



# TOP SCHOOL TRIPS

#7 TRIPS

## DON'T FORGET!

Trips that build lasting memories

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### A FRESH APPROACH

6 ways to inspire nature connection

### EMBRACE OUTDOORS

Take the stress out of teaching al fresco

### STEP BY STEP

The school that planned a pilgrimage

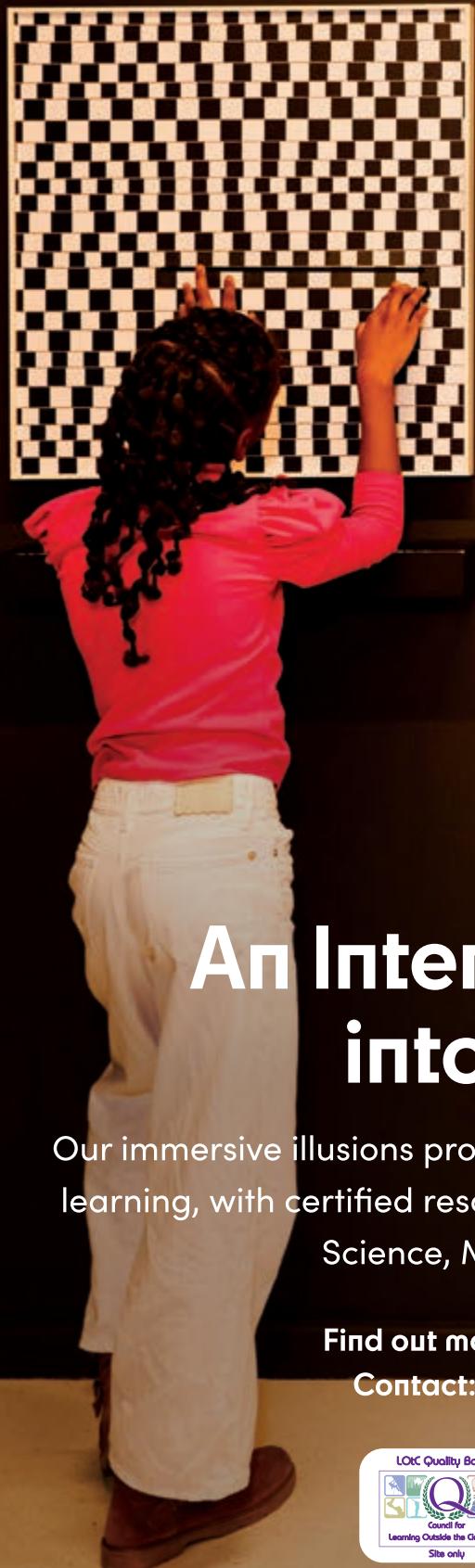
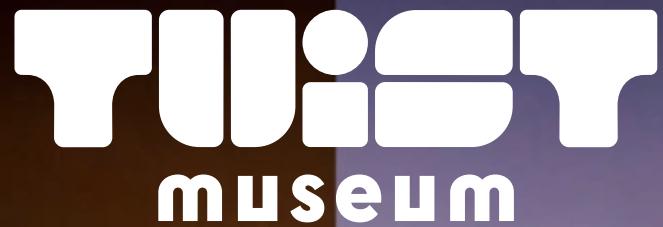
## CURIOSITY KIDS

How to spark a passion for STEM

# WHERE TO NEXT?

50 EXPERIENCES YOUR PUPILS WILL LOVE

teach  
PRIMARY



## An Interactive Journey into Education

Our immersive illusions provide the perfect backdrop for cross-curricular learning, with certified resources that link to the National Curriculum for Science, Maths, Art, English and PSHE.

**Find out more:** [twistmuseum.com/education](http://twistmuseum.com/education)

**Contact:** [education@twistmuseum.com](mailto:education@twistmuseum.com)



# Hello...

**W**ow' moments get talked about a lot in education – the idea that memorable experiences can be incredibly useful when it comes to embedding learning in children's brains. As long as it's attached to meaningful content and isn't planned 'for the sake of it', so the theory goes, learning that fires emotions can capture and focus pupils' attention, boosting their desire to engage, and subsequently enhance their recall. The memorable moment itself could be anything that stands out from the everyday routines of the classroom – a visitor coming in, the chance to use new technology, or simply some engaging thematic group work can all work well. But when it comes to 'wows', it's hard to think of anything more effective than heading out and about to learn beyond the confines of school entirely.

The novelty of these opportunities goes a long way on its own – they naturally stick in pupils' minds – but the impact can be amplified by choosing the right trip for your group and learning objectives. It's not hard to bring to mind a host of possibilities. Head to this issue's news pages, for starters, and you'll be reminded of the arrival in the UK later this year of the Bayeux Tapestry: any pupil who has the opportunity to see this unique, seventy-metre-long historical record in person before it heads back across the Channel will be hard-pressed to forget the experience, particularly if they're in the midst of studying the Norman Conquest. But whatever the subject, there's a visit that can similarly spark children's interest – and we have no shortage of options for you to consider right here.

From STEM-focused workshops that nurture curious minds and adventure-filled residential to thrilling theme parks and a host of animal attractions, *Top School Trips* is here to wow you with the options – we hope you find the perfect place to take your class.

## The *Top School Trips* team



## — The Experts —



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Teacher with a specialism in art and design



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**PUBLISHED BY:**  
Artichoke Media Ltd.

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# NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY



## Schools hub

Explore online resources that support Art & Design and History learning through the world's greatest collection of portraits.



Find out more at  
[npg.org.uk/schools-hub/](https://npg.org.uk/schools-hub/)

Image (top right): Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley portrait') (detail) by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, c. 1592.  
Image (bottom left): 'Mal (Omai) (detail)' by Sir Joshua Reynolds, c. 1776. Purchased jointly by the Board of Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery and the Art Fund, Getty Trust, 2023, with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and Art Fund and other generous supporters.  
All images © National Portrait Gallery, London.

# GET INSPIRED

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

## Time Odyssey

*Apply for an exciting free learning adventure for KS2*

**M**ore than 60% of teachers haven't taken their class to a museum in the past year, with 14% never having done so, according to research by the Art Explora Foundation. To address this, Art Explora and the British Museum have launched Time Odyssey, a programme supporting free museum visits for children aged 7–11. The initiative covers entry and travel costs – both key barriers identified by teachers – and includes a digital introduction to museum collections. Following a successful 2024 pilot in five museums, it has now been expanded to include venues in Liverpool, Doncaster and Tees Valley. Aimed particularly at schools with high free school meal rates and those in rural areas, the programme is seeking to ensure all children can benefit from cultural experiences that boost learning, wellbeing and aspiration.

### FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about Time Odyssey, access teacher resources, and book a visit for your class, head to [www.timeodyssey.org](http://www.timeodyssey.org)

## English Heritage partners with Taskmaster

Taskmaster Education has teamed up with English Heritage to bring some extra fun and friendly competition to school trips. Schools can visit any of English Heritage's 400 sites for free and receive special Taskmaster activity packs, each of which is themed to a historical period, for example, castles, abbeys, Roman sites, or prehistoric places. The packs include everything you need for a self-led school visit, including rules, score sheets, and creative challenges designed to spark teamwork, imagination, and problem-solving. The tasks suggested take between five and 20 minutes to complete and can be easily adapted to suit pupils' ages and interests.

To take advantage of the resources, simply head to [tinyurl.com/TStEHTSK](http://tinyurl.com/TStEHTSK), choose a site to visit, and sign up today.



*“School trips should be a fundamental right for young people, not an optional extra.”*

FRÉDÉRIC JOUSSET, FOUNDER, ART EXPLORA





## In the field

New research from the Geography Association has highlighted the positive impact of fieldwork on pupils' engagement with their learning, as well as its role in boosting skills and knowledge and improving resilience, self-confidence and wellbeing. In a report entitled *High-quality Geography Fieldwork for All*, which draws upon the views of over 400 teachers, the Association calls for fieldwork that's embedded within the curriculum, hands-on and meaningful, inclusive for every pupil, and strengthened through collaboration.

The report is designed to be used as a practical document for teachers working from EYFS up to KS5 and can be accessed at [tinyurl.com/TSTgaFLD](https://tinyurl.com/TSTgaFLD)

## Grant alert!

Are you looking for financial help with your school trips? If so, take a look at Hyundai's *Great British School Trip*. Since launching in 2022, the scheme has provided over £1 million in funding, helping more than 165,000 young people take part in trips across the UK. When available, funding can be used to support the costs of your school visits.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Bursaries are available to all UK schools and are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, though priority is given to those in which more than 40% of pupils receive free school meals. The funding provided can be used towards a school trip for seven to 14-year-olds that takes place in the UK during the current academic year; trips outside of the UK aren't eligible.

Head to the *Great British School Trip* website and you'll find a host of participating venues to choose from. Funding is made available in phases, so be sure to check in regularly to make sure you don't miss your opportunity to apply. Visit [www.greatbritishschooltrip.com/bursary](http://www.greatbritishschooltrip.com/bursary) today to find out more.



## Outdoors For All

*Spend more time in the fresh air to boost health and learning, APPG report urges*

A report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature, *Outdoors For All*, says giving children more chances to learn and play outdoors could help create a healthier, more active nation.

The group gathered views from over 750 organisations and individuals and found that many families still struggle to reach England's natural spaces, with around 20 million people living more than 15 minutes from a park, woodland, or river. Among its recommendations to government, the report urges that outdoor learning be embedded across the national curriculum. Teachers, it says, should have the freedom to



take learning beyond the classroom and "encourage regular, high-quality outdoor experiences at every key stage".

It also calls for every child to enjoy at least one residential or outdoor adventure by the end of Key Stage 2, ideally including "a night under the stars". It notes that continued investment in the National Education Park would help ensure that all children, regardless of background, can access local green and blue spaces.

You can read the report in full at [tinyurl.com/TSTotfa](https://tinyurl.com/TSTotfa)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### DON'T MISS IT!

The Bayeux Tapestry will go on display at the British Museum in September 2026 – the first time in 900 years that it will have been in the UK. The 70-metre work, which famously depicts the 1066 Norman invasion and William I's



victory at the Battle of Hastings, will remain at the museum until July 2027. It will be situated in the Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery

alongside other objects relating to this period of history. Visit [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)

### ULTIMATE GUIDE

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/TWschooldtrips](https://bit.ly/TWschooldtrips)



# BRING LEARNING TO LIFE AT KNOWSLEY SAFARI



From exciting guided safari tours to engaging discovery workshops, we offer interactive activities tailored to your class. Swoop into unique experiences like our Flight of Africa programme or inspire your students with our Conservation Champions and Wild & Well days. Whether you're a school teacher or a home educator, we have something for everyone!

Email [learning@knowsley.com](mailto:learning@knowsley.com) to book your **ADVENTURE!**



# The MAD Museum

Take a trip to a place where learning and imagination meet and wow your pupils

## 1 About the Museum

The Mechanical Art & Design (MAD) Museum in Stratford-upon-Avon is the UK's only permanent venue for kinetic art and automata. Children and adults alike can explore marble runs, automata and inventive contraptions. Every exhibit is interactive, encouraging visitors to press, turn, and play.

## 2 Hands-on discovery

This is not a look-only museum. Visitors are encouraged to press

**GOOD TO KNOW**  
The museum offers activity packs for all key stages, giving pupils fun challenges to complete and linking the exhibits directly to curriculum topics.

buttons, pull levers and spin wheels to make machines spring into life. Every contraption moves in surprising ways, creating an adventure that blends learning with fun, making discovery exciting for all ages.

## 3 Educational & inspiring

The MAD Museum makes the STEM subjects engaging and memorable. From gears and pulleys to magnets and levers, pupils see how mechanisms work in real life. The unique mix of science, creativity and design inspires curiosity, teamwork and problem-solving.

## 4 Perfect for schools

The museum is an excellent choice for schools, especially those exploring primary science. Pupils see forces and simple machines in action while enjoying teamwork and enquiry-based learning. Teachers value how the museum combines hands-on fun with strong educational benefits.

## 5 Make a day of it

The MAD Museum can be part of a wider adventure in Stratford-upon-Avon. With joint ticket offers alongside Stratford Butterfly Farm and Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, groups can enjoy a full day of learning and fun while exploring the town.

[www.themadmuseum.co.uk](http://www.themadmuseum.co.uk)

E: [bookings@themadmuseum.co.uk](mailto:bookings@themadmuseum.co.uk)

2025

Travellers  
Choice  
2025

**M**A  
MECHANICAL ART &  
DESIGN MUSEUM

Visit Warwickshire's best loved museum to watch and interact with mind-boggling mechanical creations.

- Explore mechanical art and design
- Kinetic sculptures and automata
- For curious minds of all ages

# A journey to **UNDERSTANDING**

Taking on a whole-school pilgrimage allowed the pupils of a Durham primary school to think about their place in the world

**ANDREA YOUNGMAN AND DONNA DONAGHY**



## WILL THIS WORK?

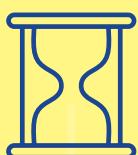
"Am I crazy?" This was the first thought that Donna Donaghy, RE co-ordinator at Blue Coat Primary School, had when the idea of a whole-school walking pilgrimage originally popped into her head. After seeing waymakers appearing locally, and teaching about pilgrimages, Donna wondered if she would be able to take Blue Coat on its own journey. Having discussed it with her headteacher and other school staff, she contacted Durham Cathedral and asked about how it could work.

The logistics were huge: 280 primary school children, staff and parents walking 2.5 miles along the Camino Ingles pilgrimage way, plus toilet stops and transport connections at each end. As it happened, Rev Canon Charlie Allen had been exploring the possibility of encouraging whole-school pilgrimages. Durham Cathedral has been an important part of pilgrimages for

centuries, being a destination in its own right, as well as being part of the famous Santiago de Compostela route in Spain. The monastery of Finchale, just outside Durham, is the starting point for the Camino Ingles, leading to the pilgrimage of Compostela.

### FOR EVERYONE

**Pilgrimages can be made to many places, not just churches. Even a short walk to a war memorial or holy well can be a pilgrimage. It is a common element in all religions.**



### FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY

The first priority was to decide a date for the pilgrimage. June was chosen because it offered the greatest chance of suitable weather conditions, and enough time to create a multi-disciplinary approach. A team was set up within the school to oversee the event. Different teachers took responsibility for certain aspects; for example, it was decided to have some teachers driving to each location so that cars were available to provide



rapid transport if needed. The deputy head, typically responsible for risk assessments, took on the task of dealing with safety concerns.

Each child had a pilgrimage passport, for stamping at stopping points. And, just as medieval pilgrims to Compostela used a shell as symbol of their visit, the children created shell key rings.

"The children wrote prayers that could be used at different stopping points, and created a prayer book for use on the walk," explained Donna.

"Walking past the prison allowed children to think about how you learn from mistakes, dealing with sins and overcoming them," said Rev Canon Charlie Allen.



### WORTH IT

**Going on a school pilgrimage brings the concept alive to children. A multi-faith and cross curricular approach takes time to organise, but provides maximum learning outcomes.**



## PRACTICALITIES

Having settled on a route, Donna walked it herself over Easter to check timing and accessibility. "I made a short video of the route to show the children where they were going and what it would be like," she said. A total of eight stopping points were created: Finchale Priory, a Camino Ingles signpost, a prison, Frankland Farm, Crookland Garden, the pilgrim bridge, and the cathedral green, before the group finally entered the cathedral itself. Toilet points were located at

Finchale Priory and Crookland Garden.

Knowing that not all children were accustomed to walking longer distances, physical education classes leading up to the pilgrimage incorporated

walking timed laps around the grounds while carrying the equipment they would need en route. Pupils were warned to wear suitable clothing and shoes, as the walk would go ahead even in light rain.

