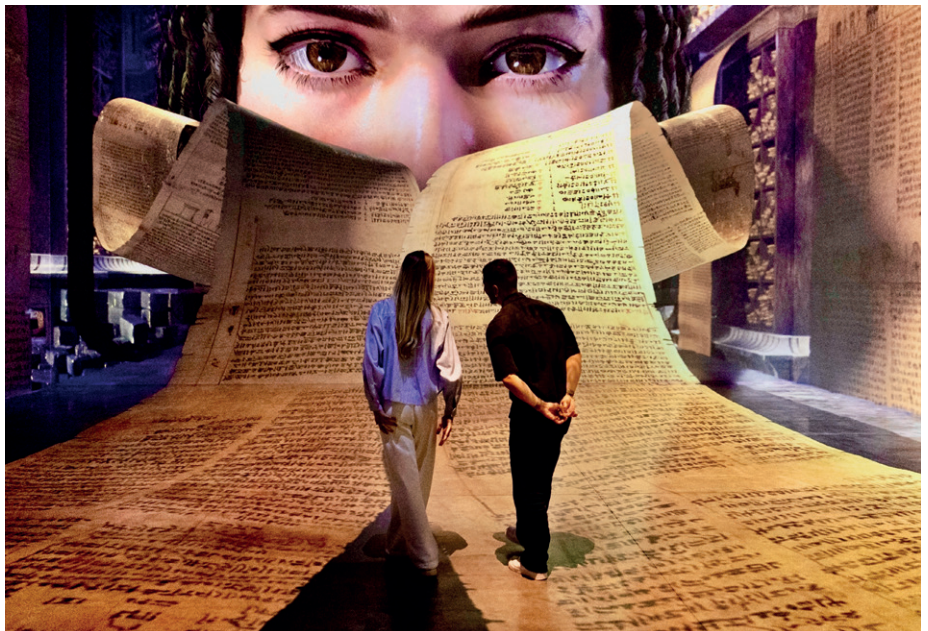
Our web-based platform tracks multiple groups simultaneously, requires no downloads and includes free support. CE-certified devices can be hired from £15/weekend or purchased from £125. Ordnance Survey licensed partner. Winners of the BETT 2026 Safeguarding Solutions Award. Visit expedition-tracking.com, call 01905 570880 or email info@tracktrail.co.uk to transform your expeditions.

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Discounted rates are available for school groups, with prices starting at £10 per pupil. Doors will open at Immerse LDN, Excel London Waterfront from 26th March for 15 weeks only. Book your trip today and become the most popular teacher in town!

For more details, visit cleopatraexperience.co.uk/london/groups



Inspiring adventures in the great outdoors

For schools looking to take learning beyond the classroom, Scout Adventures offers unforgettable outdoor experiences designed to inspire and challenge young people. Owned and operated by The Scouts, the UK's leading youth charity, Scout Adventures has been delivering safe, educational outdoor activities for more than 100 years. Across their adventure centres, pupils can take part in high-quality activities that build confidence, teamwork and resilience. With residentials, activity days and flexible packages including accommodation and catering, schools can tailor the perfect trip. Each year, international volunteers add a vibrant, multicultural dimension, helping create inclusive memorable adventures for every visiting group.

Find out more: scoutadventures.org.uk | info@scoutadventures.org.uk



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So, whether you want to get your linguists talking, travel back in time with your historians or inspire the sports stars and musical maestros of the future, we're here to help.

Visit halsbury.com



Monkey World

Monkey World Ape Rescue Centre in Dorset is home to more than 240 rescued and endangered primates, from cheeky chimpanzees to gleeful gibbons. Monkey World works with schools across the UK to bring real life conservation stories into the classroom through curriculum-linked workshops and guided visits. Students can get up close and personal with monkeys, apes and prosimians, whilst learning about the importance of conservation for these animals in the wild and hearing impactful stories about each individual who lives at Monkey World.

Email education@monkeyworld.org to book a school trip or visit monkeyworld.org/TopSchoolTrips for more information.

We The Curious

If you're looking to build interest and confidence in STEM this spring, check out Bristol's playful and surprising science experience, We The Curious.

This science centre on Bristol's harbourside is brimming with interactive exhibits exploring illusions, sound, space, animation and much more. Students can enjoy awe-inspiring trips to the stars in the 3D Planetarium, and spend time reflecting on some of life's big questions in the unique 'Project What If' exhibition.

School groups can combine a visit to the exhibition floors with a choice of practical, curriculum-linked workshops led by experienced presenters on topics that range from climate change and earthquakes to forensics and psychology.

For more information, contact education@wethecurious.org or visit wethecurious.org.

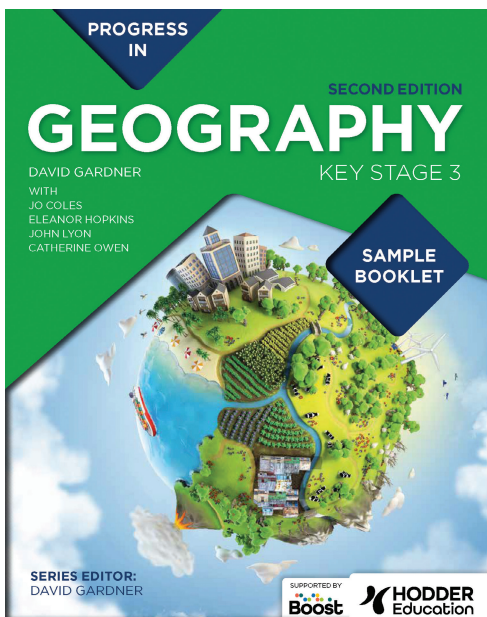


Image courtesy of Lisa Whiting

Historic Royal Palaces

Historic Royal Palaces offers school groups unforgettable learning experiences in some of Britain's most iconic palaces. Using the palaces and their stories as inspiration, our schools programmes are designed to excite pupils and make history more real and immersive. Curriculum-linked sessions for KS3 and KS4 help to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and make learning truly memorable. With subsidised school entry and expert-led sessions, Historic Royal Palaces makes it easy for you to give your class an inspiring day of outdoor learning.

