



TOP.....! SCHOOL #6 TRIPS

INSIDE

PAST MASTERS

How to get more from museum visits

OUTDOOR INSPIRATION

Explore art and design in nature

DIY RESIDENTIALS

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HERE TO HELP

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PUSH THE LIMITS!

What kids learn from risk-taking

DAYS TO REMEMBER

30 WAYS TO WOW YOUR PUPILS

teach
PRIMARY



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 to book your **ADVENTURE!**

Hello...

It's an inescapable reality that things have got more expensive for everyone over the last few years, and parents and schools are no exception. When times are tight, the natural reaction is to rein in non-essential spending and focus on the basics, but it's equally important to consider value, as the price tag never offers the full picture. School trips are a case in point. As highlighted in this issue's news pages, recent research shows that days away from the classroom are becoming more expensive, in line with inflation, and that parents are finding it more challenging to fund the opportunities their children are given. In turn, schools are under pressure to source and subsidise visits while carefully managing their own budgets. But while this process requires time and effort as well as money, if you get it right, it is all well spent.

This is where value comes in. Put simply, nothing comes close to enthusing pupils as much about their learning as a great school trip. Nothing gives them better opportunities to develop the skills they'll need to succeed, either. Whether it's a day out a museum or a week spent in the countryside, these are the school days that children remember for the rest of their lives, and for some they might even spark a passion that turns into a career.

The important thing, particularly in the current economic climate, is to make sure you get the very most out of the trips you plan – and that's where *Top School Trips* comes in. Over the following pages, you'll find a host of fantastic places to take your classes, with options to support subjects across the curriculum as well children's personal development. There's also plenty of advice on leading a successful trip wherever you're heading, plus lesson plans to enjoy outside of the classroom. We hope you find it useful!

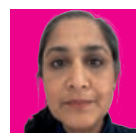
The *Top School Trips* team

— The Experts —



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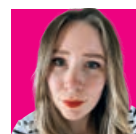
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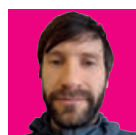
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NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY



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/

GET INSPIRED

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

Generation Green 2

Addressing inequalities in children's access to nature

A £4.5 million project, funded by Defra, has been launched to help more than 25,000 of England's most socially disadvantaged young people to connect with nature. Delivered by a coalition of 24 organisations and authorities, including The Outward Bound Trust, YHA (England and Wales), and National Parks England, Generation Green 2 is set to have provided in excess of 41,500 day and overnight nature connection experiences by the time the project comes to an end in the spring. Research suggests that 18% of children living in the nation's most deprived areas never spend any time in natural space, but there is also extensive evidence linking doing so with increased happiness, a sense of life being worthwhile, and a willingness to act to protect the environment.

FIND OUT MORE

Further information about Generation Green 2, which is building on the first Generation Green project, is available at www.yha.org.uk/generationgreen



"The positive difference Generation Green will make to our collective future cannot be understated."

MARTIN DAVIDSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST

Crushing it

Electrical retailer AO gave one lucky group of children the chance to enjoy a school trip with a difference recently. Having emerged triumphant in a competition, 15 students from secondary school Ysgol Bryn Alyn in Wrexham headed to Telford, the site of one of the biggest fridge recycling plants in Europe, where they were welcomed by CBBC host and sustainability influencer James Stewart. On-site at the state-of-the-art facility, they were introduced to AO's 80-tonne fridge-crushing machine, Bertha, which can 'eat' up to 100 fridges per hour. Rob Sant, AO's group recycling director, came up with the idea for the competition after learning that more than a third of adults in Britain rely on their kids to remind them to recycle. "It's amazing to see kids leading the charge when it comes to recycling, so it was a pleasure to welcome a school class to AO Recycling for the first time ever," Rob said.

Learn more at www.ao.com/recycling





OWL expands

A national scheme offering students the chance to enjoy a residential in the countryside has been extended to Cumbria. The OWL (Outdoor Week of Learning) Collaboration, created by charity The Ernest Cook Trust, supports qualifying schools to send children on an immersive week in nature, as well as providing funding and support to develop their own outdoor learning back at school. Similar opportunities are already available elsewhere in the country, including in Kent, Hampshire, Essex, Somerset, Berkshire and Devon. Each OWL is aimed at targeted schools, to enable those with the highest level of need to benefit. Visit www.ernestcooktrust.org.uk

Grant alert!

Are you looking for financial help with your school trips? If the answer's yes, be sure to investigate Hyundai's Great British School Trip. Since its launch in 2022, the scheme has allocated £1 million of funding to support over 90,000 young people to attend school trips across the UK, and when funding is available, it can be used towards meeting your school trip costs.

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 that have more than 30% of their pupils receiving 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. While applications are closed at the time of writing, more funding is set to be available by February 2025, so be sure to head to www.greatbritishschooltrip.com/bursary to find out more.



Take learning outdoors

CLoTc's National Conference explores the value of escaping the classroom...

November saw the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom's Annual National Conference, which took place at the Meridian Trust's Weldon Village Academy in Corby and welcomed over 300 educators, school leaders and LOfC practitioners from across the UK. Highlights of the day included discussions with Dr Radha Modgil, on the connection between learning and student well-being, focusing on the value of LOfC in fostering pupils' resilience, and the Royal Shakespeare Company's Georgia White and NFER's Luke Boccock, who illustrated how LOfC develops vital skills spanning a range of careers. Attendees were also able to access 25 workshops,



delivered by experts from all LOfC sectors. And there was feedback on the power of residential shared by five Meridian Trust students, who picked out their sense of accomplishment at overcoming their fears and developing teamworking skills. As one put it, "I never would have had the confidence to speak in front of hundreds of people like this before."

Planning is underway for the 2025 conference, due to take place on 12 November at the Royal Armouries in Leeds. You can find out more at www.lotc.org.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

FUNDING SQUEEZE

The average cost of a school day trip is now £28, with residential priced at £430, and a 2024 survey of 1,000 parents by insurer Zurich Municipal has found that 31% feel this is too expensive. Nearly a quarter of respondents reported cutting back to allow their child to attend, while 28% felt guilty for not being able to afford to pay.

MUSIC & MATHS

Music and maths combine in a free workshop at the Royal Albert Hall. Linking to the KS2 curriculum, the 75-minute sessions see pupils exploring fractions, decimals, percentages, graphs and probability.