Donna also wanted all aspects of the pilgrimage to be accessible to everyone, including pupils with additional needs. Two children travelled the route by car; they were able to participate fully at each location and take part in discussions with their teacher en route.

### RAIN CHECK

**Adopting a whole-school approach to a day-long pilgrimage requires lots of organisation and preparation over a long period, in order to ensure success. Have alternative dates available in case the weather makes the event impossible.**

***"Children acquired a sense of achievement and greater understanding of pilgrimage"***



## A MAGICAL EXPERIENCE

Looking back on the day, Donna says, "It went really well and worked out timewise. We had no significant problems, and I would like to make this an annual event.

"Learning outcomes were excellent, too. It provided an experience that the children might not otherwise have had. They learned to work as a group, and about their place in the wider community. We found that pupils acquired a sense of achievement and showed greater understanding of the nature of pilgrimage.

"Rev Canon Charlie Allen also came into the school and helped children think though the subject of pilgrimages, including the idea of our life journey as a pilgrimage."

Most importantly, reactions from participants were positive. "The children really enjoyed it and said it was a magical experience," commented Donna. "They wanted to do it again and

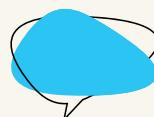


Pupils from throughout Blue Coat School had the opportunity to reflect on what pilgrimages mean to them, and what they gained from taking part in their own journey. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and comments included:



### PUPIL 1

*"It was truly amazing walking in the paths of faith. Now I am not just a pupil, I am a pilgrim. I am proud of that."*



### PUPIL 2

*"The pilgrimage made me think about who I am and what I believe."*



### PUPIL 3

*"I felt connected to God, happy, and full of joy."*



*Angela Youngman is a freelance journalist.*

*Donna Donaghy is RE co-ordinator at Blue Coat School.*



### LET'S DO THAT AGAIN!

Blue Coat Primary School's pilgrimage has provided a clear success case and a proforma, which both Donna and Durham Cathedral intend to reuse for future pilgrimages.

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## WE LOVE TO LEARN

# Step into Paddington's world

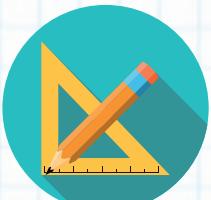
Experience an educational adventure for all ages...

The Paddington Bear™ Experience's live actors and interactive gameplay will immerse your pupils in an unforgettable educational adventure that brings the beloved world of Paddington to life. Pupils will start their journey at the bustling Paddington Station before boarding a full-sized train carriage. From there, they'll travel through the vibrant streets of London, visit the Browns'

house at No. 32 Windsor Gardens, and even venture into the magical jungle of Peru – all to help Paddington prepare for the biggest party Windsor Gardens has ever seen: the Marmalade Day Festival!

Tickets for The Paddington Bear™ Experience are just £12.50 per pupil, with generous free teacher and accompanying adult ratios (see the website for details).

### CURRICULUM LINKS



#### MATHS

Bring problem-solving to life for your class through fun, story-led activities inspired by the experience. The maths resources provided explore topics such as time, shape and measurement.



#### PSHE

Resources explore themes of anti-bullying, friendship and identity. Celebrate compassion with a "Kindness Certificate", for which pupils nominate a classmate who's shown true kindness.



#### ENGLISH

Use the Paddington-inspired lessons to explore poetry, persuasive writing and newspaper reporting. All are themed around Paddington's adventures and the Marmalade Day celebrations!

## LEARNING JOURNEYS

### Educational links

The Paddington Bear™ Experience offers pupils an unforgettable educational visit supported by free teaching resources. As well as linking to a wide range of curriculum topics across subjects such as English, maths, art & design and PSHE, this cross-curricular adventure will help your pupils build confidence and develop problem-solving, teamwork and communication skills.

### KS3 Activity Pack

The experience is also a brilliant way to introduce pupils to immersive theatre. Designed to spark teamwork and imagination, the KS3 Activity Pack invites pupils to create and pitch their own immersive experience. Working in teams across creative, marketing, finance and production roles, they will develop skills in leadership, communication and project management. Perfect for drama, English, business studies or cross-curricular days, this engaging resource brings real-world learning to life through problem-solving and collaboration – all inspired by their school trip to The Paddington Bear™ Experience.

### Contact the education team

A dedicated education team make planning a school trip to The Paddington Bear™ Experience as easy as possible. Schools can take advantage of a complete planning guide and the information needed to complete a risk assessment. You can find out more by emailing [schools@paddingtonbearexperience.com](mailto:schools@paddingtonbearexperience.com) or visiting [paddingtonbearexperience.com/schools](http://paddingtonbearexperience.com/schools)





# 10 OF THE BEST DAY TRIPS

From theme parks and attractions to engaging interactive museums and historic buildings, you're guaranteed to find a trip for your class here...



## Cadbury World

Book an exciting adventure at Cadbury World, where education meets entertainment in a series of interactive experiences! Pupils can uncover the fascinating story behind one of Britain's most iconic brands, from the origins of the cocoa bean to the science of chocolate-making and the inspiring story of the Cadbury family. Through interactive zones and engaging workshops, they'll explore topics such as business, marketing, design, and product development, all linked to the national curriculum. Each visit blends learning with fun, giving your group a real taste of how creativity and innovation come together in the world of chocolate.

For more information, visit

[www.cadburyworld.co.uk/schools-and-groups/schools](http://www.cadburyworld.co.uk/schools-and-groups/schools)



## Warwick Castle

Travel back in time with a school trip to Warwick Castle and see history leap from the textbooks into vivid reality. From towering battlements to dramatic live shows and immersive exhibits, pupils can explore nearly 1,100 years of history in one unforgettable day. Inside the castle walls, they'll hear tales of battles, kings, knights and everyday life, discovering how courage, strategy and innovation shaped the medieval world. Interactive workshops use props, authentic artefacts and costumes to spark curiosity across topics such as medieval history, creative writing and literacy, tailored to all key stages. With dedicated SEND support, it's an inclusive, hands-on journey through time.

Find out more at

[www.warwick-castle.com/schools](http://www.warwick-castle.com/schools)

## Chessington World of Adventures

At Chessington World of Adventures Resort, your group will experience thrilling rides, incredible wildlife, and unforgettable encounters. It's home to over 1,000 animals, including majestic lions, mischievous monkeys, and towering giraffes, offering the perfect mix of adventure and education. Pupils can explore 'Britain's Wildest Classroom', taking part in interactive workshops that cover topics such as adaptation, habitats, and conservation, all linked to the national curriculum. More than just a school trip, a visit to Chessington is a chance for children to connect with nature, ignite their curiosity, and experience the wild up close.

For more information, visit  
[www.chessington.com/schools](http://www.chessington.com/schools)



## 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.

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.

Visit [www.themadmuseum.co.uk](http://www.themadmuseum.co.uk) or email [bookings@themadmuseum.co.uk](mailto:bookings@themadmuseum.co.uk)

### DreamWorks Tours: Shrek's Adventure! London

Step into a world of fairy-tale fun with a school trip to Shrek's Adventure! London. Your pupils will become part of the story in a magical, interactive experience like no other. They'll join Shrek, Donkey, and their DreamWorks friends on a hilarious journey through Far Far Away, filled with surprises, laughter, and a sprinkle of ogre magic. It's an adventure that encourages imagination, teamwork, and creative thinking, making it a fantastic way to inspire young learners. They can explore narrative structure, character development, and performance through engaging, curriculum-linked activities that bring literacy and drama to life in an unforgettable way.

For more information, visit  
[www.shreksadventure.com/schools](http://www.shreksadventure.com/schools)



### The London Eye

Take learning to new heights with a school trip to the London Eye and let your pupils see the capital like never before. Rising 135 metres above the city, the London Eye offers a breathtaking 360-degree view of London's most iconic landmarks, from Big Ben to Buckingham Palace, providing an inspiring backdrop for learning outside the classroom. Pupils can engage with subjects such as

maths, geography, history, architecture, and urban development, linking classroom lessons to real-world sights and experiences. With downloadable learning resources and engaging activities, the London Eye turns observation into discovery.

Find out more at  
[www.londoneye.com/schools](http://www.londoneye.com/schools)

### Madame Tussauds

At Madame Tussauds London, pupils can step into the spotlight and get up close to famous faces from history, sport, film, music, and more. From meeting world leaders to posing alongside Hollywood icons, every moment is an opportunity to connect learning with real-world culture and creativity. Through its blend of art, media, and storytelling, Madame Tussauds offers an inspiring environment for exploring topics such as celebrity influence, pop culture, and modern history, all in a fun, interactive setting that captures children's imaginations.

For more information, visit  
[www.madametussauds.com/london/schools](http://www.madametussauds.com/london/schools)



## We The Curious

If you're looking for a day out of the classroom that will spark curiosity in STEM, check out Bristol's playful and surprising science experience, We The Curious. The science centre on Bristol's harbourside is home to the UK's only 3D Planetarium, while its two floors are brimming with interactive exhibits exploring illusions, sound, space, food, animation and much more.

Combine a visit to the exhibition floors with an awe-inspiring trip around the Solar System in the Planetarium and a choice of curriculum-linked shows and workshops on everything from fossils to forensics, chemistry to climate change.

To find out more, email [education@wethecurious.org](mailto:education@wethecurious.org) or visit [www.wethecurious.org](http://www.wethecurious.org)



### LOTS TO LEARN

There are over 200 intriguing things to do at We The Curious, with an engaging Live Science Team on hand to answer questions.



## 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 EYFS to KS2 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](mailto:learning.info@hrp.org.uk) or visit [www.hrp.org.uk/schools](http://www.hrp.org.uk/schools)

## Inspire next-gen filmmakers

Take your pupils out of the classroom and into the filmmaking home of the Harry Potter™ film series. At Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – The Making of Harry Potter they'll be inspired as they learn how their favourite subjects could lead to a future career in the creative industries. A visit to the studio tour includes a:

- Free 45-minute lesson with qualified teachers
- Free teacher planning visit tickets
- Free teacher tickets (allocation-based)
- Free carer tickets for students with EHCPs or equivalent
- Free green screen broomstick experience digital photo

Call the school booking team to arrange your visit on **0800 640 4750**, or find out more at [wbstudiotour.co.uk/schools](http://wbstudiotour.co.uk/schools)



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# MAKE LEARNING THRILLING

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## 6 THINGS TO DO AT...

# Paultons Park

With over 70 rides and attractions, beautiful gardens, and a host of birds and animals, there's plenty here to keep any class entertained...

### GOOD TO KNOW

Paultons Park operates a 'no visit, no charge' policy and invoices after the trip takes place.

## 1 Head into Tornado Springs

Set in a 1950s American town, Tornado Springs boasts eight exciting rides and attractions. The Storm Chaser rollercoaster is sure to have your class in a spin, while the exhilarating Cyclonator will challenge even the bravest students. Grab your driving licence at Al's Auto Academy or tame the wild rivers on Buffalo Falls. There's something for everyone in Tornado Springs!

## 2 Book a workshop

Enjoy a curriculum-based workshop in a unique classroom! Paultons Park's Learning Lab is fully themed, with bubbling test tubes and smoking pipes, and is sure to engage every pupil. Workshop highlights include Rollercoaster Forces, where children learn all about the forces on rides with the help of experiments using 'K'Nex coasters'. In Ride Programming, children take on the role of engineers to program the park's mini sky swinger rides.

## 3 Come face to face with dinosaurs!

Step into a Jurassic world where dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes greet you at every turn. Lost Kingdom is home to three rollercoasters, including the mighty Flight of the Pterosaur, which gives riders a bird's-eye view of the land as they swoop over the kingdom. Take a jeep tour of the park's prehistoric creatures and even come face to face with a T-rex in a meet-and-eat show!



## 4 Venture forth with Vikings

Launching in May 2026, Valgard: Realm of the Vikings is a brand-new £12 million themed world that includes two major new rides, headlined by Drakon – a twisting, inverting coaster designed for the most fearless pupils. Your class will also love trying the UK's first epic Wild Swing ride while being fully immersed in this exciting land.



## 5 Picnic in beautiful surroundings

Lunch is a key part of any visit, so the park boasts several undercover seating areas for hungry pupils. The main seating area can accommodate 450. On colder days heat lamps are available, and the site is conveniently located next to toilets and a free water bottle refill station. If the weather is nice, there is nothing better than eating under the park's cedar trees within the beautiful gardens.

## 6 Enjoy the variety

Whether you are finding out about penguins at the daily keeper talk-and-feed or capturing spooks in Ghostly Manor, there is so much variety for school groups. Paultons Park has a range of options, whether for a learning trip, a reward trip or a mixture of the two. Teachers will also enjoy the complimentary adult ratios, free pre-visits, zero deposit and the park's 'no visit, no charge' guarantee!





READY TO TRY CORNWALL  
FOR YOUR SCHOOL RESIDENTIAL?

# COME TO PORTHPEAN!

Visit Porthpean Outdoor, Cornwall's longest running outdoor education centre. Trusted by local schools for decades for their educational residential, we cater for groups from 15 to 220, for 2-night or 4-night stays.



## TO KEEP THE KIDS HAPPY

- Beach and land activities such as Kayaking, High Ropes, Archery, Laser Tag, Bushcraft, Axe Throwing, Mega SUP, Coasteering, Problem Solving, Caving, Climbing, & Rockpooling
- Cosy accommodation in our 12-bed canvas bunkhouses, or 5-bed wooden cabins
- Delicious food from our fully equipped catering facilities, with lots of tasty choices

## TO KEEP YOU HAPPY

- Our expert instructors lead activities until 9pm
- Secure site with 24/7 supervision including a night manager
- Our online Teacher Zone and easy booking system reduces your admin
- Dedicated teacher lounge with free wifi and coffee to fuel up



SEE MORE INFO  
AND ENQUIRE ON  
OUR WEBSITE



PORTHPEAN.COM

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PORTHPEAN  
OUTDOOR



Porthpean Outdoor  
Cornwall  
PL26 6AZ

**EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE**

# Your Cornish adventure starts here!

Treat your group to a fun-filled residential packed with activities on land and in the water...

**9:00am**

The moment you step off the coach, an experienced and qualified activity lead will look after your group, give a tour of the site, and handle your bags, setting the tone for a smooth, stress-free stay. During a two-night residential, you can expect to complete 7–8 activities of the 13 on offer. The centre provides instructor-led activities from morning to bedtime, taking the pressure off teachers!

**10:00am**

You'll get stuck into your first activity as soon as possible. The kids could be taking on the 'leap of faith' on the high ropes course, sharpening their aim at archery, or exploring the artificial caving system and learning about stalagmites and stalactites. Every activity is designed to be educational, challenging, and fun!

**12:00pm**

All meals are freshly prepared on-site by Porthpean Outdoor's catering team, with hearty breakfasts, filling lunches, and two-course evening meals that always get excellent reviews. Dinner is a real highlight - healthy, hearty, with all dietary requirements catered for.

**1:30pm**

A private beach, just a five-minute walk away, is the perfect setting for the centre's water-based activities, such as stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking,

**MAKING MEMORIES**

Porthpean Outdoor creates residential experiences that build pupils' confidence and teamwork and make memories that last a lifetime.

coasteering, rock pooling and the ever-popular Mega SUPs – big enough to fit 10 children!

**6:30pm**

After dinner, Porthpean Outdoor's instructors will provide further entertainment until bedtime. The kids could take part in an epic laser tag battle, toast marshmallows around the firepit, or dance the night away at a silent disco!

**9:00pm**

While the centre's activities are deservedly the stand-out attraction for any visiting school, Porthpean Outdoor also recognises how important it is for children (and teachers!) to have a good night's sleep in comfortable surroundings. You have a choice of canvas bunkhouses that sleep 12 or timber pods that sleep five.