To find out more, email learning.info@hrp.org.uk or visit www.hrp.org.uk/schools



Progress in Geography

Hachette Learning is a leading provider of trusted print and digital resources for schools worldwide. Our Progress in Geography series supports KS3 teachers with a clearly structured, enquiry-led approach, helping students build knowledge and skills with confidence.

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The MAD Museum

The MAD Museum in Stratford-upon-Avon is an inspiring destination for school groups, designed to spark creativity and curiosity. Home to over 100 interactive exhibits, it brings

STEM subjects to life through hands-on learning. Pupils can experiment with gears, levers, and kinetic sculptures, exploring how science and engineering work in fun and memorable ways. The museum offers strong links to the national curriculum, making it ideal for primary and secondary school visits. You can be confident your pupils will leave inspired, having experienced a unique blend of art, design, and mechanical discovery in a safe, engaging environment.

Visit www.themadmuseum.co.uk or email bookings@themadmuseum.co.uk

MAKE A DAY OF IT

The MAD Museum can be part of a wider adventure in Stratford-upon-Avon, with joint ticket offers available for other attractions.



EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE

Connecting with conservation

Engaging, cross-curricular learning opportunities abound at Monkey World – here’s what your school trip there might look like. . .

The second students hear a gibbon calling across the trees or spot a group of chimpanzees playing together, something shifts. Suddenly, the topics they’ve been learning about in the classroom – habitats, ecosystems and conservation – start to feel real. A school visit to Monkey World Ape Rescue Centre in Dorset offers exactly that kind of connection...

Arriving and getting curious

It doesn’t take long before students start spotting their first primates, such as the red-bellied guenons located right by the park entrance. Students quickly begin asking questions like “Where did these animals come from? Why were they rescued?”

Exploring the park

With maps in hand, students start making their way around the park, discovering primates from different parts of the world as they go. Teachers often turn this time into a mini field study, encouraging students to observe behaviours, compare how different primates move or interact, and start to recognise how different species adapt to their environments. It’s the kind of learning that sticks, because students are witnessing the behaviours first-hand.

Keeper talks

Throughout the afternoon, keeper talks offer students the chance to pause and learn more about the different species they’ve been observing. These sessions are often where students become most



“The topics they’ve been learning about in the classroom start to feel real”

engaged. Hearing about the rescue stories behind individual animals, such as those confiscated from the illegal pet trade or saved from poor living conditions, helps connect global conservation issues to real lives.

Time to refuel

After a busy morning exploring, lunchtime offers a welcome break. Many groups head to Treetops Café, which serves hot meals, sandwiches, drinks and sweet treats. Schools bringing packed lunches also have plenty of space to sit and relax. Halfway around the park, the Malagasy Café provides another handy stop for drinks or ice creams before you continue the adventure. These quieter moments often spark discussion too, with students swapping favourite animals, debating which primate is the most intelligent, or comparing the behaviours they’ve noticed.

Big questions

Seeing so many rescued apes and monkeys in one place naturally raises bigger questions, like “Why do so many

animals need rescuing?

What is happening to wildlife habitats around the world? What can people do to help?” For teachers, this is where the visit becomes especially valuable. Conversations about biodiversity, environmental responsibility and conservation suddenly feel relevant and immediate.

Before you go. . .

Before heading home, many school groups make a stop at the Great Ape Play Area, the largest outdoor play area in Dorset. It’s the perfect place to burn off some final energy after a day of exploring. A quick visit to the gift shop often follows, where students can find souvenirs to help remember their trip.

Heading home

Teachers often notice that the conversations on the coach journey home go beyond simply recounting the day. Students talk about the chimpanzee families they watched, the surprising calls of the gibbons, or the impactful stories of animals rescued from difficult situations. That’s what makes the school trip worthwhile, because while the day might begin as an exciting outing, it often ends with a deeper understanding of the natural world and the role we all play in protecting it.

LOTS TO SEE!
Monkey World Ape Rescue Centre’s 65-acre site is home to more than 240 rescued and endangered primates from around the world.

Just LIKE US

The study of primates offers a fascinating way to get students thinking about human behaviour and society, says **Kate Morgan**

The first time you really watch a chimpanzee interact with another member of its group, it can feel strangely familiar. One individual sits patiently grooming another, carefully parting the hair with delicate fingers. Nearby, a youngster races past with obvious mischief in mind, chased by a tolerant adult who seems to know exactly what's coming next. It's not difficult to see echoes of a playground, a staffroom or even a family dinner table.

Friends & relatives

Chimpanzees share over 98% of our DNA, making them our closest living relatives. Yet the most compelling similarities are not genetic statistics, but behavioural ones. Spend time observing chimpanzee communities, and you begin to notice striking parallels with human society. They live in large social groups with complex hierarchies, typically led by a dominant male but influenced by alliances among both males and females. Disputes occur, loyalties shift and friendships matter.

Like human communities, chimpanzee societies are fluid. Groups often divide into smaller, temporary parties before re-joining again later, a dynamic known as fission-fusion social structure.

For teachers, these observations provide a powerful hook into lessons about evolution, biology and behaviour. Students quickly recognise traits they associate with humans – cooperation, conflict resolution, empathy and even humour.