Children then use what they have learned to create their own piece of music using maths! To find out more about the Hall's Engagement

programme, which provides a range of learning experiences, visit bit.ly/RAHmaths

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/TWschooltrips




JORVIK

VIKING CENTRE



JORVIK DIG



BARLEY HALL

EVERY MAGICAL MINUTE

Explore the animal kingdom

With exciting workshops, incredible creatures and expert-led tours, Knowsley Safari brings learning to life. . .



MEMORABLE MOMENTS
Want a closer look at the playful baboons? Book Knowsley's Baboon Bus Tour for an unforgettable up-close encounter!

10:30 am

Start your adventure with a guided tour through Knowsley's five-mile Safari Drive! Get close to camels, rhinos, baboons, and lions as expert guides share fascinating facts about the animals you encounter along the way. With fun, interactive tours suitable for all ages, it's the perfect way to explore the park.



11:30am

The park is more than just a Safari Drive – why not enjoy your lunch on the Foot Safari? Home to Amur tigers, Andean bears, giraffes, and many other magnificent animals, it also features rides, play areas, and plenty of picnic benches for a bite to eat.

12:00pm

It's time to enjoy the sea lion display – a must-see for school groups, offering an engaging and educational experience. Perfect for children of all ages, the display showcases the intelligence and agility of these amazing animals, providing an exciting way to learn about marine life and conservation.

12:45pm

Next, soar down to the birds of prey display and get close to some incredible avians. Pupils can watch them feed, fly, and swoop inches above their heads. Learn

about vultures, nature's vital scavengers: their crucial role in the ecosystem, unique adaptations, and feeding habits.

1:15pm

Dive into a Discovery Workshop! Whether you're in one of the park's safari classrooms or out exploring the Foot Safari, pupils will learn about exciting topics that link directly to the national curriculum. Knowsley's expert team will guide you through fun, interactive activities, making learning come to life!

2:15pm

Finally, unwind by exploring the Foot Safari further. Alongside some amazing animals, the nature walk and woodland area offer the perfect setting to reconnect with nature. Let your class enjoy the calming sounds of birds, splash in puddles, spot native species, and stroll past the waterfall for a refreshing well-being boost.

{ BEFORE YOUR GO }

EXPLORE

Head to Knowsley's website to find the perfect package for your visit, from general day trips to specialised experiences like the Aspirations Day programme.

REVIEW

Each trip is tailored to your class's needs. Review the Teacher's Guide and the itinerary you'll receive to ensure everything aligns with your learning goals.

REACH OUT

Feel free to contact the team with your questions. They're always happy to help with any queries or specific requests you may have!

10 OF THE BEST RESIDENTIALS

Make the most of your multi-day stay away from school by choosing the perfect activity centre for your class...



TAKE THE VIRTUAL TOUR!

You can explore every nook of this picturesque, activity-packed centre from the comfort of your desk! Head to www.kingswood.co.uk to take the tour.



Inspiring Learning North Devon

Inspiring Learning North Devon is an adventure-packed activity centre on the beautiful Devon coast in Bideford, offering residentials for UK and international schools and youth groups. The centre can host up to 500 guests in cabins that combine modern conveniences with rustic aesthetics. With wood-cladded buildings, a water sports lake, a vast high ropes course, and an exhilarating water assault course, ILND is uniquely kitted out for young people to go on an adventure immersed in nature.

To find out more, call **0800 655 6564** or email sales@kingswood.co.uk



Mendip Activity Centre

It's time for adventure at Mendip Activity Centre! With over 30 years of experience delivering school activity residentials, 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 residentials 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

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 residentials 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 or email 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

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
or visit www.uksa.org/course/schools-and-groups



ISLAND EXPLORER!

New for 2025, Kingswood has teamed up with the Isle of Wight's biggest attractions – visit www.kingswood.co.uk to find out more.

Kingswood Isle of Wight

Kingswood's Isle of Wight centre in Bembridge covers 100 acres of beautiful fields and woodlands in a superb cliff-top location, with direct beach access to Whitecliff Bay. Located in a Site of Special Scientific Interest on the Jurassic coast, this centre is perfect for learning outside the classroom and an unforgettable adventure in the great outdoors. For the ultimate IoW experience, choose the new Island Explorer programme, which features five days of adventure activities, fun and an excursion of your choice.

For more information, call **0800 655 6564**
or email sales@kingswood.co.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



Conway Centres

With four centres located across North Wales and Cheshire, Conway Centres offers the perfect locations for schools to come together and make lifelong memories. New for this year, Conway Centres have introduced 6 brand-new programmes that are all low on cost and big on outdoor learning. The programmes have been carefully crafted to ensure schools get the most out of your residential experience! Whether you ascend into adventure or let classmates connect – there is something for every primary school. Ready to experience new adventure?

Visit www.conwaycentres.co.uk or email conwaycentres@edsential.co.uk.



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), sports tours

(edwindoran.com), ski trips

(skibound.co.uk), expeditions

(weareworldchallenge.com) and

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

[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

DECADES OF EXPERIENCE

Experience Education's educational travel brands have been on a mission to provide unforgettable school trips for over 40 years, both at home and abroad.

Farms for City Children

Farms for City Children exists to remove the barriers that prevent children and young people having meaningful access to the natural world. We support over 3,300 young people each year to enjoy a life-changing, immersive residential on one of our three heritage farms in Devon, Gloucestershire, and Pembrokeshire for up to 39 children aged between eight and 18 years, across a Monday-Friday visit. Inclusion is at the heart of all it does, and the charity welcomes young people from city, rural, and coastal communities across England and Wales, particularly focusing on serving those who experience significant deprivation and disadvantage.

Visit www.farmsforcitychildren.org, email bookings@farmsforcitychildren.org or call 01392 276381



DIVE INTO OUR CHOCOLATEY WORLD OF LEARNING



Get your class exploring our range of curriculum-linked sessions - including **The Maya**, **Bean to Bar** and our brand new **Creative Language** workshop - for a fun and fascinating dive into the world of Cadbury.

BOOK NOW AT
cadburyworld.co.uk





LEARNING JOURNEYS

Session 1 – The Maya talk

Pupils will be introduced to the great city of Chichen Itza and discover the Mayan myths and legends about how humans were created. They will also see real-life cocoa pods filled with the cocoa beans that were so valuable to the Maya around AD 900, as well as the wooden whisk they used to make their favourite chocolate drink, xocolatl.