**{ BEFORE YOU GO }****READ**

Porthpean Outdoor will send you a schools welcome pack – it has all the information you need for your trip, to help you and your team feel fully prepared for your stay.

**TALK**

The centre's team will have a pre-welcome call with you two weeks before your visit – they'll double-check the final details and make sure everything is in place before you arrive.

**GET EXCITED!**

It's time to get excited! Once you're on the coach, you're on the way to an unforgettable experience. The team will be there to make sure every child feels supported, inspired, and ready for adventure.

# Uncover 1,000 years of history

Delve into the past at Historic Royal Palaces' four iconic sites and find excitement and education at every turn...

## Tower of London

Discover the terrible events of the Great Fire of London and the story of Samuel Pepys; learn about crime, punishment and empire by stepping into the shoes of pirates and prisoners; and meet Katherine Parr as the new queen learns about royal marriage in the Tudor period.

## Hampton Court Palace

Discover the lesser-known stories of life at the Tudor Court; investigate the real Henry VIII; learn about hierarchy and status in the Court; and explore how the natural world can support wellbeing in the historic gardens.

[www.hrp.org.uk/schools](http://www.hrp.org.uk/schools) E: [learning.info@hrp.org.uk](mailto:learning.info@hrp.org.uk)

## Hillsborough Castle & Gardens

Discover how rich and poor in Victorian Ireland celebrated important events; uncover the roles of servants in a Victorian 'big house'; and explore the State Rooms and investigate the idea of power and how best to overcome problems with others.

## Kensington Palace

Discover Queen Victoria's childhood home; examine objects and documents and consider how well prepared she was to become queen; and travel through time to discover how the role of the monarchy has changed.



## { GOOD TO KNOW }

### GREAT VALUE

Royal Historic Palaces' four sites offer subsidised entry for schools during UK term time.

### LEARN YOUR WAY

Take advantage of interactive sessions for all key stages and SEND on-site.

### START EXPLORING

Curriculum-aligned activity trails, tailored by key stage, provide all you need to explore the sites' stories.

# HENRY VIII ON TOUR

SCHOOLS TUDOR FESTIVAL  
AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE



Join us for an amazing schools-only Tudor festival, in the gardens at Hampton Court Palace, as we bring to life the sights, sounds, smells and excitement of King Henry VIII and his court on tour!

The year is 1522 - find out what it was like to prepare for the arrival of a King on a Royal Tudor Progress. Experience demonstrations of cooking and crafts, watch performances and play Tudor games!

You might even meet King Henry VIII himself!

For more information and to book your school trip, visit: [www.hrp.org.uk/schools](http://www.hrp.org.uk/schools)

Company information: Historic Royal Palaces  
Email: [schools@hrp.org.uk](mailto:schoolsfestival@hrp.org.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 neuropathways, 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.



# AirHop Adventure & Trampoline Parks

Help pupils jump, learn, and grow with a school visit to a truly high-flying attraction

## 1 High-flying thrills

AirHop Adventure Parks feature a variety of high-flying attractions, which vary by park. These digital and immersive experiences and obstacle challenges create a one-of-a-kind adventure that pupils won't find anywhere else. They can bounce higher, move faster, and explore safely, turning physical play into pure excitement and unforgettable memories.

## 2 Teamwork & friendship

Group games and relay-style challenges promote communication, cooperation, and encouragement. Pupils cheer each other on, work towards shared goals, and strengthen friendships,

helping to build a more positive classroom dynamic when they return to school.

## 3 A real reward

A trip to an AirHop Adventure Park offers pupils a chance to celebrate achievements and good behaviour with an experience that feels special. It's memorable, exciting, and something they'll genuinely look forward to, boosting motivation and morale back in the classroom.

## 4 Active bodies, active minds

With pupils jumping, running, balancing, and moving constantly, they enjoy a burst of physical activity that supports health

and wellbeing. It's a refreshing break from screens and desks, helping them return to school more energised and focused.

## 5 Safe, guided exploration

Trained staff support every step, encouraging pupils while maintaining a safe atmosphere. Kids can try new activities knowing they're secure and supervised, helping even more hesitant children enjoy the experience and develop greater self-belief.

### GOOD TO KNOW!

AirHop Adventure Parks can host up to 250 people, depending on the location. Get in touch to find out more.

[www.airhop.co.uk](http://www.airhop.co.uk) T: 0330 223 3333 E: [sales@airhop.co.uk](mailto:sales@airhop.co.uk)



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**AIRHOP**  
ADVENTURE PARKS



# Bring History to life for your students with York Archaeology

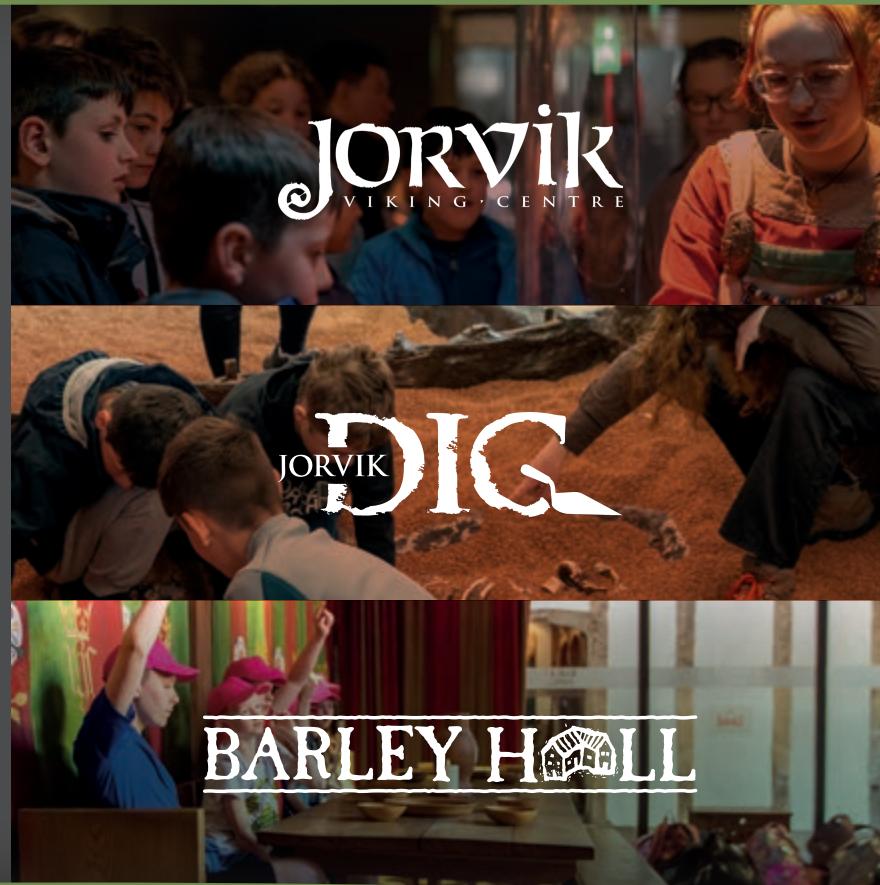
Looking for a fun summer term activity or getting a head-start on planning for next year? We offer a range of trips, workshops and themed Loan Boxes of objects. We can even deliver a digital history lesson straight to your classroom via videoconferencing platforms, Zoom and Google Meet! Choose from a choice of themes and historical periods for these immersive, interactive and curriculum-linked sessions. Read on to learn more!

## Explore 2000 years of history on an unforgettable school trip

Discover the sights, sounds and smells of the past at York Archaeology's attractions! There's always something new to experience, like a close-up encounter with a Viking, becoming an archaeologist for the day or experiencing life in a medieval townhouse. And with our joint ticketing options, see where your visit takes you!

## Virtual History Experiences in Your Classroom

Connect with a friendly Viking, medieval character or archaeologist via videocall and bring the history to life in your classroom. Get the chance to put questions to your host too – perfect for shaping students' enquiry skills!



Explore York Archaeology's Learning Programme  
[learning.yorkarchaeology.co.uk](http://learning.yorkarchaeology.co.uk)

Learn more about different activities at our York-based attractions or explore exciting themes in our Virtual Outreach offer online.

# 10 OF THE BEST RESIDENTIALS

Make your adventure beyond the classroom a truly memorable one with the help of these experienced providers...



## READY FOR ADVENTURE!

At CYM Ipswich, choose from a host of activities – from sports on land and water to a zip wire, a low ropes course, and even laser tag.

## CYM Ipswich

CYM's Basecamp is a unique adventure-based activity programme nestled in the heart of rural Suffolk. Here, you can reimagine residential trips through meticulously designed trips that strengthen confidence and teamwork and build a wider understanding of the world around us, all while meeting key national curriculum learning objectives.

School parties visiting a Basecamp will enjoy the team's complete, undivided attention, being the only group on-site, which means your pupils will be fully immersed in the experience. It's a fun, safe space to try new things and reach for those 'mountaintop' moments!

Get in touch at [bookings@c-y-m.org.uk](mailto:bookings@c-y-m.org.uk) or [01473 487031](tel:01473487031). For more information, visit [www.c-y-m.org.uk/basecamp](http://www.c-y-m.org.uk/basecamp)



## Mendip Activity Centre

It's time for adventure at Mendip Activity Centre! With over 30 years of experience delivering school activity residential, the Mendip team helps young people make time to disconnect. Your group will experience real adventure while surrounded by one of South West England's most special natural playgrounds, the Mendip Hills National Landscape. With real outdoor activities surrounding the site's unique and comfortable accommodation, this truly is the ultimate adventure destination. School residential and school trips are available for all primary school pupils, with group sizes ranging from 30 up to 300.

For more information, visit  
[www.mendip.co.uk/primary](http://www.mendip.co.uk/primary)

## Oaker Wood Leisure

Nestled in a picturesque woodland setting just 20 minutes from Wales, Oaker Wood Leisure is the premier destination for outdoor activities and glamping on the Herefordshire-Shropshire border. Its school residential give children the chance to connect with nature while developing valuable life skills. Your group can unleash their adventurous spirit with activities like woodland navigation, high ropes, low ropes assault course, target shooting, woodland krypton, rafting, paintball and more, all of which will help to improve teamwork and problem-solving skills. Staff at this family-run business ensure pupils have an enriching experience during their visit. Activities can be tailored to the needs of children with special educational needs.

To learn more, visit [www.oakerwoodleisure.co.uk](http://www.oakerwoodleisure.co.uk) or email [info@oakerwoodleisure.co.uk](mailto:info@oakerwoodleisure.co.uk)



## Skern Lodge

Skern Lodge, a premier outdoor education centre nestled on North Devon's stunning coastline, offers bespoke learning experiences for primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. With a rich history dating back to 1976, the centre leverages its unique location to provide exceptional adventure activities, premium water sports, and carefully constructed experiential learning programmes, including field studies. Its growth-oriented methodology, focused on personal and social development, is integrated into the activities on offer, and the centre partners with schools to design tailored programmes that meet specific needs and objectives, ensuring that impact is felt on both individual and group levels following a residential trip.

To find out more, call 01237 475 992 or email [skern@skernlodge.co.uk](mailto:skern@skernlodge.co.uk)

### UK Sailing Academy

UK Sailing Academy (UKSA) is a leading residential watersports centre based in Cowes on the beautiful Isle of Wight. Offering a picturesque four-acre waterfront setting, it's perfectly situated to deliver dinghy sailing, watersports and team-building programmes. Activities include dinghy sailing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, windsurfing, and raft building/racing. All-inclusive packages include round-trip ferry transportation to the Isle of Wight, day and evening programmes, full-board accommodation with exclusive occupancy of dormitory-style rooms, and expert instruction and equipment. For every 10 students, there is a leader's place free of charge. With everything you need on-site, UKSA offers fun, safe and engaging experiences, ensuring everyone has a great time.

To find out more, call **01983 203045**,  
email [schools@uksa.org](mailto:schools@uksa.org)

or visit [www.uksa.org/course/schools-and-groups](http://www.uksa.org/course/schools-and-groups)



### Dunfield House

Dunfield House, located in Kington, Herefordshire, is an ideal group accommodation centre for schools. Set in 15 acres of beautiful private gardens, parkland and woodland, it offers excellent facilities for educational groups. The centre provides fully catered options that can be tailored to suit your students' needs, accommodating up to 101 guests. With a variety of on-site activities, including an indoor heated pool, games room, and outdoor sports areas, Dunfield House ensures a memorable experience. Its supportive staff can assist with programme planning and activity facilitation, making it a perfect choice for school trips and educational retreats.

Call **01544 230563**,  
email [info@dunfieldhouse.org.uk](mailto:info@dunfieldhouse.org.uk)  
or visit [www.dunfieldhouse.org.uk](http://www.dunfieldhouse.org.uk)

### NST

NST have over 55 years' experience creating inspirational school trips with immeasurable benefits. Their expert team will create a tailor-made experience to perfectly complement your learning objectives and budget while also prioritising safety and ensuring all trips create lasting memories. NST provide a fantastic selection of primary school trips, with destinations including London, York, Edinburgh and Northern France, each offering safe and secure accommodation for school groups.

NST's engaging educational visits provide golden opportunities for pupils to bond with their peers outside of the classroom, expand their cultural capital, and foster confidence and independence.

To find out more, call **0330 333 6090**  
or visit [www.nstgroup.co.uk](http://www.nstgroup.co.uk)



### SPOILT FOR CHOICE

NST has a host of school trips available for primary pupils, at home and abroad – from exploring Stratford-upon-Avon to visiting Disneyland Paris.

## Calvert Devon

Take your school residential to the next level at Calvert Devon, where adventure meets learning. Open to all and specialising in accessible activities for all abilities, the centre offers action-packed trips for groups of 16+, with accommodation for up to 60, tasty meals, and thrilling outdoor experiences.

Whether it's a year-end celebration or a curriculum-driven adventure, the team will help tailor the perfect programme. From zip wires to canoeing, learning blends seamlessly with excitement, making your school trip an unforgettable adventure.

Call **01598 763 221** or visit [calvertdevon.org.uk](http://calvertdevon.org.uk) to find out more.



## Experience Education

The Experience Education group has successfully launched over 45,000 trips for more than 1.5 million students to 100 countries. Collectively, it provides the peace of mind teachers deserve by carrying out stringent health and safety policies and providing unrivalled financial protection. Individually, the

group members' curriculum tours

([travelbound.co.uk](http://travelbound.co.uk)), sports tours

([edwindoran.com](http://edwindoran.com)), ski trips

([skibound.co.uk](http://skibound.co.uk)), expeditions

([weareworldchallenge.com](http://weareworldchallenge.com)) and

UK activity centres ([jca-adventure.co.uk](http://jca-adventure.co.uk)) have

made them widely trusted

experts in worldwide tailored

experiences for UK schools.

To learn more, visit

[www.experienceeducation.com](http://www.experienceeducation.com)

## YHA

Discover the flexibility of a YHA residential, with locations and options to suit every school group. With hostels across England and Wales, you can choose a self-led stay, a fully supported activity package, or a combination of both. Enjoy great food with full-board catering or make use of the self-catering kitchens. From the 14-acre grounds of YHA Chester Trafford Hall to the National Park setting of

YHA Hawkshead, the castle views at YHA Conwy and the central location of YHA National Forest, there's a perfect base for every adventure.

Find out more and plan your trip at [www.yha.org.uk/group-bookings/school-trips](http://www.yha.org.uk/group-bookings/school-trips)



# “I CAN DO IT!”

Activity residential trips build confident, connected learners – here’s how, says **Duncan Kemp...**

**T**he most powerful lessons don’t always happen at a desk,” says Matt Smith, compliance and operations manager at school residential provider JCA. “Sometimes they happen halfway up a climbing wall, when a child realises they can do something they didn’t think they could.”