“These observations provide a powerful hook into lessons about evolution, biology and behaviour”

Comparisons

Take grooming, for example. In chimpanzee groups, it means far more than just hygiene. Grooming strengthens friendships, reduces stress and helps maintain social bonds within the community.

Scientists have observed that individuals who groom each other frequently are more likely to support one another during disputes. It's an early form of relationship building that students instantly understand.

Tool use offers another compelling comparison. In the wild, chimpanzees have been documented stripping leaves from branches to create tools for extracting termites from mounds. This process requires planning, patience and learned skill – behaviours once thought uniquely human. Observations like this challenge outdated

assumptions about intelligence in other species.

It takes all sorts

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect for students is personality. Just like humans, chimpanzees are individuals, some are bold and assertive, others cautious and reserved. Observing these differences encourages students to think critically about the complexity of animal minds.

These parallels offer a valuable teaching opportunity, understanding animals doesn't just tell us about wildlife, it tells us about ourselves.

In a classroom increasingly focused on measurable outcomes, it can be easy to overlook the power of curiosity. Yet discussions about primate behaviour invite exactly the kind of interdisciplinary thinking education aims to develop.

Primates in the classroom

Here are some practical ways to bring those ideas into secondary lessons.

Behaviour detective

Show students short clips of primate interactions and ask them to identify behaviours such as grooming, play, conflict or cooperation.

Encourage them to suggest why each behaviour might be important for group survival.

Social hierarchy mapping

Provide students with descriptions of individuals within a primate group (dominant male, high-ranking female, juveniles, etc.). Ask them to map relationships and predict how conflicts might be resolved.

Tool-use challenge

Recreate a simple 'termite fishing' experiment. Give students sticks, tubes and small objects to retrieve from inside containers. Discuss what this reveals about problem solving and learned behaviour.

Personality profiles

Ask students to imagine five individuals within a primate group and describe their personalities with words such as bold, cautious, sociable, independent. Then explore how these differences might affect group dynamics.



Kate Morgan is Marketing and PR Executive at Monkey World. She

works to share Monkey World's ethos of rescue and rehabilitation, whilst educating visitors about primate conservation.

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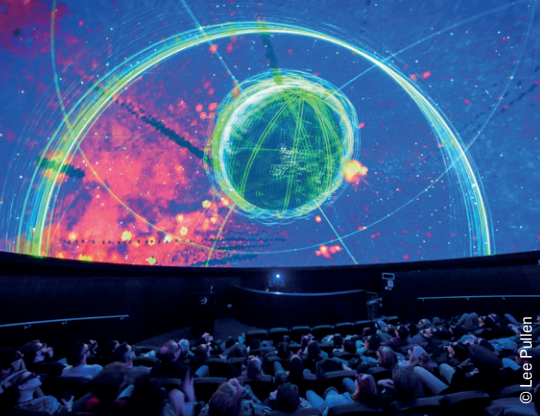
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We The Curious

There's so much for students to see and learn at Bristol's surprising science experience

DID YOU KNOW?

At We The Curious, students can investigate topics as diverse as animation, how our brains work, and whether we have a soul.

1 Ask "What if?"

Explore life's big questions in the intriguing "Project What If" exhibition. Interactive exhibits, films and installations explore themes such as time, illness and happiness. Turn invisible, peer inside the TARDIS, think about what makes you unique, and then leave your own burning questions.



© Lisa Whiting

2 Visit space

Set off on an intergalactic adventure in the UK's only 3D planetarium. Visit far-flung worlds, hear stories from ancient stargazers, and explore new possibilities for humankind. A range of shows are bookable as part of your visit.

3 Book a workshop

Spark curiosity in a practical STEM workshop. Led by experienced presenters in the centre's learning rooms and laboratories, there are 25 different workshops or longer theme days available for secondary schools. Students can also enjoy entertaining science shows in the 70-seat studio.

4 Play Climate Changers – The Game

In this workshop, students work in teams acting as governments of different countries, making decisions with the aim of growing a strong economy while monitoring and reducing the cumulative environmental impacts on the planet.

5 Conduct research

Get hands-on with science in the Open City Lab, a collaborative working laboratory where students can take part in research via engaging activities and discussions. This season, explore curiosity itself through activities related to space science.



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we the curious

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- / Search for alien life in the 3D Planetarium
- / Build confidence through practical, curriculum-linked workshops

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We The Curious is a registered charity (no. 1049954)

Image credit: Lisa Whiting

Climate CHANGERS

Mark Pickering shares an engaging approach to exploring the world's environmental emergency with young people

In 2019, We The Curious became the first science centre in the world to declare a climate emergency. In recognition of this and in conjunction with data from the Teach the Future campaign, which cited that the majority of UK teachers feel ill equipped to teach the topic of climate change or that it is not being properly embedded in the curriculum, our education team created a climate change-focused workshop for KS2 and KS3/4 (funded by the National Grid via their Community Grant Programme).

Research from the British Science Association shows that young people in the UK feel that climate change education in school is insufficient, outdated, and too focused on theory rather than practical solutions. Chatting with our young visitors, one question that came up repeatedly was, "Why don't the people with the most power make better choices?" Inspired by this, for KS3/4 we developed *Climate Changers: The Game*, in which teams function as governments of different countries, making decisions to try and grow a strong economy while monitoring and hopefully reducing the cumulative environmental impacts on the planet.