Session 2 – NEW Creative Language Workshop

Pupils will utilise their knowledge of language to create a persuasive advertisement for a product of their own design. They will look at past adverts and discover ways to describe and persuade viewers to desire their product. They will work in teams to create the most engaging tagline and use descriptive verbs and adjectives to convince the rest of their class their product is the best.

Session 3 – Design and Technology Workshop

Pupils will discover the fascinating process by which Cadbury develops new chocolate bars and learn how both wrappers and advertisements are linked to the design of each bar. They'll also take a closer look at Cadbury's packaging and how it's evolved over the past 100 years, work in small groups to design their own wrapper, and see real-life chocolate moulds used in the Cadbury factory at Bournville.



WE LOVE TO LEARN

It's choc-full of discovery!

Explore history, design and much more with a day out at Cadbury World

With over 32 years' experience and more than 2,000 school groups attending each year, Cadbury World offers unique educational trips that provide a fascinating insight into the nation's favourite chocolate brand. There's an assortment of interactive chocolatey zones to explore and a variety of informative curriculum-linked talks and workshops, including Bean to Bar, the Maya, and Design and Technology.

The one-hour talks and workshops complement your group's day out perfectly, expanding pupils' knowledge on a range of topics. Self-guided tours are also available, currently priced from just £9.20 per pupil, with one adult admitted free for every eight children. All of this makes Cadbury World the perfect day out for schools. To find out more and to book, visit the website quoted below.

CURRICULUM LINKS



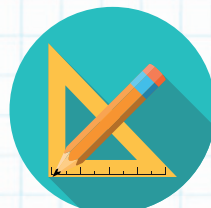
HISTORY

In Bull Street, the Cadbury Story and the Bournville Experience zones, uncover the philanthropy of the Cadbury family, and how their beliefs created a holistic approach to industry.



GEOGRAPHY

Explore the Aztec jungle and uncover the journey of the cocoa bean all the way from South America to Europe and into the heart of Victorian England.



D&T

Throughout the tour, discover how the manufacture of chocolate has changed since Cadbury made its first bar, and how chocolatiers made chocolate by hand in the past.

www.cadburyworld.co.uk

Impactful primary school trips with NST

wow moments that matter

At NST, we've been creating **real-life learning, textbook-affirming, friendship-building, confidence-boosting, WOW moments that matter** for over 55 years.

Let's start making wow moments for your pupils today.



55+ years' experience



Widest choice of visits & destinations



Dedicated travel & subject experts



Externally certified Safety Management System



Fully ABTA & ATOL protected



Online school trip organiser for easy admin

6 REASONS TO CHOOSE AN...

NST Primary School trip

WOW moments await for pupils with expertly designed trips to support and enhance KS2 learning

1 Tailor-made every time
NST's Educational Travel Advisers are experts in creating the perfect school trip. By crafting 100% tailor-made itineraries that suit your learning goals and curriculum, they will work with you to create a bespoke experience that delivers those real-life learning, independence-developing, friendship-building, confidence-boosting moments of WOW!

2 Trips to suit your budget

NST offers a wide range of primary trips to suit any budget, including free visits at many of their destinations. Their tailor-made itineraries ensure you get maximum value for money while providing a fantastic learning experience. With NST, your budget stretches further as well as your pupils ensuring an unforgettable trip with no compromising on quality.

3 Support every step of the way

When you book with NST, you'll be supported every step of the way with their externally certified Safety Management System. SMS provides 24-hour emergency cover, audited accommodation and transport, excursions and school visit assessments, plus group leader preview visits. You can access your paperwork online and in one place with NST's award-winning online school trip organiser, My Tour Manager, ensuring your trip is smooth, stress-free, and fully supported throughout.

**IN BRIEF**

NST has over 55 years' experience in providing primary school trips in the UK and overseas that deliver immeasurable benefits and lasting memories for pupils.



4 Financial peace of mind

With thousands of school trips delivered, NST is the trusted choice for educational travel. You can be assured that you are financially protected with NST from the moment you book, as your trip will be fully protected through ABTA & ATOL. This is the best way to protect parents' money – remember, if you book directly, you may not be covered.

5 A wide range of destinations

NST offers primary school trips across the UK and Europe to help prepare KS2 pupils for their transition into secondary school. You'll be spoilt for choice with their impressive range of visits and

experiences. From inspiring pupils with brand new surroundings in Northern France to visiting fun-filled galleries in London, WOW moments will await them around every corner.

6 Château d'Ebblinghem

NST's exclusive accommodation in Northern France offers a safe and secure environment within private grounds that's perfect for your pupils' first overseas trip. The château features four buildings with en-suite rooms for both pupils and teachers. Immerse them in a new culture through experiences like visiting a traditional goat farm, exploring nearby towns, and practising French at the boulangerie – all while NST provides support throughout the trip.

Leap into LEARNING



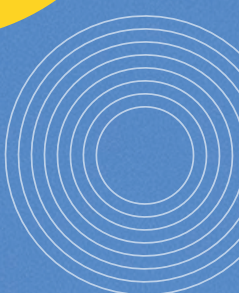
Take the
stress out of
school trips with
**TRIP
PLANNER**

Giving them the skills to thrive through transition and beyond

We all know the challenges of the back-to-school period, whether it's the transition from primary to secondary or into the next year group. Students are faced with the challenge of navigating new spaces, new people and a new curriculum.

Studies have shown that outdoor adventure residential trips are more effective than school-based induction programmes; that they can improve academic engagement and even attendance. This is why our outdoor adventure education programmes are curriculum-infused and Skills Builder-accredited, designed to instil skills that help them to thrive in these formative weeks.

sales@kingswood.co.uk | 0800 655 6564



**CHANGEMAKER
BUSINESS**





LEARNING JOURNEYS

Challenge by choice

Facilitating adventurous learning in a nurturing, friendly and safe way is exactly what Kingswood does. Children are empowered to make their own decisions about taking on activity challenges. Expanding comfort zones is effective when children feel supported. Taking an informed risk and trying something perceived as difficult, such as jumping off the Leap of Faith, with full support of peers, teachers and instructors, is where personal growth really happens.

NEW for 2025 – Impact reports

Kingswood’s impact questionnaire provides schools with a validated measure of an individual’s resilience and wellbeing following their programme. It’s a unique way to track the impact of your visit on children’s abilities to adapt to new challenges and maintain their psychological wellbeing. This measure was developed by UK academics in positive psychology and education and is a valuable tool for teachers to evidence pupils’ holistic learning arising from residential visits for OEAP and Ofsted.