It’s a moment many teachers recognise – that spark of courage and pride when pupils push beyond their comfort zones. Whether it’s tackling a team challenge, paddling across a lake, or spending their first night away from home, activity residential trips give young people the chance to test themselves in ways that can’t be replicated in the classroom.

expanding it,” says Simon Potter, activity manager at Croft Farm Waterpark, who has worked with thousands of pupils on school residential trips in the Cotswolds. “When children are encouraged to make decisions, take supported risks and work together, they develop skills that feed directly back into their classroom learning.”

Research supports this. Studies by

Learning Away and the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom show that residential trips help pupils build confidence, improve peer relationships, and make stronger connections between learning and real-world experience. When thoughtfully planned, these trips can reinforce curriculum areas such as

PSHE, geography, and science, while also developing teamwork, wellbeing and independence.

## A safe space for bravery

For many children, a residential trip is their first taste of independence –

*“It’s not about climbing walls – it’s about building confidence. Every child leaves a little taller than when they arrived.”*

### Expanding education

Activity residential trips are not just about outdoor fun – they are powerful learning experiences that support academic, emotional, and social growth. Away from the familiarity of school, children encounter new environments that demand problem-solving, collaboration, and communication.

“Outdoor learning isn’t about taking a break from education, it’s about



and with that comes both excitement and nerves. The best programmes balance adventure with reassurance, providing opportunities for every pupil to challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment.

“Success looks different for every child,” says Potter. “For one, it might be reaching the top of the climbing tower; for another, it’s taking that first step off the ground. What matters is that they feel proud of what they’ve achieved.”

Most activity centres now use a “Challenge by Choice” approach, encouraging children to set personal goals rather than compete against

each other. Combined with robust safety procedures, first-aid-trained instructors and clear communication with schools, this ensures the focus stays on growth, not fear.

## Transformational experiences

One of the unique aspects of a residential is the way it transforms teacher-pupil relationships. Away from the classroom hierarchy, children and teachers see each other in a new light.

“We often hear that teachers come back from a trip saying they’ve discovered sides of their pupils they’d never seen before,” says Smith. “The quiet child who becomes a team leader, or the hesitant pupil who finds their voice during a group challenge – these are the moments that stay with you.”

Teachers frequently describe residential as “transformational”, not just for pupils’ confidence but also the sense of community they bring back to school. Shared experiences outdoors help strengthen peer connections and improve collaboration when pupils return to class.

## The joy of inclusion

At their best, activity residential are great equalisers. Mud doesn’t care who’s sporty, academic, or shy – everyone can take part. The inclusive nature of adventure-based learning allows every pupil to find their own way to contribute, regardless of ability or confidence. “It’s not about who climbs the highest or paddles the fastest,” says Potter. “It’s about the team cheering each other on.”

This inclusivity also supports pupils with additional needs. Structured risk, predictable routines and

## WHY RESIDENTIALS MATTER

- **Outdoor residential give pupils the chance to grow in ways that classroom learning alone can’t provide.** Stepping into a new environment helps children develop independence as they take responsibility for their own kit, routines, and decision-making.
- **They strengthen friendships.** Shared challenges – like cheering on a classmate during an activity or solving a problem as a team – help pupils build trust, empathy, and confidence in one another.
- **Residential are great levellers, too.** Pupils who may be more introverted or less confident in academic settings often shine when faced with hands-on learning. Teachers frequently see new strengths emerge, from leadership to resilience.
- **Time outdoors supports wellbeing.** Fresh air, movement, and time away from screens help pupils reset and return to school with a more positive mindset.

encouraging staff create an environment where pupils can explore independence safely, often surprising themselves – and their teachers – in the process.

## Lifelong learning

The impact of an activity residential rarely ends when the coach pulls away from the centre gates. Teachers consistently report long-term improvements in pupils’ resilience, problem-solving skills and relationships with others.

“Children return with a sense of pride and purpose that carries into their learning,” says Smith. “They’re more willing to have a go, to support each other, and to see mistakes as part of progress. Those are the qualities we want to nurture in the classroom.”

Residential also support key educational priorities such as wellbeing, inclusion and character education. They help young people practise teamwork, reflection and self-management – skills that underpin academic success and life beyond school.

## A shared responsibility

As schools continue to balance budgets and timetables, residential remain a significant commitment. But for many educators, they are one of the most valuable investments a school can make in its pupils’ development.

“Every campfire story and every shared challenge adds a thread to the bigger picture of who these young people are becoming,” says Smith. “That’s why learning beyond the classroom is so important – it builds the skills and confidence that help children thrive in every other part of their education.”



**Duncan Kemp** is the general manager for school residential provider

**JCA, based at Condover Hall Activity Centre, Shropshire.**

 [jca-adventure.co.uk](http://jca-adventure.co.uk)

## EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE

# Step outside, stand taller

From arrival to departure, every outdoor-fuelled, laughter-filled moment on a **JCA** adventure builds pupils' confidence and teamworking skills...

## 9.00am

Morning is here and so is the adventure! JCA's instructors will greet their dedicated group with songs and jokes. Pupils get to jump straight into action with on-site activities, setting the tone for a day bursting with energy and discovery.

## 10.45am

Harness on, helmets fitted – it's time to go! Whether pupils are conquering the climbing wall, testing their teamworking skills on the low ropes, or building rafts that might just float, the morning is all about courage, cooperation and a good dose of giggles.



## 12.30pm

After a busy morning, there's an opportunity for pupils to tuck into a hot, tasty lunch to fuel the next round of adventures. This is also a moment to swap stories ("Did you see me reach the top?"), form new friendships with their peers, and reset together before the next big challenge arrives.

## 2.00pm

After refuelling with lunch, it's time for the children to dive back in. Whether it's archery, abseiling, or kayaking, each challenge they encounter builds confidence, communication skills, and resilience. JCA's 'Challenge by Choice' ethos means that every child has the chance to shine, their way, at their own pace.

## COURAGE, CAPTURED

That moment on the climbing wall when a nervous pupil takes one brave step higher – and the whole group erupts in cheers.

## 7.00pm

As the sun sets, the magic begins – from campfire songs and talent shows to opportunities to show off their disco moves, it's a celebration of shared adventures and new friendships. Teachers can simply sit back and enjoy watching their pupils beam with pride.

## 9.00pm

After a full-on day of excitement, pupils wind down and settle into their cosy accommodation. This is the moment the magic sinks in for the group. They arrive in the morning as classmates, but they fall asleep as a stronger, braver team.

## { BEFORE &amp; AFTER }

## PREPARE

Hold a pre-trip chat with your group about teamwork, bravery and fun. Set the tone so pupils arrive feeling ready, curious and confident about the adventure ahead.

## PACK

Show pupils the kit list and practise packing together. It's a great chance to spark excitement about the challenges they'll face (and the stories they'll bring back!).

## REFLECT

Ask pupils to share their proudest moment with the class, big or small. Reflection helps the learning stick and lets their confidence shine long after returning to school.



# 6 ways to engage pupils with nature

Why reinvent the wheel when you have these brilliant resources at your disposal, says **Barbara Henderson**

## 1 | RSPB

As a writer and as a teacher, I have a long history with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds – from family visits to nature reserves as a child, to volunteering for the organisation as a young person. Established in 1889, the RSPB now cares for much more than birds: they aim 'to bring people together who love birds and other wildlife, and who want to take action to restore the health and diversity of the natural world'. The charity also has plenty of resources that work well in a school context. Not sure where to start? Look no further than its annual Schools Birdwatch survey, and its bank of worksheets, data, and story activities: [tinyurl.com/tp-RSPBschools](http://tinyurl.com/tp-RSPBschools)

## 2 | THE WOODLAND TRUST

**My childhood was almost exclusively spent in the woods** – nothing puts a smile on a child's face more than an afternoon clambering over roots and rocks. Up to 70% of ancient woodland in the UK has already been lost, but the UK's largest woodland conservation charity works hard to reverse this, with a vision for a world where woods and trees thrive. The Woodland Trust protects existing woods, restores damaged woodland ecosystems and creates new ones by planting. It also has a good range of free resources on offer, including an online learning hub called Tree Tools for Schools. You can source ideas for outdoor learning and even entire assembly kits there, too. See [tinyurl.com/tp-WTresources](http://tinyurl.com/tp-WTresources)

## 3 | NATURESCOT

As well as being a valuable timesaver for Scottish teachers looking for funding, Scotland's nature agency is a rich resource for all educators. The professional advice and outdoor learning page links to a wealth of information and brings it together accessibly in one place. For example, ready-to-use classroom resources that can introduce pupils from all over the UK to the wonders of Scotland's flora and fauna. Take a look at [tinyurl.com/tp-NatureScot](http://tinyurl.com/tp-NatureScot)



**BARBARA HENDERSON**  
is a teacher and writer. Her latest book for children is the eco-adventure *I Don't Do Mountains* (£7.99, Scottish Mountaineering Press).

## 4 | FORESTRY ENGLAND

Forestry England cares for the nation's forests and is the largest land manager in England. It also provides a fantastic range of teaching resources for a variety of ages and stages. I was incredibly impressed with the fun and engaging activities on offer on its website, which include videos and lots of downloadable activities and worksheets. From Forest Yoga to map-reading and numeracy skills, there's something for everyone. My favourite is a treetop trumps game – what a brilliant idea! See [tinyurl.com/tp-FEschools](http://tinyurl.com/tp-FEschools)

## 5 | THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS

Forty-six regional trusts across the UK seek 'to empower people to take meaningful action for nature'. In my experience, it's easy to enthuse young learners about wildlife that's on their own doorstep. Wildlife Trust's learning page, [tinyurl.com/tp-WTLearning](http://tinyurl.com/tp-WTLearning), is well worth a look for its downloadable guides and learning programmes. The downloadable Nature's Climate Heroes programme is an inquiry-based resource that helps KS2 pupils understand the connections between nature, climate change and people, before giving them an outlet for climate activism. The seasonal programmes like 'My Wild Summer' are also very practical.

## 6 | THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

The WWF offers a world-wide perspective, seeking to 'sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife'. Children will love travelling around the world encountering tigers, sea turtles, polar bears and the like via the informative website. The jam-packed resource section also features more general materials on teaching biodiversity and endangered species. The page is extremely easy to navigate, with a wealth of lesson plans. One of the things I love most is that the material uses popular cartoon characters and films as hooks to engage young audiences – genius! [tinyurl.com/tp-WWFresources](http://tinyurl.com/tp-WWFresources)



# Hooke Court Activity Centre

Take your class to the heart of West Dorset to enjoy a host of curriculum-linked activities

## 1 Food and Farming

Cook lunch with fresh polytunnel produce and local trout; make soup, bread, quiche, jam and butter to compare with ultra-processed supermarket versions. Meet Hooke Court's animals, and walk to the village dairy to learn how a farm works and watch the cows being milked.

## 2 History Day

Choose an era to explore and immerse your class in one of Hooke

### GOOD TO KNOW

Hooke Court offers fully catered, self-contained accommodation for visiting school groups, with dedicated play areas and dining times for your pupils.

Court's authentic historical settings. They'll participate in activities such as quill-writing and runes, cooking, jewellery-making, or wattle and daub. Alternatively, experience life as a WWI soldier and go "over the top" in the centre's trench.

## 3 Fun with Science

Explore forces by sliding down water slides, firing rockets, running with parachutes and playing tug of war. Investigate electricity by making a lighthouse, learn about the properties of materials, and explore habitats and food chains through engaging outdoor investigations.

## 4 Bushcraft and the Outdoors

Learn to forage and prepare food over a fire you build and light using varied techniques. Make woodland shelters and enjoy team-building challenges, such as kayaking and raft-building on the lake or archery in the extensive grounds.

## 5 Geography

Visit the iconic Jurassic Coast to learn about coastal defences and landforms, enjoy a fossil hunt at Charmouth, explore river processes and habitats along the River Hooke, and practise six-figure grid references during an engaging field session in Hooke Woods.



[www.hookecourt.co.uk](http://www.hookecourt.co.uk) E: [info@hookecourt.co.uk](mailto:info@hookecourt.co.uk) T: 01308 862260

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# Making sense of THE MAYA

There's no better way to introduce your pupils to this fascinating ancient civilisation than with a trip to Cadbury World, says **Ruth Astley**...

**A**s a passionate teacher of history, even I have found teaching ancient civilisations such as the Maya a challenge. The KS2 history curriculum specifically references “a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history”, with the Maya a suggested focus. This supports objectives around understanding similarities and differences across societies, and developing historical enquiry skills.

With their hard-to-imagine timeframes, unfamiliar cultures, and distant locations, it's difficult to make ancient peoples and their achievements seem tangible to our pupils. The Maya, in particular, can feel hard to reach from the world children know.

Yet, making ancient civilisations come alive is vital to fostering historical enquiry, empathy and, most importantly, a love for one of the most exciting subjects in the curriculum! Teaching the Mayan civilisation offers us a unique opportunity to enrich pupils' understanding of world history and diversity. The Maya were an advanced society whose achievements spanned mathematics, astronomy, art, and even the origins of chocolate. Exploring their rise and fall encourages critical thinking and historical enquiry, while their myths capture children's imaginations.

## Rich learning opportunities

Choosing the Maya as a topic brings a host of positives to our history curriculum and



the learning of our children, including:

- **Global perspective:** Learning about the Maya introduces pupils to a non-European civilisation, broadening their understanding of world history and diversity.
- **Critical skills:** Exploring the rise and fall of the Maya encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and the analysis of sources.
- **Cross-curricular links:** The Maya offer opportunities to delve into geography, maths (through their advanced numerical systems), art, science (such as astronomy) and even PE (through their interesting leisure activities, including the world's first team sport).
- **Engagement:** The myths, legends, and achievements of the Maya – from chocolate to pyramids – capture children's imagination.

The question, therefore, is how best to do it? One innovative way to bring their story to life is through a school trip to Cadbury World. While at first glance a chocolate-themed attraction may seem an unlikely candidate for historical learning, Cadbury

World offers a unique and engaging experience that connects modern life with the legacy of the ancient Maya. On a school trip to Cadbury World, children are treated to a range of interactive, hands-on experiences that make learning both fun and memorable.

## Getting hands-on with the past

At Cadbury World, children can follow the fascinating journey of chocolate from the rainforests of Central America – where the Maya first cultivated cacao – to modern-day Birmingham, drawing direct connections between ancient civilisations and their own lives. Engaging activities include handling real cacao pods, grinding cocoa beans, and immersive insights into chocolate manufacturing, which bring history to life through taste, touch, and exploration. There's even a dedicated Mayan workshop, which immerses children in the myths, rituals, and daily practices of the Maya, highlighting the sacred significance of chocolate and its role in their culture.

These experiences not only spark curiosity but also help pupils see the Maya as a vibrant and innovative society, making the past feel immediate and relevant.

A visit to Cadbury World supports the KS2 history objective of studying a non-European society that provides contrast with British history. It also offers rich opportunities for cross-curricular learning, including:

- **Geography:** Mapping the journey of chocolate and exploring the Maya's home.
- **Science:** Understanding plants, food production, and the properties of materials through the chocolate-making process.
- **PSHE and citizenship:** Exploring fair trade, cultural appreciation, and the global significance of chocolate.

By linking classroom learning about the Maya to real-world experiences like those offered at Cadbury World, teachers can make ancient civilisations feel relevant and exciting. Such trips both deepen historical understanding and ignite curiosity, providing a springboard for further enquiry and appreciation of our global heritage. For teachers seeking to inspire their pupils, Cadbury World offers a surprising way to make history come alive.



**Ruth Astley** is a freelance educational writer and former assistant head and SLE. To find out more about school trips to Cadbury World, visit [www.cadburyworld.co.uk](http://www.cadburyworld.co.uk)



EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE

#### ENGAGE LEARNERS

With so much on offer for primary schools, a trip to the Science Museum will ignite your group's curiosity in science and maths.