A chance to choose

In the game, teams choose one card each round from a selection of six options, with each round

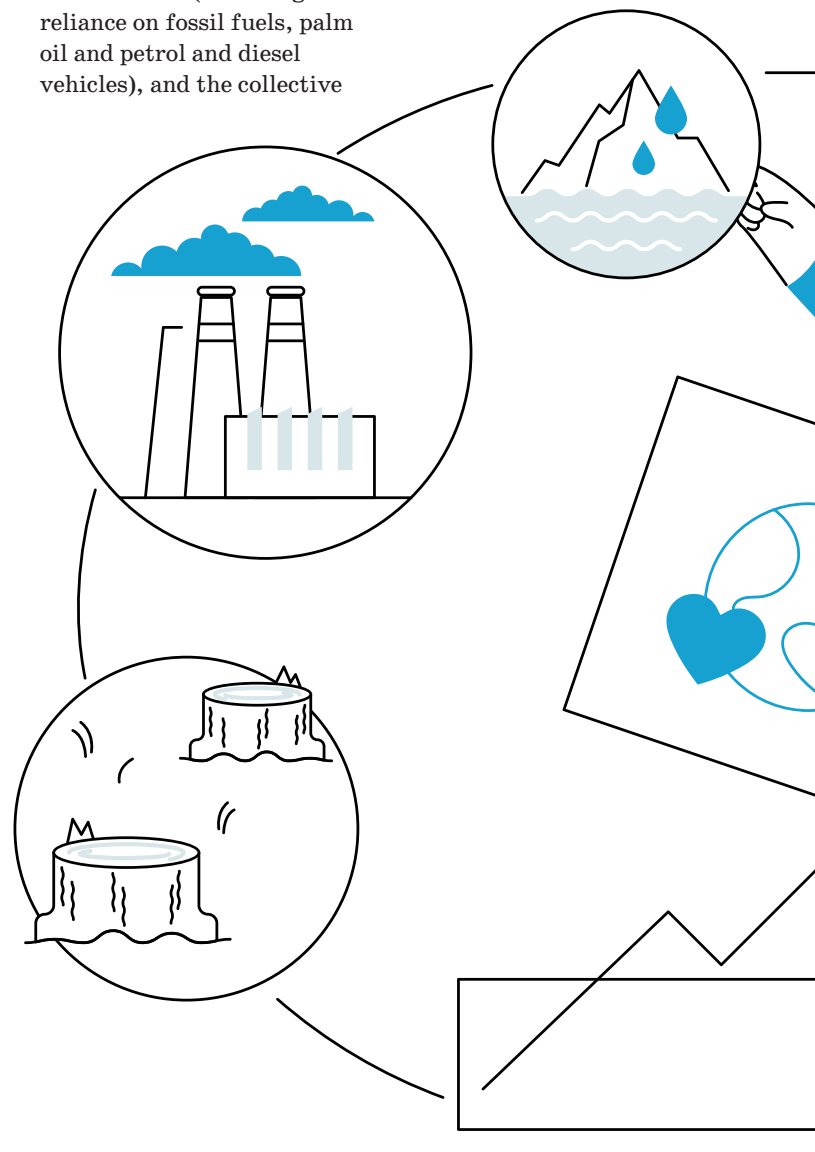
focused on a theme such as energy, food, transport, or industry. These choices shape a country's strategy and affect four key scores: economy, energy, biodiversity and pollution. Teams must keep at least one energy point and cannot let their economy drop below zero. The goal is to build the strongest economy – we explain that having a strong economy itself isn't a negative thing (some young people equate this with greed or inequality); it's what a government does with it that counts. Does a country invest in schools, hospitals, roads, or raising its citizens out of poverty, or does it not?

After each round, teams review their economy and energy, and total biodiversity and pollution scores are calculated. If pollution becomes too high or biodiversity drops too low, the game ends for everyone due to unsustainable climate and ecosystem collapse. A game-over resets all scores back to round one, encouraging players to make different choices to reduce the impact on our planet and its people.

We've found the game format to be engaging, winning over even the most hardened Year 9s. The combination of gamification, competition, empowerment to make choices that aren't judged by us (our role is to simply facilitate and add some relevant scientific and real-world context), and a safe environment

(pardon the pun) is an effective way to contribute to this topic. It stimulates unexpected conversations, as participants discuss what happens in the real world – always trying to achieve the right balance of choices. For example, there are frustrations when a country is making all the "bad choices" (including a reliance on fossil fuels, palm oil and petrol and diesel vehicles), and the collective

group only manages to get to the end of the game due to the more conscious decisions of the other countries. Early wins gained from less environmentally considerate choices can feel unfair. We address this by adjusting scores to reflect each country's global impact and show how environmental decisions affect the economy



over time – for example, higher healthcare costs from air pollution or increased food prices due to poor soil. It gives us the opportunity to discuss social and economic inequality and why tackling the climate crisis is so difficult when countries have very different resources and options.

Questions like “Can we ban that country?” or “Can we ban this card for all countries?” often arise. Our answers? It’s a “no” to the first question, with an explanation that countries can encourage each other to behave more responsibly via trade deals or sanctions, and a “yes” to the second: everyone can agree to not pick a certain card. The suggestion of war is occasionally tabled, but

again we discuss this not being an option in our game and not a go-to initial tactic to attempt to influence the actions of another country.

The world has changed a lot in the last couple of years, and now our game feels like it is not just talking about climate change; it’s offering young people a chance to ask other questions and express other opinions about the wider global context. Being able to facilitate these sorts of discussions puts us in a challenging but privileged position.

“We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it.”

Barack Obama

change and its consequences. But they also feel far more complex (or not), more emotional and more far-reaching as they go beyond the initial scientific discussion; they require more considered answers, or sometimes, no answers at all – but creating space for that discussion is vital.