Rope of Resilience module

This new evidence-informed module can be incorporated into your residential and is designed to build the resilience of young people. It uses the idea of a tightrope to represent that resilience is a personal journey of positive adaptation developed through actively facing challenges. A thicker rope helps us to maintain our balance as we face things that may unsettle us. Our ropes are made up of strands of soft skills that protect us from stress and promote learning.

*Subject to availability

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School trips aren’t just to celebrate the end of Year 6. For over 40 years, Kingswood has been inspiring children to grow in resilience and improve their wellbeing through nature connectedness and experiential adventure. Learning through outdoor play offers unmatched opportunities for children to discover more about themselves, overcome challenges, and expand their comfort zones.

Outdoor adventure experiences introduced early on in an academic year foster deeper relationships, to the value of ‘half a term’. According to research by Learning Away, *71% of KS2 pupils said that because of their residential, they got on better with the other pupils in class.* Teachers also reported increased progress in learning and improved motivation, through pupils becoming more aware of their strengths.

Reader offer: Top School Trips readers can save 10% on school trips taken in September and October 2025 by quoting TOPTRIPS10*

CURRICULUM LINKS



BUILDING SKILLS

Kingswood’s programmes develop eight key skills: listening, speaking, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, leadership, and teamwork.



PE

Its 11 centres offer activity choices spanning water sports to archery. By developing resilience and teamwork, children feel more comfortable taking part in PE back at school.



GEOGRAPHY

Themed environmental sessions linked to the centres’ locations range from exploration and field studies to sustainability and minibeasts.





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4 REASONS TO TRY // JCA

JCA School Residential Adventures

At JCA, teachers receive exceptional support from dedicated instructors, fostering inclusive environments where education and adventure combine

1 Passionate instructors

Students are at the heart of the JCA experience. A unique 1:12 instructor-to-student ratio, with each remaining with their groups from start to finish, ensures a seamless and supportive environment.

2 The JCA experience

It's the little things that make a big difference, which is why JCA invest so much in their activities. From the cutting-edge safety systems of their high-aerial treks to the creation of chest-deep lakes for watersports to

support children's confidence on the water, every detail is geared towards providing an exceptional experience.

3 A lifetime of memories

Blending education with excitement, promoting new skills, personal development, and – above all – unforgettable fun, JCA's tailored programme of LOfC-approved activities make your little learners want to stay even longer!

4 Preparing pupils for the future

JCA goes beyond the traditional. In

partnership with the School of Coding and AI, take part in pioneering workshops bringing cutting-edge learning to residential and activity days.

At a glance

+ For three decades, JCA has been at the forefront of children's development through unforgettable residential experiences.

+ Primary schools trust JCA for their secure environments, providing peace of mind to teachers and parents.



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JCA

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"The instructors were amazing. All staff were so helpful, including in the canteen and the office staff. The food was lovely! The amount of activities on offer is fantastic and the children had an experience they will always remember."
Exning Primary School



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7 REASONS TO CHOOSE...

Condover Hall

Providing school residential trips for over 30 years, JCA's flagship activity centre truly sets the bar

1 Choose from over 40 activities

With over 40 thrilling indoor and outdoor challenges, Condover Hall promises non-stop excitement. From archery and raft building to abseiling and kayaking, each one offers students chances to learn, grow, and develop, whether it's fostering teamwork through engaging problem-solving tasks or conquering personal fears on the high ropes.

2 High-quality instructors

With a dedicated instructor-to-child ratio of 1:12, JCA ensures each group has personalised support throughout their stay at Condover Hall. This continuity allows instructors to understand students' strengths and areas for growth, creating a nurturing, safe environment in which students can confidently take on new challenges, developing their resilience, leadership skills and self-assurance.

3 School of Coding workshops

While JCA has built its reputation on providing unrivalled outdoor adventures, they understand the importance of preparing students to be the next generation of tech leaders. In collaboration with the School of



GOOD TO KNOW

Condover Hall Activity Centre is also home to junior netball and football weekends, providing the perfect mix of round-robin tournaments and adventure activities.



Coding & AI, they offer tailored coding workshops that engage students of every ability. With four themes to choose from, children can master robotics, programming, and more through a hands-on experience.

4 A secure, supportive environment

Safety is paramount at Condover Hall. Comprehensive protocols create a secure, supportive atmosphere, allowing teachers peace of mind that their students are well cared for. Located in the scenic Shropshire countryside, the centre provides a safe space for children to freely explore, face exciting challenges, and fully engage in activities that foster personal growth, confidence, and development in a nurturing environment.

5 Maximise your activity time

Condover Hall's self-contained grounds ensure that no time is wasted travelling between activities, so students can fully engage in each moment. With everything conveniently on-site – activities, dining, and comfortable

accommodation – children can make the most of their time outside the classroom.

6 SEND-centred itineraries

At Condover Hall, JCA is dedicated to providing unforgettable experiences for SEND schools, with fully accessible facilities, adapted activities, and highly trained instructors, as well as additional free places for essential support staff. From inclusive adventure challenges to sensory-focused programmes, their tailored approach guarantees an enriching, supportive environment where all abilities can thrive, learn, and enjoy memorable outdoor adventures.

7 Loyalty discounts

Teachers can enjoy exclusive loyalty discounts by rebooking their next adventure with JCA before departing Condover Hall! This exclusive offer rewards returning schools and helps streamline future bookings, ensuring more seamless, affordable, and memorable trips with activities everyone will love year after year.



Planting A SEED

Encounters with extraordinary plant life can transport your class and transform their engagement with the science curriculum...

“Science and everyday life cannot and should not be separated.”

“I love this quote from Rosalind Franklin, a chemist, molecular biologist and one of the key figures behind unlocking the structure of human DNA,” says Helen Gill, formal learning and development manager for learning and participation at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. “It sums up what we are trying to do here in the schools team at Kew. My aim is for all learners to view science as something that is for them, to develop

in the south, a string of grand glasshouses and carefully curated gardens make great destinations for school parties. Visiting in person really does imprint a wonder and fascination on pupils. “Botanical gardens have a crucial role to play in supporting pupils to make the connection through the experiences we provide,” says Helen. “Questioning and exploring pupils’ ideas is key to them making that connection and then wanting to know more. We know that learning is a multifaceted experience, and pupils all learn in different ways. In-person school

with these spaces is a sight my team and I never tire of,” says Helen. “We’re fortunate enough to engage with Kew Gardens each and every day – but sharing the wonder of these first-time experiences is something that continues to surprise and delight us all. Nature has the power to stop us in our tracks, engage all of our senses, and make us experience the world in entirely new ways. It’s a real privilege to share these experiences with so many of our young school visitors.”