# Set course for the cosmos

Journey into Space, discover the inner workings of the digestive system and explore forces, electricity, light, sound, matter and maths on a trip to the Science Museum...

## 10.15 – Space

Get ready for lift-off at the new, free *Space* gallery. Explore real spacecraft and extraordinary space objects, including a three-billion-year-old piece of the moon and a spacesuit worn by the first Briton in space, Helen Sharman. It's recommended for both KS1 and KS2.

## 11.00 – A Beautiful Planet 3D (U)

Follow your visit to *Space* with a trip to the International Space Station as you journey into orbit in *A Beautiful Planet 3D (U)*. This educational documentary covers topics including space, climate and understanding humanity's impact on Earth. Recommended for KS2 upwards.

## 13.20 – It Takes Guts

Go on an adventure inside the human digestive system with the Science Museum's squirm-inducing show for KS2. Led by Explainers who facilitate pupil engagement, the museum's live school shows bring science topics to life outside of the classroom.

## 14.15 – Wonderlab

Ignite curiosity in science and maths in the museum's hands-on gallery, which is packed with immersive experiences. With over 50 exhibits and live experiments at the Chemistry Bar, the gallery enriches learning across the themes of forces, electricity, light, sound, matter, space and maths. Best of all, KS2 group visits are free on weekdays during term time.

## 15.15 – Goody bags

Take home a memento of your visit to the Science Museum with a pre-booked goody bag for each child in your group. Simply add goody bags to your itinerary when booking your visit on the museum's group booking portal and collect them at the end of your visit.

## Home time

Extend the learning experience with *Wonderlab+*, the museum's online learning platform for curious minds. With experiments, videos and quizzes to explore on themes such as space, climate, artificial intelligence and more, it's the perfect way to embed the learning from your trip when you return to the classroom.

## BEFORE YOU GO

### DOWNLOAD

Download resources from the Science Museum's website before your visit. Discover gallery guides, activity trails and object hunts designed especially for your key stage.

### BOOK ONLINE

With the Science Museum's easy-to-use online group booking portal, you can plan your itinerary and manage your booking hassle-free. It'll even recommend the best learning resources to download for your visit.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Science Museum Group Academy hosts CPD training courses for teachers on-site and online. These cover a range of topics, from *Exploring Science Through Play* to setting up your own *Exploration and Discovery Club*.

# Sparkling CURIOSITY

Looking for ways to engage your learners in STEM? **Andy Lickley** from the Science Museum Group shares his tips for running an exploration and discovery club...

**S**tarting your own exploration and discovery club is a fantastic way to boost children's enjoyment of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and help them develop new skills in a real-world context. The idea is to offer an alternative to traditional STEM clubs, showing that science is much more than what's taught in the classroom.

At the Science Museum Group (SMG), we encourage discovery through active participation and social interaction on school trips and in clubs back at school, an approach grounded in years of research. So here are our top tips for taking a similar approach with your pupils...

## 1. The joy of discovery

Science is a creative and imaginative endeavour; it's a way of thinking, asking questions and observing the world around us. By focusing on key skills such as problem-solving, teamwork and communication, you can inspire children to follow their curiosity and discover science on their own terms.



## 2. Beyond experiments

Experiments are exciting, but they can be time-consuming and may require a lot of equipment. Club activities are only limited by your imagination – try craft projects, games or digital experiences that promote science skills, or explore STEM content by creating a magazine, planning an event, or running a science-themed film or book club. Why not invite people in from your community who have interesting hobbies or jobs? You could also consider going on exploratory visits in your local area.

## 3. Choose a theme

Plan your activities around a theme to help your club feel different to a formal lesson. Run team-based projects or competitions that last several weeks, or research a specific problem that is relevant to your group. Why not get your members involved in generating ideas to give them more ownership of the experience? You never know what ideas they might come up with!

## 4. Measuring success

What do you want your group to gain from the experience? Are there specific outcomes you hope to achieve? From developing interpersonal skills to growing confidence in STEM subjects, think about what success looks like for you and your group. There are many ways to demonstrate achievements. Ask the group to capture experiences with pictures or get creative with feedback, using ideas like pebble voting at the start and end of your club.

## 5. Don't fear failure

Curiosity is at the heart of science, so if you don't know the answer to something, use that as an opportunity to find out more as a group. If something goes wrong, use your club's scientific skills to work out why and have another go. Make sure you have spare supplies, and always do a risk assessment for your activities.

## 6. Recruit creatively

Who do you want to attend your club? Will

it be open to anyone, or do you want to target those who may not be as confident with science? Help everyone feel welcome by advertising your club in places where you know your target audience will be looking. Remember to focus on the experiences they will have rather than any subject content.

## 7. Celebrate your work

Showcase your club's opportunities and achievements by celebrating your work. Plan a taster event or exhibition, inviting friends, families and local supporters to get involved. Take and share plenty of pictures or write a feature for a school newsletter to raise the club's profile. Sharing successes can also boost recruitment and attract funding or staffing support.

## 8. Enjoy yourself!

If you're making the time to run the club, it should be something you enjoy. Your passion and enthusiasm will ensure your group have positive experiences, so join in with the activities and enjoy discovering STEM with them.



**Andy Lickley** is Academy Programme Leader at the Science Museum Group. The SMG Academy hosts fully funded training courses for primary school teachers in London, Manchester, York, and online. With refreshments and resources provided, it's the ideal development opportunity for you and your department.



# Walk this way to adventure



Inspire your pupils with a YHA school residential they'll never forget.

Choose from exciting **activity packages** or explore at your own pace with our **self-led options**. With over 95 years of experience, YHA makes learning outside the classroom safe, fun and affordable.

To learn more, scan the QR code or visit

[yha.org.uk/school-trips](https://yha.org.uk/school-trips)



**EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE**

# Bring the great outdoors to life

From the moment your group arrives at a YHA, there are opportunities for discovery, adventure and learning at every turn...

Across England & Wales, YHA offers accessible, curriculum-linked geography residential that bring classroom theory to life outdoors. Pupils engage in hands-on fieldwork, using real data to analyse landscape change, coastal/river features, and human-environment interaction – and because YHA hostels are often located in diverse natural settings, you spend less time travelling and more time learning on site.

Here's what a sample day could look like on one of its KS2 packages, which are available at the following YHA sites: Castleton Losehill Hall, Ravenstor, Ilam Hall, Malham, Boggle Hole, Whitby, Langdale, Sherwood Forest, and Grinton Lodge.



*A typical day on a YHA residential trip might involve...*

**GOOD TO KNOW**

YHA provides free leader places and bursary support for eligible schools, helping more students access the benefits of school residential.

**8:00am – Breakfast**

Choose from an unlimited continental buffet with cereal, fruit, and pastries, or a cooked full English breakfast. Drinks like Yorkshire Tea, coffee, and fruit juice are included.

**9:00am – Map skills**

For hundreds of years maps have helped people travel from one place to another. Where could a map take you? Learn how to get started with a map, understand its symbols and practise navigation skills.

**10:30am – Compass skills**

It's time to find your bearings! Learn the parts and purpose of a compass and practise using it.

**12:00pm – Lunch**

YHA provides convenient packed lunches for groups on the go that are ideal for days out.

**1:00pm – River dipping**

A hands-on fieldwork activity where groups work in teams to collect data and observe a local river and its environment.

**3:30pm – Mini beast hunt**

A hands-on outdoor activity observing and exploring micro-habitats using investigative tools.

**6:00pm – Evening meal**

The evening meal is a hearty, rotating menu that changes daily. It can be served in a buffet-style or plated format, and both vegetarian and vegan options are available.

**7:00pm – Evening walk or Night line**

As the sun sets and the stars begin to twinkle, groups are invited to explore the great outdoors with YHA's expert and friendly teams.

**{ BEFORE YOU GO }****ASK**

How is the area around your school different from where you live? (E.g. the landscape, buildings, and what people do there.) Now apply this to the YHA hostel you plan to visit.

**READ**

Read resources that provide details about the area you will be visiting to ensure your group can get the most out of their experience when you're there in real life.

**DO**

Take the time to complete a Goal-Setting worksheet before your residential, and take advantage of a free planning trip to ensure you're prepared for your stay.

# Should I stay or SHOULD I GO?

Embarking on al fresco learning might sound like a real headache, but once you've got the essentials down, you won't think twice about taking the kids outside

ZANA WOOD

**A**s the cold wind whistles around the school building and your class sits quietly on task, it is easy to understand why teachers may be reluctant to take pupils outside. But when the days are short, spending an hour outdoors can do you the world of good, not to mention your class.

Some of the barriers are obvious, such as the weather and children's inadequate clothing – watching them run around at playtime with no coat and wearing light fabric trainers or ballet pumps can feel uninspiring. A lack of green space – or, conversely, a big expanse of playing field with no trees – can feel equally challenging. Staff confidence and time are an issue. With so many obstacles it can make you wonder how anyone teaches outside easily and with joy; yet they do.

Before I delve into overcoming the barriers, it is important to be clear. I am not talking about forest school. Forest school is child-led, but the outdoor learning I am referring to here is teacher-led. One whole class outdoors, meeting the curriculum through a lesson they would have traditionally done inside.

## When it rains...

The adage 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing' is true.

But this applies to us as much, if not more, than the children. Children, whether through cost, or fashion, are often inappropriately dressed. Reminders to bring warmer clothing in winter and suitable footwear often go unheeded. On outdoor learning days, some schools opt for wearing PE clothes, others have non uniform days. Spare wellies are useful – ask parents to donate them. Keeping children active to keep warm and limiting time spent outside makes all the difference. The most important person here is YOU. If you are not wearing appropriate clothing, you will hate it outside. If you hate it, so will your class.

## FIVE, four, three...

I cannot emphasise enough that the easiest way to overcome behavioural issues outside is through regular – ideally weekly – outdoor sessions. It might sound counterintuitive, but honestly, it works. When starting out, use the same behaviour control methods you use inside (counting down, clapping, using a gong, etc.). Limit the space you work in to roughly the size of your classroom, and show the children where they can and can't

go. Start the lesson with a clear expectation of what you would like to achieve. I favour Paul Dix's three rules – ready, respectful, and safe –reminding them of this at the beginning of each session (learn more at [tinyurl.com/tp-PaulDix](http://tinyurl.com/tp-PaulDix)).

We always work in teams, and using the same teams each week also helps everyone to settle. Children with higher needs might have to have shorter lessons outside to begin with, as they

can become overstimulated, and when we are outside, I often keep them close to me with extra jobs if needed – taking photos is always a good one. I also have a soft toy rat, who is invaluable at keeping children comforted and occupied when all else fails.



## You got this

I'm a firm believer that if you can take PE outside you already have all the skills to take your class out for other learning. For a successful outdoor lesson, research before you go out. There are thousands of ideas out there, but if you are stuck, a simple place to start is to explain to your children you are going to take an English lesson outside. Read them a passage from a book and explain they are going to make a collage picture based on the passage (you can always take visual

prompts, such as illustrations from the book, if they're new to this).

We always use white plastic sheets as

'paper'. This gives a clear background, which makes it easier to see. Encourage the teams to collect some materials – grass, twigs, stones, etc. Then guide them to make their picture. Stragglers can be given more collecting jobs. Don't forget to take photos at the end. You can use this method for science diagrams, too. Younger children can start with self-portraits to get them used to creating pictures using natural materials.

## Clock watching

Even for a teacher who loves going out with their class, time is a huge stumbling block. As teachers' roles and responsibilities grow beyond the curriculum and teaching assistants become few and far between, simply finding the time and motivation to do more than the mammoth amount already on your plate is nigh on impossible. Decision fatigue is very real in education. It is one of the reasons why bought-in

## Outdoor prep kit

Expect excited behaviour the first few times outside, so plan lessons that allow for letting off steam – there are lots of spotter sheets available online and collecting in numbers keeps everyone engaged, e.g. 10 blades of grass, 20 tiny stones, 1 fallen leaf. Even a tarmacked playground offers up a surprising amount of options.



Make use of natural materials for creating 2D and 3D diagrams. Get the children involved in collecting a store of sticks, stones, leaves, pinecones, etc. to save time when you next go out. These can be kept in boxes or buckets. If you don't have any available at school, ask the children to bring in sticks and stones or collect them on your own weekend walks. You'll be surprised how quickly you can fill a bag.



Create investigation stations – use benches, tables, or trays. This encourages scientific language and reasoning.



Cut up cheap white shower curtains into 1m squares. These are great to use as sheets to lay on the ground outside. They provide a good backdrop to see the work more clearly for taking evidence photos, too.



Don't be afraid to let some children work on their own or with a partner if they struggle within a team, but keep them close to you so you can guide them when needed.



Enjoy yourself and your class will enjoy themselves, too! If you are unsure how to start your outdoor learning adventure, choose a warm sunny day and a good book and read to your class outside.

***"The easiest way by far to overcome behaviour issues outside is to have regular – ideally weekly – sessions"***

schemes and curriculums are so appealing. For anyone to overcome this barrier it is better for the change to come from the top. If outdoor learning is timetabled into weekly learning, teachers are more likely to take their class out.

Some schools allocate PPA cover with the task of running outdoor lessons across the school. One of our schools uses their weekly outdoor learning lessons as part of their science curriculum, and all lessons from living things and their habitats through to electricity have been adapted for outdoors. Other schools we work with use active lessons and tie in some PE lessons with outdoor learning as curriculum-based physical education.



**Zana Wood** is director and co-founder of *Grow to School*

 [growschool.co.uk](http://growschool.co.uk)





# 10 OF THE BEST ANIMAL ATTRACTIONS

Give your class the chance to meet creatures from across the world with a trip to a zoo, farm or nature reserve. . .



## Colchester Zoo

Colchester Zoo is more than an award-winning family day out; it offers an inspiring backdrop for education too. Its educational offering includes a wide variety of engaging school sessions full of inspiring content, with direct links to the national curriculum. From art to geography, science to debating skills, there are sessions for all ages. During the workshops, learning is brought to life through the use of biofacts. Skulls, feathers, furs and taxidermy – the zoo's biofact store contains hundreds of amazing items. With the help of conservation educators, these interesting objects are used to enhance learning opportunities, inviting visitors to get up close and personal with the wonder of wildlife!

To learn more, visit [colchester-zoo.com](http://colchester-zoo.com) or email [education@colchesterzoo.org](mailto:education@colchesterzoo.org)



## Stratford-upon-Avon Butterfly Farm

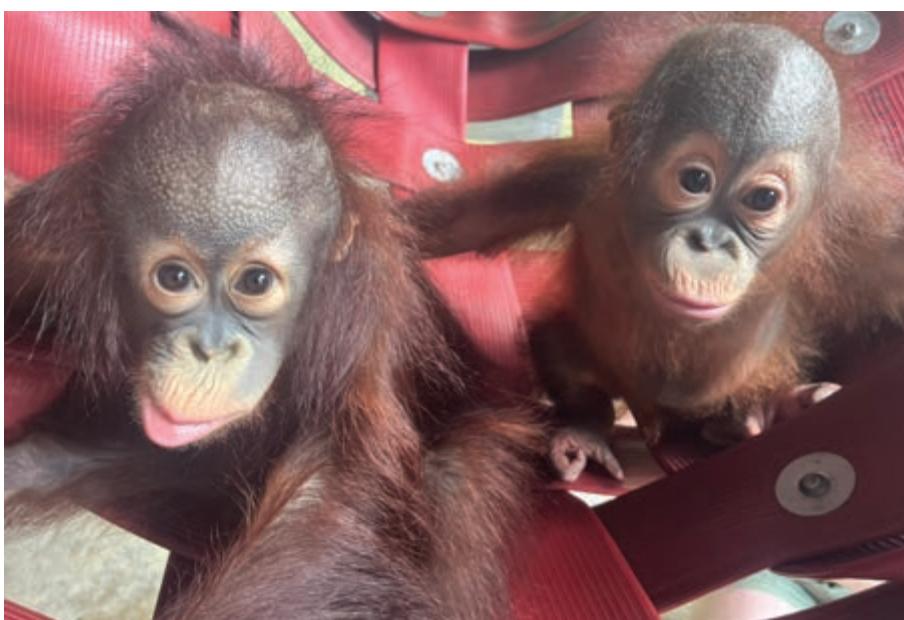
Stratford-upon-Avon Butterfly Farm offers an exciting school trip that sparks curiosity in every child. Pupils can step into a rainforest environment filled with hundreds of butterflies fluttering freely around them. Interactive areas introduce fascinating creatures like leafcutter ants, axolotls, snakes and a spectacled caiman, helping children discover the wonders of the natural world. The visit supports science, geography, art and design learning – from habitats to life cycles and amazing rainforest creatures – while providing a fun, hands-on experience they'll remember long after returning to the classroom. It's an inspiring adventure that brings learning to life and encourages a love of nature.