We stick to the science, the cause and effects of the choices in our game, while knowing that these discussions and questions are likely, at least in the short term, to become louder, more frequent, more enthused, and more polarising. We also acknowledge that climate anxiety is very much present in some of the young people who visit us and take part in this workshop, so again, having a safe space to work through these

Discussing the issues

At We The Curious, we encourage questions – in fact we collected 10,000 for our ground floor “Project What If” exhibition, where we worked in collaboration with the question askers themselves to help shape the exhibits and installations our visitors can explore.

Questions around politics, conflict, and the behaviour of countries in times of limited and localised natural resources are all tied into climate

conversations forms part of our approach.

But the question of what the role of a science centre is in these discussions is a big, difficult one, and not where the original flow of this article was intended, so I will move back to safer waters...

Climate in the spotlight

The recent Curriculum and Assessment Review recommends bolstering “the presence of climate education and sustainability in the science and geography curricula” and emphasising “sustainability in the D&T curriculum”. It also states that “It is important to note that curriculum content is only one part of the issue: pedagogy has an important role in applying an engaging climate lens to existing curriculum content.” Our approach is always embedded in opportunities to encourage curiosity, ownership and multiple “correct” outcomes and answers, using gamification and competition where appropriate. We find giving young people – and especially young adults – respect, a voice, and the opportunity to express their thoughts is a really effective way to engage with them on these areas of the curriculum.

We hope to do more with our game in the future, perhaps sharing it further afield in Bristol during one of our off-site deliveries. We would love it to reach more young people and more teachers, and for it to be delivered directly to students by their educators. Hopefully these ambitions will be realised in the next few years.



Mark Pickering is Education Manager at We The Curious





RSC



RSC 2026/27 SEASON
SCHOOLS TICKETS FROM £10

learning.boxoffice@rsc.org.uk

01789 331259*

*(midday-6pm, Monday – Friday, excluding Bank Holidays)



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



LEARNING JOURNEYS

Bespoke workshops

In our workshops, students work as actors and directors on a Shakespeare play of your choice, or from the RSC season. Workshops explore characters, scenes and themes using the same techniques that are used in an RSC rehearsal room. All workshops are led by an RSC Associate Learning Practitioner – an actor, director or creative with experience of RSC creative practice. Workshops last two hours and are tailored to your class.

First Encounters with Shakespeare

Julius Caesar will spend five weeks in five of our Associate Secondary Schools with performances for students and communities. Performances on tour and in Stratford-upon-Avon will feature a series of Post-Show Talks. These supporting events, unique to each performance, invite young people and audiences to explore connections between the play, its setting and our world today with cast, creatives and speakers from communities and the criminal justice system.

Shakespeare Curriculum

Join the teaching Shakespeare revolution. The Shakespeare Curriculum is the next generation in Shakespeare teaching resources, giving you everything you need to design and deliver your classes for Key Stage 3 and 4, all in one intuitive platform. The curriculum includes 24 deliverable lesson plans for each play, a full RSC production to watch on demand, student log-ins, assessments tools and an interactive digital platform.

WE LOVE TO LEARN

Make Shakespeare unforgettable

Experience the power of live performance and our active approaches to teaching Shakespeare

Give your students the unique experience of visiting one of our theatres; in our 2026/27 season familiar stories are reimagined for the stage offering something to spark all imaginations.

This summer enjoy the RSC's first collaboration with the Unicorn Theatre, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – a 90-minute show full of magic and mayhem co-directed by Rachel Bagshaw and Robin Belfield.

In the autumn term, Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans directs Jonathan

Groff in *As You Like It* and Harriet Walter reprises her role as Brutus in Phyllida Lloyd's groundbreaking 2012 Donmar Warehouse production of *Julius Caesar*. This is a First Encounters tour to schools and Stratford-upon-Avon, in a co-production with KPPL Productions.

Two beloved novels are reimagined for the stage this Christmas – *Middlemarch* directed by Jeremy Herrin, and a joy-filled re-telling of *The Three Musketeers* brought to life in a co-production with *Told by an Idiot*, directed by Paul Hunter.

CURRICULUM LINKS



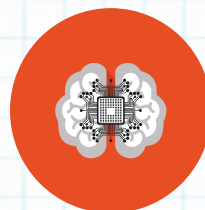
SHAKESPEARE

Give students the best experience of studying Shakespeare. Using RSC approaches deepens young people's engagement with Shakespeare and increases enjoyment in learning.



DRAMA

See world-class performances of Shakespeare's plays, new writing, and modern adaptations of literary classics or try it yourself in a Bespoke Workshop.



CRITICAL THINKING

Invite young people to challenge the themes and topics presented in Shakespeare's plays by discussing and exploring the choices made in our productions.



From audience TO AGENCY

Jacqui O'Hanlon, deputy executive director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, examines the importance of theatre as a springboard for 21st century learning

For many young people, a school trip or school visit from a theatre company is their first – and sometimes only – encounter with the arts or with live theatre performance. Yet, as school budgets and resources are squeezed, these experiences can also be the first to get cut.

Transformative trips

A school performance or theatre visit can spark a lifelong passion for the arts. Sometimes that spark is powerful enough to change the entire trajectory of a young person's life. But even when it isn't, the impact can be felt in other, subtler, but no less profound ways.

From oracy and communication to creativity, critical thinking, empathy and resilience, the benefits of an arts-rich education reach far beyond the stage. The evidence is clear: children who are exposed to arts and an arts-rich education are equipped with important capabilities for both life and work.

But behind all the benefits that we know an arts-rich education can provide, is a worrying reality.

Inequality issues

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) has highlighted a deepening 'enrichment gap', exposing a clear link between the poverty of an area and lack of access to arts opportunities in schools in those areas. Exacerbated by the pandemic and the wider economic climate, this inequality

mirrors a widening attainment gap and means that the children who would benefit most from these sorts of creative arts experiences are often the least likely to have access to them.