Curating curiosity

In 2019 Kew Gardens collaborated with Royal Holloway, the University of London and two Inner London primary schools – St Monica’s Catholic Primary School in the Borough of Hackney and Wilberforce Primary School in the Borough of Westminster – to create pupil-curated museums, echoing a common practice in schools in the late 19th and early 20th

“Sharing the wonder of these first-time experiences is something that continues to surprise and delight us all”

their understanding of why plants are important in their lives and here at Kew, and to realise that their actions can make a real difference to current global challenges and those faced in the future.”

Nurturing growth

South West London’s botanical gardens are one of a host of horticultural treasures around the UK, each offering school groups the chance to marvel at the architectural qualities of awesome specimens while learning about the incredible complexity, diversity and adaptability of our planet’s plant life. From Inverness Botanic Gardens in the north to the Eden Project

visits provide an invaluable opportunity for learning beyond the classroom, for broadening horizons, and for framing education in new and dynamic contexts. The experiences stick: many of the teachers and parents who accompany the pupils regularly comment on their memories of visiting when they were at school, and what they found out about.”

Stepping into a soaring glasshouse, sensing the warm air on one’s skin, feeling moist leaves and smelling the scent of flowers, foliage and even mulchy growing mediums is an immersive experience that botanical collections excel at. “Seeing how our school visitors interact



centuries. Inspired by their visits to Kew's permanent collection artefacts, pupils collected and created exhibits connected to a whole range of curriculum topics for Key Stages 1 and 2, including science, geography, history, arts and languages. "The headteacher of one of the schools involved said that the visit to us provided the opportunity to enrich children's lives through the relationship with Kew Gardens," says Helen. "I would agree; pupils didn't realise that places like Kew Gardens have museum collections. Incorporating what they discovered here and the museums pupils created back at school provided us with the opportunity to develop

a resource to support teachers and pupils in creating their own museum using plant-based objects. The project certainly increased awareness of the importance of plants in our everyday lives and engaged pupils, teachers, parents, carers, and the wider community on why plants matter."

The team at Kew also took part in the Science Capital in Practice initiative from 2019 to 2020, a collaboration between the Science Museum and the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres. "As one of 15 UK science museums and centres involved, we worked to develop a community of good practice for increasing diversity and inclusion in science by applying a science capital-informed

approach," says Helen. "In taking part in such

initiatives, our aim is to provide up-to-date training for Kew teachers and to embed the most pertinent elements of science capital-oriented thinking in our education sessions and the resources we offer online."

"These elements include science literacy: the promotion of attitudes and values required for science to be inclusive, communicating about people in science-related jobs, and encouraging pupils to talk to others about science. To date, our work in this regard has reached over 30,000 pupils. And school groups continue to learn and discover the world of science behind our botanical collections during their visit. With over 50,000 living plants across our UNESCO World Heritage site, what they discover and learn about becomes an integral part of that memory."

Always valued for their magical ability to transport visitors into entirely new ecosystems, botanical collections play an increasingly active role in preserving, exploring and advocating for the delicate wild habitats that link to many aspects of the science curriculum: identifying wild and garden plants; describing basic structures; spotting seasonal changes; learning the basics of the

life cycle of plants... There are other connected gains too. "Kew encompasses a rich history alongside pioneering scientific and horticultural research," says Helen, "which we employ every day to care for and understand our vast living collection and present solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing humanity at the moment. Among them are the climate crisis and food security, which are two of Kew's top priorities. Sessions are curriculum-linked, so that the experience is as stimulating and relevant to classrooms as possible, whether it's setting foot into the mysterious, tropical world of the Palm House for the first time, understanding the importance of pollinators, or finding out more about some of the world's most endangered plants in the Temperate House."


GROWING WILD

- Pre-booked sessions around science and gardening are free at all five RHS gardens. Experienced education officers are available to lead visits, or schools are welcome to self-guide. Expect purpose-built learning studios and teaching gardens alongside main attractions.
- More than 50,000 pupils a year visit the Eden Project as part of a school trip or workshop. Entrance costs from £6.40 per pupil for a self-guided visit. An extensive range of on-site workshops are available for classes from EYFS to Key Stage 2 and beyond.
- Alnwick Gardens in Northumberland offers four free pupil tickets for every paying adult. Entrance includes admission to the Poison Garden, which can be accessed by guided groups of up to 20 people. Booking online is recommended.



Helen Gill is formal learning and development manager for learning and participation

at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

 @kewgardens

 kew.org



Forestry England

A classroom with no walls



Enjoy Forestry England's brand-new resource, Ranger in a Bag.

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For more information please visit forestryengland.uk/ranger-bag and find a forest near you.





LEARNING JOURNEYS

Ranger in a Bag

This brand-new learning resource is the perfect tool for a self-guided visit. Ranger in a Bag is suitable for preschool and primary-aged children and has everything you need for a fun-filled forest adventure, all zipped up in a handy rucksack. The bags are based around a role/career in Forestry England with clear learning outcomes that link to the national curriculum.

Self-guided visits

Forests are natural classrooms – the perfect place for hands-on learning. Take your class on a self-guided visit and the time is yours, allowing for free play, exploration and child-led discoveries. The forest is also the perfect setting for role-play and scenarios, a fantastic way to encourage creativity and inspire their minds. Free downloadable resources can also extend the life of your trip.

Guided visits

If a self-guided visit is not for you, Forestry England has a variety of guided visits on offer across its forests. These range from bushcraft to forest ecology and learning about forests and climate change. Whatever the session, these hands-on activities led by Forestry England staff or third-party providers excite and engage your students. Head to the website to discover what's on offer at a forest near you.

WE LOVE TO LEARN

A classroom with no walls

Reconnect with nature in a fun-filled forest adventure for every child...