Find out more at [www.butterflyfarm.co.uk/atraction/schools-and-groups](http://www.butterflyfarm.co.uk/atraction/schools-and-groups)

## Kent Wildlife Park

Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading wildlife charity in Kent and is expert in outdoor learning. With a passion for connecting learners with the natural world and offering high-quality, meaningful learning experiences, the park brings people closer to nature, ensuring that wildlife is protected and restored for future generations. With expert tutors on hand to guide school groups, learners will explore different habitats, practise new skills and have fun whilst meeting curriculum objectives. Staff are committed to ensuring high-quality provision and have been awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge.

For more information, email [education@kentwildlife.org.uk](mailto:education@kentwildlife.org.uk) or visit [kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/education](http://kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/education)



## Monkey World

There is more to learning outside the classroom than just monkey-ing around! Whether you're learning about Monkey World's rescue work, the impact of deforestation or how woolly monkeys use their tails, the experienced education team can enhance a trip to Monkey World or support learning in the classroom. As well as curriculum-linked sessions and workbooks, Monkey World offers a chance to see over 250 monkeys and apes, including the largest group of chimpanzees outside of Africa, Europe's only orangutan crèche and a breeding group of woolly monkeys – all in one day!

Visit [www.monkeyworld.org](http://www.monkeyworld.org), call 01929 401022 or email [education@monkeyworld.org](mailto:education@monkeyworld.org) for more information.

### Knowsley Safari

Bring learning to life at Knowsley Safari! From thrilling guided safari tours to see the park's safari superstars to engaging discovery workshops, there's a diverse range of interactive activities specifically tailored to your class. Explore unique experiences like the Wild & Well programme, designed to promote well-being and environmental awareness. You can also inspire your students through virtual live-stream sessions, such as Food & Feeding, where they'll learn about animal diets and habitats. Whether you're visiting in person or tuning in online, there's something exciting for everyone to enjoy and learn from. For more information, email [learning@knowsley.com](mailto:learning@knowsley.com) or visit [www.knowsleysafariexperience.co.uk/education](http://www.knowsleysafariexperience.co.uk/education)



#### STAFF TRAINING

The Lancashire Wildlife Trust also offers professional development opportunities for teachers (including Wild Workshops), forest school training and team building.

### The Lancashire Wildlife Trust

You can visit some of Lancashire's best nature reserves and have an experienced education team to take your class on a journey of discovery. The Lancashire Wildlife Trust's fun, hands-on outdoor learning programmes are fully risk-assessed for all ages and support the national curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Choose from trips to several magical locations, each of which offers different habitats and wildlife to explore: Brockholes Nature Reserve, Preston; Mere Sands Wood, Rufford; Lunt Meadows Nature Reserve, Sefton; The Hive at Moss Bank Park, Bolton; Environmental Resource Centre at Seven Acres Nature Reserve, Bolton; and Beach School on the Fylde Coast, St Anne's, Lancashire.

For more information, visit [www.lancswt.org.uk/visit/school-trips](http://www.lancswt.org.uk/visit/school-trips)

### Hobbledown Adventure Park and Zoo

Hobbledown Adventure Park and Zoo is a unique world of magic, imagination and adventure! Your pupils will climb towering forts and explore enchanted castles filled with dragons, tunnels, and turrets – and, along the way, they'll meet a wide variety of zoo and farm animals, from cheeky meerkats to giant tortoises. With epic indoor and outdoor play areas, the immersive sensory Imaginarium, and unique animal walkthroughs, Hobbledown is one of the top family days out in the UK.

To find out more, visit [www.hobbledown.com/epsom](http://www.hobbledown.com/epsom)



## Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital

Tiggywinkles Visitor Centre offers an unforgettable learning experience for primary pupils, bringing the wonders of British wildlife to life. As the world's busiest wildlife hospital, it provides unique, real-world insight into animal rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation. Schools can explore engaging indoor and outdoor exhibits, meet recovering hedgehogs, birds and other native species, and discover how vets and volunteers care for injured animals. Interactive talks, curriculum-linked resources, and hands-on learning make every visit meaningful and memorable. Safe, educational, and inspiring, Tiggywinkles encourages children to appreciate nature, protect wildlife, and understand their role in caring for the environment – a perfect trip for curious young minds.

Visit [www.tiggywinkles.org.uk/visitor-centre/group-visits](http://www.tiggywinkles.org.uk/visitor-centre/group-visits)



### NATURE STUDIES

During their trip to Tiggywinkles, your pupils will learn practical tips on how they can help wildlife in their own gardens.



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Find out more at [www.whitepostfarm.co.uk/education-2](http://www.whitepostfarm.co.uk/education-2)

## Chester Zoo

The team at Chester Zoo make learning exciting and engaging for your primary school pupils by bringing them closer to wildlife. The zoo's hands-on experiences help children connect with nature and will go a long way towards inspiring the next generation of conservationists. Featuring over 30,000 animals and world-class conservation efforts, its programmes spark curiosity and support understanding across the curriculum. A new experience was introduced for 2025: Heart of Africa brings Africa's ecosystems to life, across an immersive 22-acre area. Plan your school trip today for an unforgettable adventure!

Visit [tinyurl.com/tp-ChesterZoo](http://tinyurl.com/tp-ChesterZoo) or email [learning@chesterzoo.org](mailto:learning@chesterzoo.org)



MEDIUM TERM PLAN

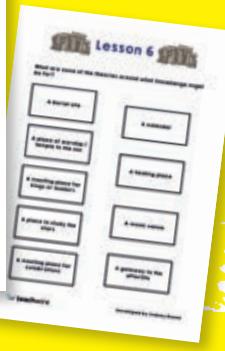
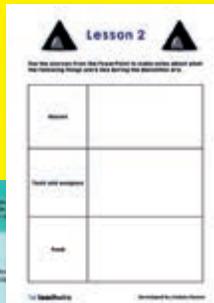
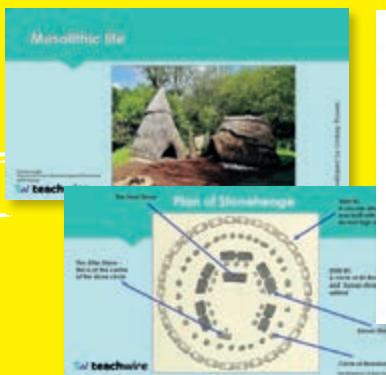
**KS2**  
**HISTORY**

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## WEEK 1

### Learning objective

- When were the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages?

Begin this lesson by showing children a timeline with BCE and CE (slide 3). Explain that BCE (Before Common Era) is all the time before 1 CE when people believe Jesus was born, and that CE (Common Era) is all the time since 1 CE up to the present. This can be a tricky concept, particularly if you're teaching it to Y3 pupils, who won't necessarily have come across it before. Explain that the numbers from 1 BCE go backwards, and demonstrate using the timeline.

Introduce the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages and show pupils the dates for these periods (slide 4). Explain that we're going to work out just how long each period lasted, using base 10 rods and cubes to represent the blocks of time (pupils should use a scale of one block of 10 for each thousand years. You could also use unifix cubes or different coloured sticky notes. See the L1 resource sheet to see how this activity works). Split the children into groups and get them to represent each period using base 10 – at this point they do not need to place it on a timeline. Once pupils have completed this task, ask what they notice. Which period lasted for the longest duration? Can the children work out how long each period lasted for? This

**T**eaching about the changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age might not have the instant appeal of the glamours of Ancient Egypt or

Rome. However, this topic can be highly engaging – both pupils and teachers might be surprised at how diverse this period actually was. It provides children with essential knowledge of how the earliest human life was shaped and the impact it had on future civilisations, showing how the very foundations of history were created. As well as covering important concepts like citing sources and explaining how environmental factors affect behaviour, pupils will be able to investigate the mysteries surrounding Stonehenge, and learn that when we refer to 'technology' in history, we might be talking about a lump of metal rather than an iPhone...

is a great visual way of getting pupils to understand that the Stone Age lasted for a much longer time than either the Bronze or Iron Ages – pupils may even run out of blocks for it! Explain that they have only represented part of the Stone Age and it actually went back as far as 800,000 BCE!

Show pupils the timeline showing how the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages fit in with each other (slide 5). Ask them why they think the periods on the timeline overlap, then explain that this is because each period happened gradually over time. Depending on prior study, you could ask the children what other periods they know about that were also happening during this time.



### Assessment

Do pupils understand the duration of each period and are they able to say which was the longest?

Do pupils understand the terms BCE/CE (you can also use BC/AD)?



## WEEK 2

### Learning objective

- How did Stone Age people live?

Begin the lesson by asking pupils what they think life in the Stone Age was like. How did people survive? What kind of houses did they live in? After some discussion, write down some of the children's ideas and misconceptions on a flipchart (for example, they might think Stone Age people existed alongside dinosaurs or lived in caves). After some discussion, introduce the vocabulary for the lesson, explaining that there were three periods that made up the Stone

Age – the Palaeolithic, the Mesolithic and the Neolithic eras (**slide 8**). Tell the children that we are going to find out what life was actually like during the Mesolithic era using a range of sources.

Clarify the word *source*, and explain that it means evidence that tells us about the past.

Show the children a video clip of what Star Carr in Yorkshire might have looked like in 9,000 BCE (**slide 9**). Ask pupils to make notes on mini whiteboards: how are the houses constructed? Why do you think people settled here? What might have been nearby that they needed to survive? How and where did they get their food? Pupils might mention that Star Carr is near a river for food/water – you could use this opportunity to make links to other civilisations they have studied that settled next to a river (i.e. Ancient Egyptians). Discuss pupils' answers together and note down their ideas.

Ask the children to examine sources showing aspects of Mesolithic life using images of tools and homes (**slides 10-13**). If possible, use pages 2-3 from *A Street Through Time* by Anne Millard, and ask pupils to discuss what they can see.

Get pupils to work in pairs, using the sources to complete a table outlining what houses, food, and tools and weapons looked like in the Mesolithic era (**slide 14**). Finish the lesson by getting pupils to report back on what they found out and discuss each area of Stone Age life together. You might discuss that the arrowheads and fishing hooks show they hunted for their food, for example.



## Assessment

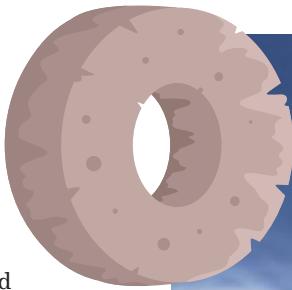
Can pupils explain what homes were like and how Mesolithic people found food? Can children use a range of sources and make notes of their findings?



## WEEK 3 Learning objective

- What were homes like at Skara Brae?

Begin the lesson by introducing the settlement of Skara Brae, which dates from the Neolithic era. Show pupils the virtual tour of Skara Brae (**slide 17**). Show the plan of Skara Brae (**slide 18**) and give pupils time to discuss it – explain that many of the houses in the



settlement were connected by tunnels. Ask pupils why they think this might have been useful.

Ask the children to look in pairs at the images of Skara Brae (**slides 19-21**) and to note down what they can see in each house, including any furnishings and decorations. Pupils should then discuss how these houses are similar to and different from the homes of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers at Starr Carr. After discussing together and as a class, get the children to draw and label a plan of one of the houses, using photos of Skara Brae to help them with as much detail as possible. Next, ask them to create a detailed plan of a house, including what they can see inside.

Finish by asking pupils to report back on what they found out using the sources. How do they know that people in Skara Brae had become more advanced during the Neolithic period? Pupils could write a short response using stem sentences (**slide 22**).



## Assessment

Can children identify what homes were like in Skara Brae? Can they compare homes in Skara Brae with Mesolithic houses and explain why these were more advanced?



## WEEK 4 Learning objective

- Why was the discovery of bronze so important?

Begin the lesson by recapping what types of tools people used during the

Stone Age. Ask the children to explain what materials were used, and how they were used. Pupils should be able to recall that stone and flint were the main materials used for tools and weapons, and that these things helped early hunter-gatherers provide food.

Show pupils examples of artefacts that were made during the Bronze Age (**slide 25**). Discuss what the objects have in common and what each one would have been used for. After discussing together, explain that they are made of bronze, a metal alloy that is produced by melding copper and tin ore. Explain that bronze was first brought from Europe to the UK by the Beaker people, who were good at metalworking, and that this helped to change what life was like.

Watch the video about the Bronze Age (**slide 26**) and ask the children to note down why they think the production of bronze was so important. Emphasise that bronze didn't just allow people to make better tools and weapons, but also enabled people to produce luxury goods, which meant they could trade with other places.

Pupils should then work to create a poster about why bronze was such a beneficial material, thinking about: why was bronze such a useful material? How did it change society in Britain? What could people living in the Bronze Age now do that they couldn't before?



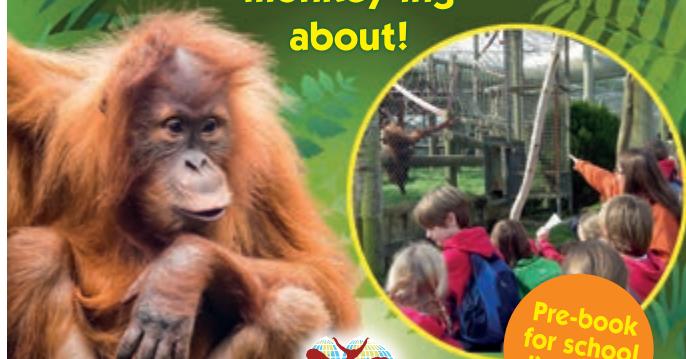
## Assessment

Can children explain why the discovery of bronze was so important and some of the ways it changed life in Britain during the Bronze Age?

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## WEEK 5

### Learning objective

- Why did Iron Age people build hill forts?

Start by recapping what settlements were like in the Stone Age. Explain that in the Iron Age people began to become more technologically advanced and were able to smelt iron – this meant they could make better tools and weapons.

Next, explain that Iron Age people lived in different types of settlements from before. Show the pupils images of different hill forts (**slides 29-31**) and ask them to discuss what they notice about these. Draw pupils' attention to the type of landscape they are looking at (this is a great opportunity to make links with possible geography work) and the ridges carved into the landscape.

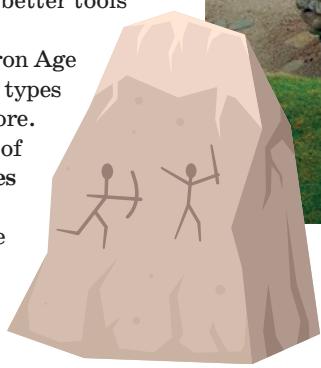
Explain that these settlements were called hill forts and were built at the top of hills, on the highest part of the landscape. Tell the children that people lived in tribes, but that there could often be battles between neighbouring tribes. Show pupils images of reconstructions of hill forts (if possible, look at pages 6-7 of *A Street Through Time*) and discuss what is different about hill forts compared with earlier settlements. Draw attention to the fact that houses are grouped together centrally, that there is a wooden palisade to protect people inside the hill fort from attack, and that the forts are made from stronger materials than previous settlements. Watch the video about hill forts and look at images of reconstructions (**slides 32-34**).