With schools under increasing pressure and the cost-of-living crisis biting hard, it means that many young people are now losing out on access to live theatre altogether. Yet these experiences can play a vital role in a child's social and educational development, offering a chance to step out of traditional learning environments and see

“Sometimes that spark is powerful enough to change the entire trajectory of a young person's life”

themselves and the world around them in new ways. For some, a single performance might open up a lifelong creative journey. For others, it might reveal a new way to access words, stories and ideas. Whatever the impact, big or small, it's clear that everyone, regardless of background or ability, can benefit in some way.

Opening up access

Alongside efforts to encourage school visits to its theatres, the RSC has worked for many years to broaden access to live theatre performances through touring productions, taking them directly into schools and communities. The hope is that this can alleviate some of the financial

and time pressures on schools and that longer-term, once they experience the positive impact of live performance on young people, a trip to the theatre will follow.

First encounters

Last year, around 22,500 young people and their families experienced one of our *First Encounters* with Shakespeare productions. *First Encounters* productions are abridged, 80-minute versions of Shakespeare's plays designed for younger or first-time audiences. Many of the children who access these shows are not

only new to Shakespeare, but new to live theatre itself. They offer an accessible introduction for all age groups – and young people and their teachers are often astonished by how the language comes alive in performance. It's a communal, visceral experience that connects the audience and actors intellectually and emotionally, promoting curiosity and understanding.

Meet the experts

This year, we're piloting a new 'artist in residency' model

with, *First Encounters: Julius Caesar*. A co-production between the RSC and KPPL Productions, Dame Harriet Walter reprises her role as Brutus in Phyllida Lloyd's landmark all-female 2012 production of *Julius Caesar*. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see a production hailed at the time as “one of the most important theatrical events of the last 20 years”.

As part of the tour, the company will spend a week in residence at five secondary schools across England, performing the play and leading an in-depth programme of workshops and discussions to explore the play's central themes with its young audiences. At its core, *Julius Caesar* is a play about the rise of tyranny and the fragility of democracy – issues that feel especially relevant in the world young people are inheriting today. The hope is that a deeper, week-long exchange between artists and young people will create an



environment where the artists and young people can explore the issues and examine ideas collaboratively and creatively in a meaningful way.

Different ways of learning

That ethos underpins all our education work at the RSC. Our goal is to open up Shakespeare’s work and the wider world of theatre as a tool for personal and social development. Through our award-winning rehearsal-based approaches to learning, pupils encounter the plays as living, breathing texts. Our education workshops are based around that same principle, with pupils working with their teachers and RSC Learning Practitioners to unlock the plays using the same kinds of approaches that actors and directors use in a rehearsal room.

Research commissioned by the RSC shows that learning about and through Shakespeare in this way not only strengthens literacy, language development and emotional intelligence, but it can also improve attitudes to learning and a student’s academic self-concept (the way a learner perceives their own ability).

Taking it further

That power also extends into productions beyond classic Shakespeare.



Matilda The Musical UK Tour 2025, Sama Kurihara as Matilda © Manuel Harlan



Connected - Associate Schools Symposium Photo by Sam Allard, Fisher Studios © RSC

“It’s a communal, visceral experience that connects the audience and actors intellectually and emotionally”

Matilda the Musical, the RSC’s adaptation of Roald Dahl’s classic story, continues to inspire young audiences around the world and messages around the importance of education and the courage to stand up for what’s right sit firmly at its heart. The RSC’s learning programme surrounding the production is called ‘Change My Story’, and it focuses on the power of stories to help us understand ourselves, each other and the world in new ways.



Matilda The Musical UK Tour 2025. © Manuel Harlan

All these experiences remind us of the power of live performance as a springboard for wider learning. We know schools face huge obstacles. It is part of the RSC’s mission to take our work on the road and directly into communities, finding new connections together with these 400-year-old plays. A theatre visit to your school or a school trip to the theatre is a unique experience and a unique opportunity to help young people expand their horizons, spark their imagination and see themselves and the world around them in new ways.

At the RSC, our belief is simple: access to the arts and to developing your own creative agency is a right, not a privilege. Through our touring productions, school partnerships and nationwide

learning programmes, we’re working to ensure every child can experience the joy, challenge and possibility of the arts. A visit or a school trip can be the first step in that process, helping young people develop agency, a sense of belonging and find joy. And right now, that feels more urgent than ever.



Jacqui O’Hanlon is deputy executive director of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

- [rsc.org.uk](https://www.rsc.org.uk)
- [rsc.org.uk/learning](https://www.rsc.org.uk/learning)
- [rsc.org.uk/first-encounters-julius-caesar-2026](https://www.rsc.org.uk/first-encounters-julius-caesar-2026)



First Encounters - King Lear Production 2025. Photo © Joe Bailey

A world of **ADVENTURE**

Nikki Ball reflects on how organising ambitious school trips to far-off countries isn't easy, but can transform students' perspectives, behaviours and prospects

Let's be honest, few things beat that moment when you watch as a student steps off a plane (or even a minibus) and realises the world is much bigger, stranger and more wonderful than they ever imagined.

Whether it's a month living within Costa Rican communities, or 10 days spent on a beach in Greece helping to conserve turtles, these are the moments that remind us why school trips matter. Because when you strip away the WiFi, timetables and TikTok, something special happens – young people reconnect with the real world, with people, with nature, and with themselves.

They're suddenly aware that not everyone lives as they do, and the gratitude that grows from that understanding is powerful. Such trips don't just enrich learning; they build empathy, independence and resilience in ways that are lasting, long after the suitcases are unpacked once they're back home.