The nation's forests are the perfect place for a school trip. The benefits of children learning outside are well known: it can reduce stress, improve emotional well-being, build resilience, and boost self-confidence. A forest visit allows for all this and much more, while offering a valuable learning experience. With forests all over England there is an opportunity

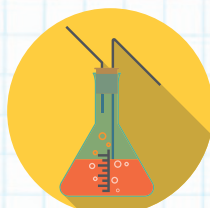
for every school to get involved. Forestry England offers plenty of free downloadable activity ideas to help you plan your perfect class visit. With its great ideas for EYFS and Key Stages 1 and 2, you'll find everything you need to help your pupils to reconnect with nature and build long-lasting friendships in a stimulating but low-stress environment.

CURRICULUM LINKS



GEOGRAPHY

Learn about native woodlands within the temperate forest biome using the geography lesson plan, or study maps and the physical and human processes that shape our environment.



SCIENCE

Learn about our native British trees and how important they are for both people and wildlife. Find out all about the forest cycle, woodland habitats and some fascinating real-life experiences.



PSHE

Help the children in your class develop an appreciation and understanding of the world around us. Reconnect, build relationships and inspire children within a beautiful forest setting.





FOR THE THRILL OF LEARNING



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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 is plenty to keep any class entertained. . .

DID YOU 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 pupils. 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 in the Learning Lab

Enjoy a curriculum-based workshop in the UK's most 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 and conduct experiments using the park's K'Nex coasters. In Ride Programming, children take on the role of engineers to program mini Sky Swinger rides.

3 Walk 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, where riders get a bird's-eye view of the land as they swoop over the kingdom. Take a jeep tour of the park's dinosaurs or even come face to face with a T-rex in the meet-and-eat show.



4 Venture into Wild Lands

Step into Wild Lands and discover a host of birds and animals, set within Paultons Park's own African village. Enjoy the stunning walk-through aviary and get closer than ever to a range of unique birds. In the nocturnal house, pupils can see fennec foxes, sugar gliders, and tiny pygmy mice up close. Outside, children can meet the cheeky meerkats and stunning porcupines, as well as many other mammals.

5 Picnic in beautiful surroundings

Lunch is a key part of any visit! The park boasts several undercover seating areas for hungry pupils. The main seating area can house 450 people. On colder days, heat lamps are available, and the area 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 cedar trees within the park's beautiful gardens.



6 Enjoy the variety

Whether you are finding out about penguins at the daily keeper talk and feed or dropping 25 metres on the thrilling Magma ride, there is so much variety for school groups. Paultons Park has a range of options, whether it's 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.





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Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler



Room on the Broom



Room on the Broom © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 2001 – Macmillan Children's Books



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Adventures in LANGUAGE

Cross-curricular collaboration with a partner school overseas is a powerful way to unlock progress in MFL, as **Marc Bowen** discovered...

It has long been accepted that cross-curricular planning of teaching and learning is an effective way to resolve the competing demands of multiple curriculum areas and limited time. However, languages sometimes remain confined to their own curriculum silo, awaiting innovative pedagogical approaches to set them free. This is where translanguaging comes to the rescue – a powerful approach that can shatter these barriers and result in rich, authentic learning experiences.

The theory

Translanguaging is a pedagogical practice that weaves the use of two languages into the fabric of a single activity. Learners receive information in one language and then engage with that information using another. In the case of my Year 5 learners, this approach was employed to nurture their Spanish language skills while fostering a deeper understanding of cross-cultural connections.

Lighting the language spark

The first step in our translanguaging journey was a conventional three-week unit of English work based on the book *Better Than New* by Broder and Buckley. This fantasy tale set in Argentina is presented bilingually in English and Spanish. After working through the book



as a class, the children wrote individual stories inspired by the text.

Bridging continents

The next leg of our linguistic adventure involved connecting with a class in Argentina through the British Council's school partnering portal. This partnership provided a real-world context and an authentic audience for the learners.

We decided to work on a story exchange project. This would help the Argentinian learners to develop their English, and my class to work on their Spanish. We agreed that our *Better Than New* stories, with their environmental focus, would be ideal for the purpose, as we were aware that similar coastal pollution issues

affect both our countries.

We set up a Padlet (padlet.com) through which our two classes could initially get to know one another, and then work together on the story project, in a safe and managed manner.

Having established a bond with our Argentinian friends, my learners then revised their stories electronically using the online tool Book Creator (bookcreator.com), incorporating short Spanish phrases to mirror the original presentation of the text.

Book Creator was instrumental in giving the children's work a polished, book-like finish with interactive elements, adding an engaging dimension to their learning, as well as a huge sense of pride in their completed publication.

Expert advice

As I'm not a fluent Spanish speaker I knew that external language mentoring would be extremely useful while working on the story exchange, so I contacted one of our local universities to see if they might be able to help us out.

The result was astounding. We received a full-day visit from a third-year language undergraduate, who worked with each of the children in the class to ensure the grammatical accuracy of

their Spanish inclusions, as well as helping to teach them more about Spanish vocabulary and sentence structure. At the end of this experience, the children were confident in the Spanish they had included, and extremely proud of what they had achieved.

Interestingly, this was the most motivated I'd seen many of my pupils in relation to language learning. I think it had a lot to do with having a defined 'real world' audience of Argentinian friends who the children really wanted to impress, as well as a fluent language role model to support them with the task.

Beyond language

The journey didn't end with language skills; it extended into collaborative exploration of subjects like history and geography. The children, now armed with enhanced Spanish proficiency, collaborated with their Argentinian counterparts to study the migration of Welsh settlers to Argentina during the 1800s. This interdisciplinary approach fostered a deeper understanding of both language and culture.



Marc Bowen is a deputy head and primary teacher in South Wales. You

can contact him at marc.bowen@raglan.schoolsedu.org.uk

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6 THINGS TO DO AT...



Conway Centres

With three locations nestled in the Cheshire countryside and one beneath the Snowdonian Mountain range, there's an option for every primary school

1 Conway Discover

Use the Cheshire centres to take your classroom outdoors while expert tutors introduce pupils to essential outdoor skills such as orienteering. In wellies and raincoats or sun hats and shorts, this cost-effective programme is the perfect opportunity for young people to discover the great outdoors from an early age. The cosy Cheshire centres are a home from home for first-time residential visitors. Perfect for KS1 students.

GOOD TO KNOW...

Conway Centres' brand new programmes are low on cost, big on outdoor learning, and make booking a residential trip easier than ever.