Ask pupils to discuss the following questions: what would be the advantages of living in a hill fort? What might the disadvantages be? Ask pupils to discuss these together, and create a list of advantages and disadvantages of living in a hill fort. When they have had time to discuss, compile a class list. Children could then create a written response, using stem sentences to explain their ideas (**slides 35-36**).



### Assessment

Can pupils summarise why people built hill forts in the Iron Age?



## WEEK 6

### Learning objective

- What was Stonehenge and what might it have been used for?

Begin this lesson by explaining that Stonehenge is one of the world's most famous monuments that can still be visited today. People began building it around 3,000 BCE, in the late Neolithic era, but it took hundreds of years to finish. Show the pupils images of Stonehenge (**slides 39-42**) and look at the virtual tour from English Heritage website ([tinyurl.com/tp-VirtualStonehenge](http://tinyurl.com/tp-VirtualStonehenge)).

After discussing some initial ideas, show pupils the plan of the site as it would have been in the Iron Age (**slide 43**) and explain that Stonehenge is made up of a circular ditch with a six-foot-high bank. Later, the circle of Sarsen stones and smaller bluestones was added. Draw pupils' attention to the Altar stone and the Heel Stone. Explain to the children that historians have different theories about what Stonehenge might have been built for and no one knows for certain its real purpose. Ask pupils if they have any theories of their own about what it might have been used for based on the images they've looked at so far, and the plan of its layout. After discussing their ideas together, give pupils the resource sheet with different theories about Stonehenge's purpose and read through them together (**L6**).

Introduce the Diamond Nine task from the L6 resources sheets – children

should work in pairs or threes to order what they think Stonehenge was used for from the most likely to least likely. Explain that they should take it in turns to rank one of the possibilities on the diamond grid – they are allowed to disagree and move one of their partner's ideas, but they need to explain why they are changing it. Emphasise that there is no right or wrong answer, but that they must explain their choices based on what they have learnt so far this lesson – get them to think about the layout of the site.

At the end of the session, ask the children to report back on which reasons they thought were most and least likely, and to explain why they think this. Get pupils to explain their ideas using the stem sentences (**slide 44**). They could follow this up by writing a short response in their books using the same stem sentences.



### Assessment

Can pupils explain what Stonehenge is, and what it might have been used for?



**Lindsey Rawes** is a primary teacher and history lead. She is also a chartered teacher of history for the Historical Association.

[theprimaryhistorian.substack.com](http://theprimaryhistorian.substack.com)

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### WE'RE THE EXPERTS

# “Every child deserves a residential”

**Maria McQuillan** explains how the Conway Centres Bursary Scheme can help schools give pupils an unforgettable adventure

#### Why was the Conway Centres Bursary Scheme introduced?

We see every day the emotional, physical, mental, social and academic benefits of residential trips to children, and we wanted to make these opportunities more accessible than ever before. We are determined that as many young people as possible should experience an overnight residential trip in the great outdoors, which is why we have introduced this new funding initiative.

#### When is the funding available?

We trialled the Conway Centres Bursary Scheme initially, with over 500 young people benefiting in the autumn term alone. Now, due to the success of the trial, we are thrilled to announce that the scheme is here to stay – and it is bigger and better than ever, with up to £89 funding per child available! The funding is available to schools throughout the whole year for any new bookings they make, but they should be quick, as funding is going fast.

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

At Conway Centres, we believe that every young person deserves the chance to experience a residential, so we have removed the usual barriers teachers might expect to encounter. With no child-eligibility limitations, schools don't need to fill out any lengthy forms. If you're interested, just get in touch and we will handle the rest.

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

With the Conway Centres Bursary Scheme, there is no compromise on adventure! With high ropes,



#### EXPERT PROFILE

**Name:** Maria McQuillan

**Job Title:** Head of Conway Centres.

**Area of expertise:**  
Ensuring a unique, life-changing experience for young people

**Best part of my job:**  
Watching how young people grow and thrive at our centres



water sports, land-based challenges, off-site adventures, art and exploration available, schools can choose from a diverse range of activities to suit their requirements. From the thrill-seeker of the group who enjoys adrenaline-filled high-adventure to the pupil who gets more of a thrill taking paint to paper, we pride ourselves on ensuring that every child will leave at the end of their residential having taken part in something that they love.

#### Which centre should schools choose?

We have three centres in the Cheshire countryside to consider, as well as our largest centre, in Anglesey, which sits beneath the Snowdonian Mountain Range. Schools tend to bring their younger visitors to our Delamere centre for their first residential experience, before moving on to Burwardsley in Year 3, where pupils can learn all about the Iron Age. Tattenhall is a great step up for younger KS2 pupils, enabling them to take their first step into adventure activities, before visiting Anglesey, the home of high adventure, when they're a bit older. Here, they can take part in activities such as canoeing, sailing, gorge walking and much more!

#### DON'T FORGET

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

**ASK ABOUT THE BURSARY** – There are no child-eligibility limitations and no application, and you could receive funding of up to £89 per pupil.

**BOOK NOW** – Funding is available on new bookings, all year round, but be quick, as dates are running out fast!

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# We The Curious

Get set for a day full of educational inspiration at Bristol's surprising science experience

## 1 Climb inside a giant bubble

Explore over 200 intriguing things to do across two floors of interactive exhibits, covering illusions, space, animation, food and much more. Ask questions or chat with the engaging Live Science Team.

## 2 Visit the stars

Take your seats for an awe-inspiring space adventure in the UK's only 3D planetarium. Head off for a journey through the Solar System, discover famous constellations, or set out on a hunt for alien life.

## 3 Start something new

From fossils to forensics, coding to climate change, get minds buzzing in one of the pre-booked workshops. Delivered by an excellent Education Communicator, these can help you introduce your next topic, revisit existing topics, or try something different just for fun.

## 4 Whizzes, bangs and rockets

Enjoy a spectacular visual show that brings science topics to life through exciting demos and experiments. Choose between presenter-led experiences about space, light, the human body, or materials and states of matter.

## 5 Get involved in research

Introduce your pupils to real-life research through engaging games and creative activities, designed in partnership with researchers in the Open City Lab. This season, it's all about investigating curiosity itself.

### GOOD TO KNOW!

Ask about the package deal price for entry, a workshop and a planetarium show to save money.



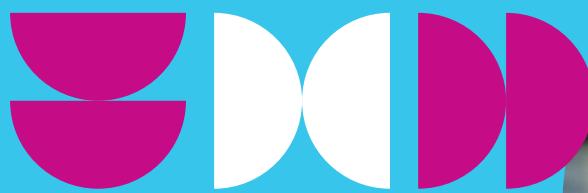
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we the curious  
**Science adventures  
start here**



We The Curious is a registered charity (no. 10419954)

Image credit: Lisa Whiting



- / Test things out across two floors of interactive exhibits
- / Visit far-flung worlds in the 3D Planetarium
- / Kick off new topics in STEM workshops for all key stages



Find us on Bristol's Harbourside

[wethecurious.org](http://wethecurious.org)

# Finding space FOR CURIOSITY

How can educators create the conditions in which children's innate inquisitiveness is free to flourish? **Mark Pickering** shares his thoughts...

**T**he Oxford English Dictionary defines curiosity as "a strong desire to know or learn about something, especially what is new or strange". Everyone possesses it, that tingle that inspires us to ask *what if?*, but it's often more visible and active in children. Of course, people don't grow out of being curious, but as we age, the nature of our curiosity changes, homing in on areas of passion and interest. Or perhaps there are simply fewer opportunities, without additional focus or effort, to be curious as adults. At We The Curious, we're interested in how we can reignite curiosity in people of all ages. In the Education team, our focus is on using curiosity to inspire interest and build confidence in STEM, from early years right through to post-16.

## Curiosity and the curriculum

We're fortunate as educators that curiosity is strongest in children. It can be a fantastic vehicle for the transfer and experiencing of new knowledge, and the younger the learner, the greater the chance that the knowledge is indeed new.

The word 'curiosity' appears six times in the primary national curriculum. A sense of enjoyment and curiosity in the subject is required in

maths; excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena is needed in science, and inspiring pupils' curiosity to know more about the past is an objective in history. In both geography and foreign languages, emphasis is put on fostering curiosity about the world and its people. It's also on the spelling word list for Years 5 and 6.

So, given its wide-ranging relevance, how do we best create situations where curiosity can flourish?

## Interaction and imagination

At We The Curious, we have two floors of hands-on exhibits. One floor is the more traditional tried-and-tested kind involving buttons, levers, lights, sounds, cause and effect, challenge and opportunity. Pupils have a go at something that then demonstrates, explains, or allows them to experience

a scientific phenomenon or principle.

The other floor contains a collection of exhibits called *Project What If*. These are centred around questions collected from the public (10,000 to be exact), resulting in seven areas covering questions such as *Why do rainbows make people happy?*, *Can your soul be seen by science?* and *How do you become invisible?* Each area contains exhibits collaboratively designed with the

question-askers. These exhibit clusters both investigate the answer and also delve deeper into the nature of the question itself and what it means to different people. This is one example of where curiosity



takes over. Intuitive exploration is encouraged, allowing everyone to have a unique and personal experience that leads to more questions and lines of enquiry rather than set answers.

## Sessions that flex

When it comes to our programme of workshops and shows specifically for school groups, we know teachers book our activities because of their relevance to the national curriculum (77% state this as the reason for booking). We need to ensure this is always a fundamental and recognisable part of our programming, but we also know that by presenting opportunities for learners to be curious, we stand the best chance of getting them to engage.

Our approach is to design programming that aims to meet one or more of the following criteria: multiple successful outcomes are possible; ideas or predictions

are needed; age-appropriate scientific investigation is undertaken.

We aim to create authority-sharing spaces between the traditional question-and-answer, expert-and-learner scenarios, which means that our Education Communicators can allow children to steer a workshop that has been delivered hundreds of times towards their own areas of interest and expertise. They're able to nudge learners into that curious space of wanting answers, not because that is the task and expectation of them, but because what they are doing is new, strange or exciting.

## When curiosity takes over

In the science centre, we have the good fortune of presenting these opportunities during school trips. We're engaging with learners with fresh eyes,

when they're feeling positive and excited, making memories that will stay with them as they grow.

During our workshops, moments are shared that demonstrate to us how children think, how they can apply knowledge from one area to a surprising range of other seemingly non-connected ones. In this environment, children will share information such as "Did you know that even in space, a snake cannot feel love as it does not have that part of the brain?" (this was shared by a child during a workshop called *Earth, Sun and Moon*).

We have delivered workshops on Scratch coding anchored in the narrative of searching for penguins in Antarctica, where learners have instead independently pushed the abilities of our robots and coding software, not for the purpose of being

'right' answer, just the opportunity to put a case together based on collected evidence. Children experience the impact of decisions on the climate via a floodable island and carnival games. Each activity is designed with the aim of having learners forget they are in a learning room and doing something purely for the joy of investigating and indulging their own curiosity.

## Benefits for all

As a trained teacher I know that by sharing enthusiasm, validating learners and facilitating and encouraging more freedom, magic does happen. I also know time pressure and the size of the curriculum that needs to be covered. I still passionately state the case for finding space for curiosity-led learning, not just for the benefit of learners but also for educators and their relationship with their pupils. It's a shortcut to being in the zone or 'flow state', when everyone is immersed and relaxed, leading to a positive impact on wellbeing, building trust and strengthening bonds between peers and their teacher.

At We The Curious, we believe that by harnessing the power of curiosity to explore and solve problems, we can tackle the complex challenges facing our world today. This starts in finding space for curiosity to take the lead in our classrooms, setting up a love for that buzz of delving deeper, that tingle of *what if?*, that can last a lifetime.



disruptive or disengaged, but because they were given the opportunity and equipment to indulge their curiosity and ask what if? Did we allow this? Of course, yes. In fact, at the end of the session, we looped in the pair's work as an example of other applications of the technology.

Our learners make art created by simple circuit machines. They design and build earthquake-proof buildings and test them out on a miniature shaking table. Groups solve crimes using forensic techniques where there isn't a



**Mark Pickering** is a trained teacher and education manager at We The Curious, Bristol's science centre and an educational charity.

 [wethecurious.org](http://wethecurious.org)

# 10 TO CONSIDER: INSPIRING IDEAS

From theme parks and immersive insights into the past to adventures in the fresh air, you'll find plenty to inspire your pupils here...



**LOTS TO DO!**  
The Alton Towers resort features over 40 rides and attractions for pupils to enjoy, and there's even the option to book residential visits.

## Alton Towers Resort

A school trip to Alton Towers Resort unlocks a world of imagination and adventure, where education meets excitement. Set in the Staffordshire countryside, the resort combines thrilling rides, immersive attractions, and inspiring learning opportunities for pupils of all ages. Children can explore the science behind rollercoasters, discover the creativity that fuels theme park design, and engage with curriculum-linked online resources that bring subjects such as STEM, business, careers, and team building to life.

Whether you're visiting for an end-of-year celebration or to enrich classroom learning, Alton Towers Resort provides an unforgettable mix of fun, discovery, and hands-on educational inspiration.

For more information, visit [www.altontowers.com/schools](http://www.altontowers.com/schools)



### GOOD TO KNOW

Whether you choose Porthpean Outdoor's canvas bunkhouses, which sleep 12, or five-person timber pods, you're sure to enjoy a good night's sleep.

## Porthpean Outdoor

Porthpean Outdoor in Cornwall provides schools with an exceptional residential experience that inspires learning beyond the classroom. Located just a five-minute walk from its own private beach, the centre offers a wide range of exciting water, beach, and land-based activities – including kayaking, coasteering, stand-up paddleboarding, climbing, archery, and bushcraft – all designed to help pupils build confidence and resilience.

The cosy on-site accommodation and full catering facilities ensure a smooth, stress-free stay for visiting schools. With safety, inclusivity, and education at its core, Porthpean Outdoor offers teachers peace of mind and gives pupils memories that last a lifetime.

To find out more, visit [www.porthpean.com](http://www.porthpean.com) or call 01726 72901.

## The LEGOLAND® Windsor Resort

Unlock a world of creativity where learning and imagination go hand in hand.

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Step into Britain's most 'brick-tastic' classroom, where curriculum-linked workshops inspire young minds through hands-on

LEGO® challenges that bring subjects like maths, science, computing and design to life in exciting new ways. Whether you're organising a learning adventure or treating pupils to a well-earned reward trip, the LEGOLAND Windsor Resort promises a day packed with creativity, curiosity, and unforgettable moments.

For more information, visit [www.legoland.co.uk/schools](http://www.legoland.co.uk/schools)



## SEA LIFE

Dive beneath the surface with a school trip to SEA LIFE. Your pupils will explore the wonders of the underwater world and uncover the secrets of life beneath the waves. From graceful rays and fascinating jellyfish to majestic sharks and playful seahorses, they'll uncover every corner of the ocean through immersive displays and interactive exhibits. Engaging curriculum-linked workshops dive into topics such as marine habitats, adaptation, and conservation, helping pupils understand the importance of protecting our blue planet. Each visit is sure to inspire curiosity, encourage discovery, and deepen appreciation for Earth's oceans.