Extraordinary ambitions

These kinds of trips enable staff to witness students flourish in ways they'd never see inside a classroom. Our school's visit to Greece was what I'd call a more 'traditional' school trip, albeit with a twist. Our Eco Club – a student leadership group passionate about sustainability – wanted to broaden their horizons and make a genuine difference.

From the very start, these students were heavily involved in shaping what the experience would look like. Over a series of lunchtime

meetings, they threw around ideas for potential destinations and causes, while staff began researching how to make it all happen. That research – a mix of late-night internet searches, chats on teacher social media groups, and word-of-mouth recommendations – eventually led us to a travel company with outstanding reviews, all of which we were able to verify through independent checks.

The students wanted to build on a project the club had run in Wales the previous year, though their ambitions quickly grew into something extraordinary – a 10-day turtle conservation expedition in Greece. The prospect of 4am starts and camping on a beach didn't faze them for a moment. Their enthusiasm was contagious.



“Education isn't only about grades or targets – it's about growing as global citizens”



Learning, connection and purpose

So it was that in July 2025, 28 members of the Eco Club set off for Kefalonia, to spend eight days living and working on the island's beaches before finishing with two days of culture and history in Athens. Their days were filled with hands-on conservation activities – monitoring turtle nests, recording turtle populations, and carrying out snorkel and drone surveys to measure seagrass health in the bay.

They also ran a number of public education activities, took part in harbour surveys, attended sustainability and careers workshops and joined litter audits in support of local eco-initiatives.

It turned out to be a packed and purposeful 10 days. The



things, building personal resilience and confidence. They were thrown into an environment they'd never experienced before, all without their families, and absolutely rose to the challenge."

The educational benefits were clear, but the personal development they'd undergone was just as striking. They looked out for each other, worked as a team and ensured everyone felt safe, valued, and part of something meaningful.

A community effort

If Greece was a traditional trip with an environmental twist, then Costa Rica was something entirely different – a full-blown adventure that stretched our students in every possible way.

Challenge-style expeditions have become increasingly popular since COVID, and with good reason, since they tend to combine volunteering, sustainability, adventure and travel into one extraordinary experience. A quick online search will reveal a host of reputable providers, but we were clear on what we wanted from the beginning – a trip that would be inclusive, purposeful, and life-changing.

Working out at around £4,800 per student, this was never going to be a budget trip, but we were determined that the cost shouldn't become a barrier. The experience was open to all, with fundraising becoming part of the journey itself.

The travel company provided full parental communication, ran a launch evening for parents and students, and delivered a fundraising workshop, as well as managing all payments directly, which took a huge administrative weight off the school.

From there, the fundraising process became a genuine community effort. The school provided spaces for bake sales, quiz nights and craft

fairs, waiving all hall and stall fees. The students quickly found other creative ways of raising the money themselves, with the result that local cafés were soon hosting additional pop-up markets, and families began donating raffle prizes, as the entire school rallied behind them.

Time for adventure

When the time came, 48 students and four staff embarked on a month-long expedition to Costa Rica, travelling from wetlands in the north to the highlands in the south. Each group was supported by an experienced expedition leader, with school staff providing pastoral care and reassurance when needed; familiar faces in an unfamiliar world.

The students all lived and worked within local communities, tackling environmental and social projects that left a lasting impact. They taught English to disadvantaged children, built a greenhouse, repaired a path that facilitated wheelchair access to a local beach and took part in vital reforestation work. Every day brought new challenges and taught them new lessons in teamwork, humility and gratitude.

There was also time for adventure. Students earned PADI diving qualifications, spotted whales and dolphins from boats, and one student even celebrated their 16th birthday by waking up in a hammock on the beach – not your average teenage milestone.

Different people

As one of our Y12 students later reflected, "It was incredible. I'd do it again in a heartbeat. It was good to get away from our real world, where people spend all day on their phones. We learnt that not everyone is as lucky as we are. We're lucky to have what we have, and this trip has made us more grateful.

"I really liked how appreciative the community was after we did some work for them. We could tell it really meant something to them. It was an eye-opening experience. I've made new friends, as I had the opportunity to speak to people I wouldn't normally."

For staff, watching students use their Spanish skills to talk, laugh and teach with local children was unforgettable. Their learning came alive in the most human way possible, through conversation, connection, and play. Friendships formed across year groups, barriers disappeared, and confidence soared.

By the time they returned home, they weren't just different students; they were quite different people. Trips like this remind us that education isn't only about grades or targets. It's about growing as global citizens, understanding privilege, appreciating difference and realising that empathy, courage, and kindness are as valuable as any qualification.

kind of trip that offers exceptional value for money, though not because of luxury – because of learning, connection and purpose the students got to experience. That they were able to see and do things they'd never previously imagined and came home changed by them.

As one of our Y10 students reflected afterwards, "I went along as I just wanted to help. The main thing for me was carrying out the turtle surveys, as it was good to see how the turtles needed our help. It made me more interested in the conservation side of things."

One of the teachers accompanying the trip meanwhile summed it up beautifully: "This was a wonderful opportunity for all involved. Our students pushed themselves to try new



Nikki Ball is assistant headteacher at Mayflower High School, Essex

Q&A

“A calmer environment for learning”

Empower your colleagues with the ability to conduct brilliant lessons in nature with the help of Coventry Outdoors

What range of qualifications does Coventry Outdoors offer?

We offer a complete suite of professional qualifications designed to suit different needs. Alongside popular options, like WILD Passport and Forest School Leader awards, we also offer specialised training in Wilderness Therapeutic Interventions and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC). For schools looking to take a more strategic approach, our Level 5 Outdoor Learning Specialist apprenticeship is a brilliant way to develop a resident expert who can lead curriculum-wide change.