2 Conway Explore

Branch out and explore the Cheshire countryside with this jam-packed residential that offers children the perfect chance to build a love of the wilderness. Creating art in the outdoors, exploring nature through pond dipping, developing leadership skills with orienteering – all day-time activity sessions are led by expert tutors and have been carefully crafted to make the most of the outdoor environment. Great for older KS1 students.

3 Conway Ascend

Take the leap with the Conway Ascend programme at Tattenhall, which offers an exciting opportunity for young children to experience high adventure – literally! Whether ascending the Tree Climb or reaching new heights on the zip wire, young people will develop new skills, work together, and find a love for adrenaline-filled adventure outdoors. This programme is perfect for schools seeking a blend of adventure and exploration. Recommended for lower KS2.

4 Conway Outdoors

Are you looking for a low-cost residential with all the benefits of



outdoor learning? From beach study to bushcraft, Conway Outdoors encourages pupils to immerse themselves in nature in Anglesey by combining a visit to a local attraction with activities that support your school's goals or learning theme. Spending time outdoors is an opportunity that every young person should have, which is why Conway Centres has made it easier and more cost-effective than ever.

5 Conway Connect

The popular multi-activity Conway Connect programme focuses on boosting teamwork, forging friendships, and improving communication. Cheering on their peers on the zip wire, building a multi-person raft to set sail on the strait, and supporting each other up the low-ropes wall – with these engaging activities, young people will work together to reach their shared goals.



6 Conway Ultimate

The Conway Ultimate programme is ideal if you're looking for something for thrill-seekers! This jam-packed adventure residential gives pupils access to a wide range of the most exciting activities, including an off-site day. Whether it is adventuring in canoes, gorge walking in Geirionydd in the hills of Betws y Coed, or sailing the straits, what better way for your Year 6s to celebrate the end of their primary school journey than with the ultimate adventure?



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After lunch in the indoor picnic areas (space will be reserved for you), it's time to explore over 200 intriguing things to do across two floors of interactive exhibits and ask questions or chat with the engaging Live Science team.

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PARTNER CONTENT

{ BEFORE YOU GO }

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Speak to the team about the package deal of entry, workshop and a Planetarium show to save money.

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The information prepared by the education team will help you get the most from your trip.

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Get in touch about a free teacher visit once you've booked to check out We The Curious first hand before the big day.

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

Image credit: Lisa Whiting



Should we promote taking risks in school?

Forest school can be a perilous business, but that is where its value lies

Schools are places where the safety and wellbeing of children are of paramount importance, and rightly so. But how does this fit in with encouraging children to take risks – often ones that could result in physical harm – in outdoor environments?

This was often a preoccupation of mine when I started out as a forest school leader seven years ago and is still at the forefront of my mind in every session I lead.

Of course, every effective forest school leader will have well-written risk assessments in place for everything from fire-lighting, through chopping wood with an axe and building a shelter, to climbing a tree. However, as is always the case in schools, in practice things are rarely such plain sailing.

I recall a session where I had to keep one eye on the capture of a millipede (the holy grail of minibeasts on our site!), while simultaneously keeping the other on a child who was whittling a stick with a sharp knife. I did contemplate taking the knife from the pupil so that I could look away. But I chose not to.

Should we encourage our children to

take risks like this? Couldn't we simply teach about trees and the changing seasons in the safety of a classroom? Why not ask children to read about the ever-elusive millipede in a book, rather than making them hunch quietly by an overturned log in the pouring rain waiting for one to scuttle past?

For us as forest school leaders, the benefits must outweigh the risks. Our starting point is always to assess the likelihood of harm and how severe that harm could be, and then balance it against the potential rewards of the outcomes from the activity. If, after an assessment, an activity is judged as high risk but beneficial, then measures will be put in place to mitigate the risks so that the activity can go ahead.

For example, we wear protective clothing when felling a tree, change the adult-to-pupil ratio according to the needs of the children, rig up a shelter when using tools on a rainy day to avoid wet slippery hands, and teach children about keeping a safe distance from a fire. Rather than trying to avoid all 'high-risk' activities, it's about being aware of the risks, and managing them properly.

A compelling reason for allowing

children to take measured risks is to better train and equip them so they can recognise and manage risk throughout their lives. In forest school sessions we actively encourage this for children.

Recently, a group of Year 2 pupils decided to create a slide using pallets. They worked out the angle the pallet needed to be placed at in order for them to land safely on their feet, rather than tumbling into the sandpit with a thump. Apart from the wealth of scientific information they were gathering (why a wet pallet allowed them to travel more quickly than a dry one, and whether their waterproofs or wellies were better for this activity), the children assessed the potential harm and made changes accordingly.

Offering all pupils the opportunity to take risks is fundamentally important, as many of them will not have had the chance to challenge themselves in potentially risky play or learning scenarios before. For those children, their environment may be so carefully managed that forest school is the only place where they are free – and actively encouraged – to take risks.

Early in my teaching career, I recall a parent firmly insisting that I should not allow her child to run in the playground, purely to avoid him ever falling over and hurting himself!

In our woodland area, an environment filled with logs, trees, bushes and long grass, children naturally want to explore. Not only does this environment challenge learners, but a number of other risks may arise due to our changeable weather affecting site conditions. Thus, the children must learn how to respond to dynamic and unpredictable situations safely.

As the outdoors is increasingly seen as an important place for people to spend time in, surely we need to train children how to be safe, while maintaining a healthy interest in exploring? Ironically, for many children, forest school may be the only place where they can 'safely' take risks. So, forest school leaders have a professional (and moral) duty to provide opportunities for this. Through risk-taking, children gain an awareness of their own limits and boundaries and, ultimately, learn how to be safe.

Sabina Khanam is an experienced primary school teacher and forest school leader. She currently teaches Year 2.

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AIRHOP



WE'RE THE EXPERTS

“Pupils will have a fantastic time”

Phillip James explains what makes a school trip to one of AirHop's Adventure & Trampoline Parks a day to remember

What expertise do you have that visitors can draw on?

AirHop Adventure & Trampoline Parks have successfully hosted thousands of school trips over the past 10 years. These have been delivered via a range of school-visit options, including sessions linked to key stage learning, PE/fitness sessions, rewards/fun trips, leaver parties/proms, and team-building experiences.

At AirHop, we have a team of friendly and experienced staff who are always on hand to enthuse, engage, and supervise school groups of any size. There is always at least one member of staff on site who is fully trained in first aid.

What sets your venues apart?

With 26 venues located around the UK, you are never too far from ultimate bouncing fun! Each of our parks offers a range of unique and exciting activities, and large groups of up to 275 children can be accommodated at some venues.