For more information, visit [www.visitsealife.com/uk/schools](http://www.visitsealife.com/uk/schools)

### The London Dungeon

Dare your class to step into the shadows of London's dark past with a school trip to the London Dungeon. It's a place where spine-tingling stories and infamous characters are brought to life right before their eyes. Pupils can journey through the capital's grimmest chapters, from plague-ridden streets and deadly dungeon cells to the haunting legends of Jack the Ripper and the Great Fire. Through live performances, immersive sets, special effects, and a dash of humour, the London Dungeon offers an unforgettable learning experience that shines a light on crime and punishment, social change, and everyday life in historical London.

Find out more at  
[www.thedungeons.com/london/schools](http://www.thedungeons.com/london/schools)



#### HELLO, GRUFFALO!

Alongside the many play areas, sensory room, café and gift shop, the Clubhouse even has a dedicated space to meet the Gruffalo himself...



### The Gruffalo & Friends Clubhouse

Step into the pages of a beloved story at The Gruffalo & Friends Clubhouse and explore a world of imagination and adventure! Designed especially for younger pupils, this indoor play experience invites children to immerse themselves in *The Gruffalo*, *Zog*, *The Snail and the Whale*, and other favourite tales by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler. Packed with interactive play zones, themed activities, and storytelling spaces, the Clubhouse encourages creative play, literacy development, and teamwork in a safe and magical environment. It's the perfect setting for little learners to explore, imagine, and grow through play.

For more information, visit [www.gruffaloclubhouse.com/blackpool/schools](http://gruffaloclubhouse.com/blackpool/schools)

### Thorpe Park

A school trip to Thorpe Park takes learning to new heights, offering the perfect blend of adrenaline-fuelled education and adventure. From jaw-dropping rollercoasters to engaging attractions, pupils can experience real-world applications of classroom subjects in a fun and memorable setting. Through the park's free *Science of Rollercoasters* talks and curriculum-linked resources, children will explore topics such as STEM, business, marketing, and physics, connecting classroom theory with exciting, real-life examples throughout the resort. Whether celebrating success or learning through adventure, Thorpe Park Resort delivers a day full of thrills, teamwork, and hands-on fun.

For more information, visit  
[www.thorpepark.com/schools-trips](http://www.thorpepark.com/schools-trips)



## LEGOLAND® Discovery Centre

Inspire young minds through play in Manchester or Birmingham, the ultimate indoor LEGO® playground designed for learning, creativity, and imagination. Perfect for KS1–2 pupils, the centres bring education to life through hands-on building challenges, interactive rides, and fascinating workshops that link directly to STEM, design, and teamwork. Every visit encourages pupils to think, build, and problem-solve in a space where imagination knows no limits. From constructing towering cities to testing LEGO® cars on speed ramps, learning has never been so much fun!

To find out more, visit [www.legolanddiscoverycentre.com](http://www.legolanddiscoverycentre.com)

### LEARN MORE

There are LEGOLAND® Discovery Centre workshops for all ages, from EYFS through to KS2. Each session is suitable for 10–30 pupils.



## Hooke Court Activity Centre

Hooke Court Residential Study Centre in the heart of West Dorset offers fully catered, self-contained accommodation for school groups, with dedicated play areas and dining times. Set within extensive grounds – home to sheep and pigs and featuring a lake for kayaking and raft-building – the centre delivers activities directly linked to the national curriculum, from hands-on science exploring Newton's laws to immersive historical workshops. Knowledgeable tutors inspire pupils amid authentic settings such as an Anderson Shelter, Saxon Long House, Celtic Round House, Medieval Manor and WWI trench. Close to the Jurassic Coast, Hooke Court also enriches learning with real-world coastal studies.

Visit [www.hookecourt.co.uk](http://www.hookecourt.co.uk) or contact [info@hookecourt.co.uk](mailto:info@hookecourt.co.uk)

## AirThrill Inflatable & Trampoline Adventure Parks

Take your students on an exciting adventure where gravity-defying fun meets family-friendly entertainment! At AirThrill Inflatable & Trampoline Adventure Parks, everyone can have fun together – you can even bring the whole school if you want. The parks cater for all ages from five years, with a range of packages available. Alternatively, the AirThrill team will create a bespoke package just for you. With four locations across Scotland, covering the west to east coast, and a variety of attractions available, it's no wonder the parks are a firm favourite. Book your trip today, and don't forget to bring your air game!

Find out more at [www.airthrill.co.uk](http://www.airthrill.co.uk)



# 6 ways to make the most of your MUSEUM TRIP

There are simple things you can do before, during and after a visit to maximise your pupils' learning, says **Hannah Brown**...

**E**veryone has a school trip that they remember right into adulthood. In fact, you probably have a few such memories that stick in your mind – perhaps somewhere that the teacher made you dress up for (Victorian child, anyone?), or maybe a very long coach trip, or that time one pupil lost something priceless somewhere in one of the attraction's many acres.

But the really memorable bits are usually those sparks of inspiration – trying something new for the first time, or that one member of staff who made the day extra special, or a one-off experience that informed your choice of what you wanted to be when you grew up.

I'm speaking from experience, as I'm one of the many schoolchildren who visited a living museum (dressed up as a Victorian child, of course!), and besides this being a cherished memory, it also ignited my love of local history, which I've carried on in my career. The question is, how can you as a teacher get the most out of your next school trip to a museum so that your pupils can take one of those sparks home with them? Well, the following tips are a good place to start...

## 1 Choose carefully

What is it you're looking for with your class trip? From traditional institutions with classical collections to immersive living museums, there is such a broad range of options to choose from. You need to consider your key outcomes, of course, including curriculum links and learning activities, but is there a museum that you haven't considered that might surprise you? Maybe an industrial museum might be the perfect place for an art class to learn about landscapes, or a geological collection might make for the perfect science lesson. Museum staff are incredibly knowledgeable about their collections, and there may be some topics you can explore in unexpected locations. Tap into that – there are hidden gems in museums that will contribute to your overall plan, which staff can help you find.

## 2 Link it to classroom learning

The key here is to use your planned visit in collaboration with your classroom learning – the trip could introduce the topic, provide memorable points for pupils to look back on when they apply their knowledge in later lessons, or it could be a

way to recap what they're studying in school. There's often an array of classroom resources available direct from museum websites. From worksheets to case studies, you can pick and choose highlights that apply to your learning and extend the experience for the class. This has the added bonus of helping to make the in-person trip even more memorable.

Many venues will also bring the experience to you through outreach

sessions.

It might be a workshop, a show, or an object-handling box – there's a host of options available out there. Either on- or off-site, many organisations offer more in-depth workshops



that are developed specifically for school groups, giving pupils access to exclusive activities that aren't available for the general public to try.

### 3 Do your research

A lot of museums offer the opportunity for a free pre-visit trip for the teacher as part of your booking, so make the most of it and check out all the highlights yourself before bringing the class. This is particularly important if a museum collection is vast! Some places have thousands of years of history covered,

while others are much more niche but still packed with objects.

Making an in-person visit will also help you figure out the best use of time on the day. You can get a sense of the venue's layout, see the arrival procedure, and gauge how much time you'll need to physically navigate the space – your lunch area might be a short walk away from the highlight of the trip, for example. As well as being able to maximise every minute of the experience, it will also give you the confidence to brief the other adult helpers attending with

you in advance of your arrival. Plus, it's a handy way to complete your risk assessments for your peace of mind.

### 4 Engage with museum staff

It's not just the objects in the museum that can enlighten and educate your class. Make the most of the museum's knowledgeable front-of-house staff – they absolutely love what they do, and they want to share their passion with you! The most memorable experiences are those that feel the most personal, and there's nothing like a human

***"Make the most of the museum's knowledgeable front-of-house staff – they absolutely love what they do and they want to share their passion with you!"***



interaction for that. It could just be one object that a room guide points out or a little bit of context about a particular sculpture in a gallery, but often these become key takeaways for pupils (and teachers! alike).

In the case of living museums, there is nothing like the experience of learning from a costumed demonstrator. Standing in their "living room" and hearing their story is extremely compelling and can add so much colour to pupils' learning. It truly does feel like going back in time.

### 5 Look locally

If you've chosen to explore the history of your local area, I'd encourage you to support and visit your local museum. It sounds obvious, but there are so many stories on your doorstep, and there's something particularly special about connecting with the history of your own region. Local museums want to share their region's story far and wide, but it's especially important for them to connect with their neighbours, as it's their history being preserved and celebrated after all.

### 6 Share your experiences

Museums love to hear from you! Your insights and thoughts about your experience are invaluable. Were there aspects of the trip you thought could be better? Are there any practical elements that the museum hasn't got quite right? You're the experts after all, and museums are open to working alongside schools to do everything they can to improve and enhance their offer. They also love to hear when the class has had a great time too!

While it's hard to predict what that little piece of magic might be in your next trip, hopefully some of these tips will set you up for an amazing visit that's full of sparks of inspiration for your pupils and which will give them cherished memories for years to come.



***Hannah Brown is the audiences and communications manager at Black Country Living Museum, a living history experience and top school trip destination in Dudley, West Midlands***

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## 5 REASONS TO VISIT // DAY TRIPS

# Black Country Living Museum

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## 1 Step back in time

Immerse your pupils in the past as you explore the Museum's historic site. Step into recreated shops, houses, and industrial workshops with real objects and stories to explore.

Travel through the eras, including the Victorian times, 1940s wartime Britain, and even the swinging 1960s.

## 2 Meet historic characters

Knowledgeable historic characters in

### GOOD TO KNOW

This award-winning open-air museum tells the story of one of the very first industrialised landscapes in Britain across 29 acres of exhibits.

full costume bring the past to life. You'll meet all kinds of people, from Edwardian shopkeepers and chemists to 1960s midwives and hairdressers. Plus, metalworkers and brickmakers bring the region's industry to life with live demonstrations.

## 3 Head into the underground mine

Your Key Stage 2 pupils can experience a journey "into the thick" as they enter the Museum's underground mine. Grab your hard hat and get ready to learn what life was like as a coal miner in the 1850s, especially for 'little Billy', who started when he was just 10 years old.

## 4 Visit a classroom like no other

The Edwardian schoolteacher is waiting, so don't be late. Pupils can get a taste of what school was like in the past. Be prepared, as things were very different back then and the teacher is strict!

## 5 Cover so many subjects

It's not just history that you can explore on a trip to the Black Country Living Museum. From industry and technology to arts and geography, boost your pupils' cultural capital and bring the curriculum to life in this unique outdoor setting.



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# Venturing FORTH

If you want to organise a memorable school trip, you need to talk to the right people as early as possible, advises **Daniel Harvey**

Often, our own holidays and travels can inspire us to take our students out of the classroom and somewhere different, engaging and stimulating that will hopefully provide a compelling experience.

All being well, the environment you've chosen will leave some lasting lessons, as well as perhaps some special memories – that first trip on the London Tube, a boat trip along the Thames, or chortles when remembering that time Mr Smith got drenched as a bus drove too fast through a puddle...

So, you're inspired to get a trip up and running for your students, and have a great idea to suggest. Maybe it's a curriculum-focused visit to the Churchill War Rooms, a viewing of a play at the RSC or a field trip to Kenilworth Castle – what should you do first?

## Notice and cover

The single best way of getting a trip authorised, at the lowest possible cost, is to discuss the purpose and audience of the trip with your school's educational visits co-ordinator (EVC) at the earliest opportunity, having worked out all the details regarding staffing and costs (transport, entry and cover) beforehand.

This will get your trip confirmed on the school calendar at the earliest opportunity, give staff notice of the event and any impact in their classrooms, and provide your school (specifically, the person who organises cover – someone you

should keep sweet at all times) with plenty of time to work out the best way of covering you and any accompanying colleagues.

It also gives your school the chance to work out how best to pay for any bought-in cover, if needed. There will be three options here – you have very nice colleagues who'll happily cover any absences for those

ensure there are no other events in the offing) and unexpected disruption for colleagues. This could result in higher costs for the trip, or a flat refusal for the trip to take place at all. Push too hard and too late, and it could even result in you sustaining reputational damage and make any future trips you plan subject to greater scrutiny.

***"The earlier the trip can be confirmed, the more time you'll have to complete the necessary admin"***

attending; the school pays for cover; or the cover expenses are added to the cost of the trip paid by students' families.

Seeking approval or confirmation for a trip at comparatively late notice can cause a number of issues, such as difficulties booking transport at competitive prices, potential calendar clashes (which is why you should always check your school calendar early on to

## Details and time

Don't get me wrong – every now and then a fantastic opportunity can come along at very short notice. If that happens, then it's incumbent upon you to make leadership and your trips coordinator aware as soon as possible, if you want to improve the chances of the trip being greenlit and given the necessary support.

Working out details early

lets you examine those important details – such as whether the school minibus(es) will be available, along with staff qualified to drive them. It might be possible for support staff to provide such assistance, and potentially attend the trip as staff, thus reducing the cost for students and alleviating cover issues.

The earlier the trip can be confirmed, the more time you'll have to complete the necessary admin your school will need for the trip to be fully authorised – particularly those essential elements, like completing risk assessments and ensuring that a first aider will be in attendance.

School trips are important for letting students experience events or places they wouldn't otherwise get to see, or even know about. A colleague once took some of our students to the coast, one of whom remarked that it was the first time they'd ever seen the sea!

So, to all those staff who organise the trips, provide those unforgettable experiences and leave wonderful memories – I salute you, and thank you. Just make sure

that your school processes are followed at all times, and seek out your EVC at the earliest opportunity to avoid disappointment. Happy travels!



**Daniel Harvey** is a GCSE and A Level science teacher and lead on behaviour, pastoral and school culture at an inner city academy



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# 7 SCHOOL TRIPS

## *you might not have considered*

Like to head off the beaten track? We have just the destinations for you...



1

### PLAYTIME

At the National Videogame Museum, your group can explore how games are made, who makes them, and even why they're made. The fully playable gallery is sure to prove popular.

Visit [thenvm.org](http://thenvm.org)

### STATUARY EDUCATION

Take your budding artists on a trip to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Both teacher- and artist-led educational visits can be booked. Visit [ysp.org.uk](http://ysp.org.uk)



2



### HUNGRY FOR MORE?

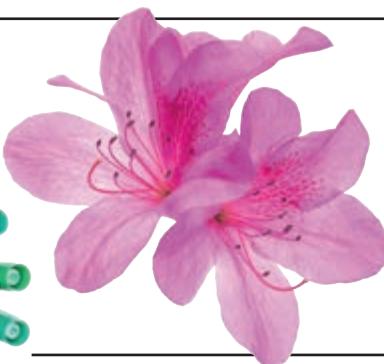
The Food Museum teaches pupils the story of how food is grown, made and eaten. Its 84-acre site features 17 historic buildings, and hands-on activities are available. Visit [foodmuseum.org.uk](http://foodmuseum.org.uk)

4



### ANIMATING TIME

The Cartoon Museum preserves the best of British cartoons, caricatures, comics and animation. Its schools workshops, led by professional artists and writers, take place in a new learning studio. Visit [cartoonmuseum.org](http://cartoonmuseum.org)



5

### GROWING APPEAL

Do your pupils have green fingers? If so, they're sure to be inspired by a trip to Birmingham Botanical Gardens, which offers visitors the chance to learn about more than 10,000 plant species. Visit [birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk](http://birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk)

### CAN YOU KICK IT?

Fans of the beautiful game will relish a day at the National Football Museum. Curriculum-linked learning sessions cover the cultural impact of the sport, its history, and even ball design. Visit [nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://nationalfootballmuseum.com)

6



7

### SEW GOOD

The Fashion and Textile Museum has tours and workshops for primary pupils – could your class design their own collection? Visit [fashiontextilemuseum.org](http://fashiontextilemuseum.org)



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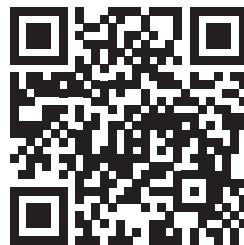
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