How does outdoor learning improve wellbeing and school behaviour?

Spending time outdoors lowers cortisol levels, gives physical and emotional space to pupils and provides a calmer environment for learning. This in turn leads to improved emotional regulation and behaviour, meaning schools can reduce the time and money spent on crisis management. Improved behaviour lets resources be reallocated into proactive teaching, making outdoor learning a preventative approach that can be used to support student mental health, while having a direct impact on school finances.

How can outdoor learning drive academic attainment?

Outdoor learning has been shown to assist in closing the academic gap for many students. By providing opportunities to contextualise classroom learning – measuring wood before it’s cut, identifying insects in their native habitats, exploring heritage skills – we’re helping to embed classroom knowledge, build deeper understanding and encourage greater curiosity. Better engagement inevitably leads to better classroom participation and improved performance in assessments.

Why should schools choose a council-run service for their CPD?

Partnering with Coventry City Council gives schools peace of mind. You aren’t just getting a trainer – you’re getting a service that understands local authority safeguarding, health and safety, and curriculum standards. We’re not profit-driven, and

30 SECOND BRIEFING

Coventry Outdoors – the dedicated Outdoor Learning Service of Coventry City Council – provides exceptional CPD and accredited Level 5 apprenticeships opportunities across the UK. We empower educators through Forest School, WILD Passport and therapeutic training, giving them the expertise to deliver high-impact, sustainable outdoor learning in any setting.



ABOUT US:

Part of Coventry City Council, we provide expert-led outdoor education training and qualifications for schools nationally.

therefore appreciate the need for long-term social and financial value, as well as educational outcomes. We want schools across the nation to develop a sustainable approach to outdoor learning.

How can schools apply for apprenticeships?

Whilst we are a Coventry-based service, we are actively expanding and encourage applications from schools across the UK to help form new apprenticeship cohorts. We’re currently recruiting for our major September intake, with dedicated cohorts already established in Coventry and Yorkshire. We also welcome interest from any national organisations keen to partner with us in creating new regional cohorts.

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WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE

- Trusted local authority expertise – we combine council-level quality assurance with years of practical, on-the-ground outdoor teaching experience
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- + Holistic qualification suite – from the WILD Passport to Therapeutic Interventions, we offer the full spectrum of outdoor professional development

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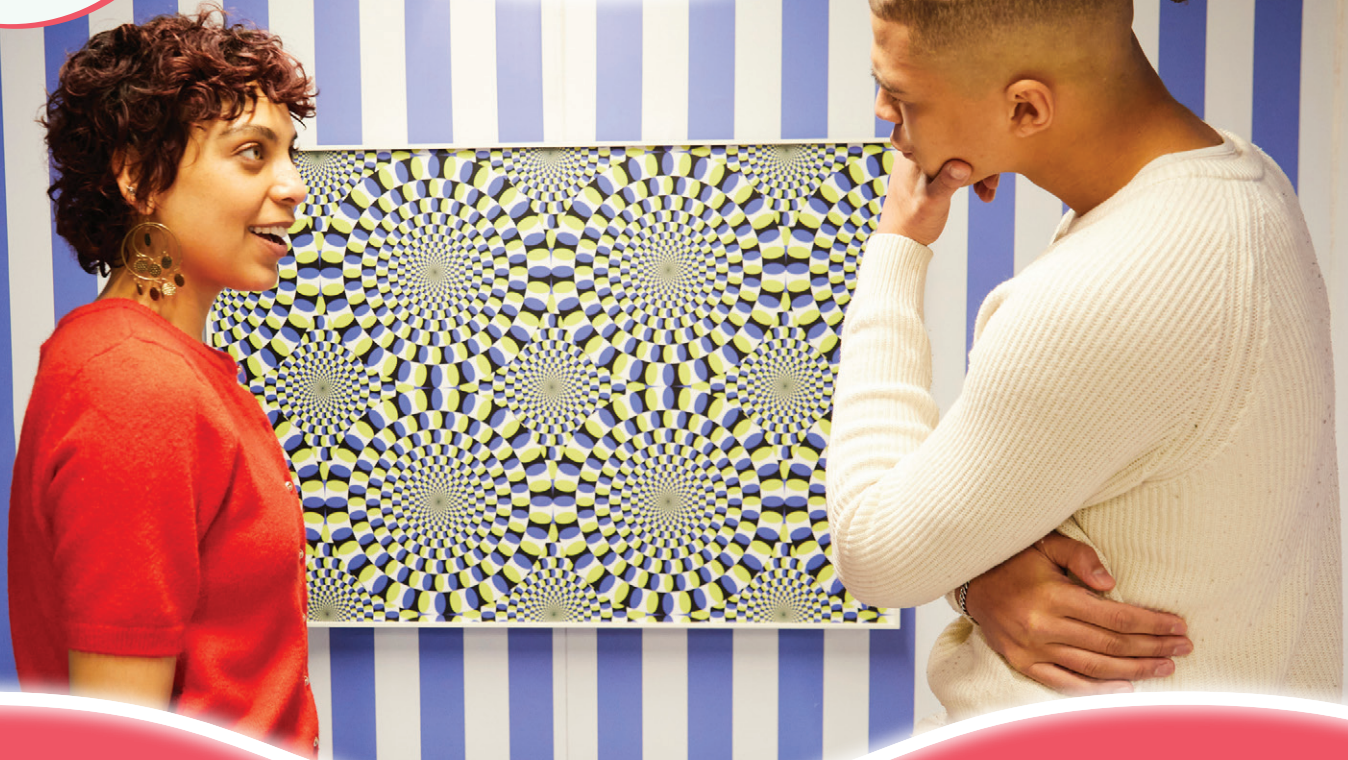
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