Some AirHop parks have attractions that will put even more of a spring in your pupils' step – for example, check out the giant AirSlides at Bristol, Blackpool and Chelmsford, or the Clip'n Climb zones at Esher, Guildford, Aberdeen and Chelmsford.

Our Blackpool park even has an indoor cave system to explore and its very own bouldering wall!

How do you like to work with visiting groups?

Visiting school groups can choose from a selection of standard packages, or a bespoke session can be created to suit your requirements. At AirHop, we offer everything from free-range jumping and games right through to guided learning that's designed to improve pupils' coordination and balance.



EXPERT PROFILE

Name: Phillip James

Job title: Head of Operations

Area of expertise: Creating enriching and safe experiences for guests

Best part of my job: Seeing the happy faces of all our visitors!

AIRHOP

What feedback have you had from teachers?

Many teachers have shared their positive school trip experiences with us. “We were impressed by how AirHop's activities promoted self-esteem and teamwork among our students,” one said. “They collaborated, supported each other, and grew in confidence throughout the day.” Another told us, “The PE sessions at AirHop were a hit – students got to stay active, have fun, and learn new skills in a dynamic environment. It was a refreshing change from traditional PE lessons.” And this review says it all: “Our school trip to AirHop Trampoline Park was a huge success. The staff were friendly and accommodating, the activities were engaging, and the students had a fantastic time. Thank you for providing us with such a memorable adventure!”

What are the health benefits of trampolining?

What better way to exercise than in a trampoline park! Trampolining isn't just fun, it's good for you too. In fact, bouncing is three times more effective at burning calories than jogging, while reducing the impact on joints and limbs. Research shows there is a positive link between physical activity and improved mental health – exercise reduces stress and releases the body's feel-good chemicals. So a visit to AirHop is good for you all round.

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Full STEAM ahead

An enduring love of science and the arts is within reach of all your pupils, say **Gordon West** and **Amira Mitchell-Karam**

Bringing the arts cohesively into the STEM curriculum, also known as focusing on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and maths), is an educational model that builds the creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills students will need in the 21st century workforce. STEAM is exciting, because it teaches the transferable skills that will be required for jobs in the future, some of which haven't even been invented yet.

Our challenge, then, as teachers, is to find interdisciplinary points that will engage pupils, and inspire them to get excited about the full range of these subjects from a young age; removing the artificial divide between 'scientists' and 'artists'. At our schools, we do this in a variety of ways.

Harnessing the great outdoors

Implementing specialist weeks or terms can ensure a thematic approach in the way educators deliver the primary school curriculum. Our group of schools has a long-standing commitment to promoting environmental sustainability; this will therefore be the overarching learning theme of our STEAM Integrated Learning Week at Dame Bradbury's Junior School. For our youngest pupils, this emphasis on sustainability has seen them being tasked with planting and labelling wildflower seeds and vegetables in the school garden, with biodiversity in mind.

School gardens offer children the opportunity to practise their design and woodwork skills through

practical explorations with materials, for example, when creating bug hotels or compost heaps. The latter offer an opportunity to learn all about worms, decomposition and how compost forms. In outdoor spaces, older children can explore STEAM more creatively, by engaging their artistic skills to create willow domes and then using maths to work out the circumference of each structure.

By encouraging children across the school to learn from and engage in shared outdoor areas, these spaces become more significant to all the pupils, helping them to understand the science behind natural processes, as well as being inspired by the beauty in nature.

Art and design

Guided projects can help to challenge young children's perception of art and design and enable them to express themselves while experimenting and practising problem solving. For example, at Dame Bradbury's Junior School, as part of the National Gallery's Take One Picture school programme, we host an annual creative exhibition at the local Bridge End Gardens in Saffron Walden, to showcase pupils' multi-disciplinary responses to a famous painting.

By offering a range of materials to work with, these design-led initiatives encourage children to get creative and experiment with all sorts of different media,



including digital animations and pottery, poetry, drama and even soundscapes.

Art doesn't just encompass visual art – it includes music, too. If your school has a peripatetic music teacher, why not invite them to come and give a demonstration of different instruments, such as the trumpet or violin, to help pupils understand the science of sound?

Girls' Olympiad

Sadly, in the UK, it is still the case that fewer girls than boys choose to study science subjects, particularly physics, at KS5 and beyond.





Entering local science tournaments is an engaging way to foster a love of science at an early stage. Both of our junior schools are lucky to be able to send pupils to our local STEM Olympiad for Year 5 girls in Suffolk. The tournament consists of mathematics, science and engineering challenges, in which teams of girls are tasked to work together to tackle interesting problems, with the chance to win awards in each category as

“Children have an innate sense of curiosity and often learn best when they are able to relate their learning to what they see every day”

well as the overall award.

Not only does the tournament challenge pupils to use their teamwork, scientific and problem-solving skills, it also encourages girls’ enthusiasm for science subjects. In addition, it enables more female pupils to be recognised for their scientific skills, encouraging representation and recognition for girls in STEM subjects from a young age.

Bringing STEAM to life

Children have an innate sense of curiosity and often learn best when they are able to relate their learning to what they see every day. At our schools, we encourage the children to follow their own lines of enquiry to learn more about the science behind everyday processes.

For example, our pupils recently honed their engineering skills while investigating how insulating materials can keep our drinks warm. The children designed and made their own ‘keep cups’ with sleeves, before being able to enjoy a hot chocolate in their finished work.

We have found that one of the most exciting ways for pupils to further develop these kinds of independent thinking and investigative skills is by hosting our own annual STEM competition for pupils across both of our schools. Teams carry out their own independent research projects, with prizes offered to those who show the most impressive teamwork, the ability to communicate most clearly what they did and discovered, and the firmest grasp of the scientific method.

Championing both male and female role models in STEAM careers means that all pupils can understand what it means to have a successful career in science, art and maths. Drawing on the experience of local scientists or artists from the wider school community can help to demonstrate how science and the arts are essential not only for doctors or engineers, but for other careers, too.

Exposing children to STEAM activities from a young age is a brilliant way to emphasise the importance of problem-solving and independent thinking. Learning about science experiments may be important, but knowing how to use this knowledge effectively is what will enable pupils to thrive.

STEAM IN SCIENCE WEEK

This year’s theme is ‘time’...

- Visit your local museum to look at historic exhibits, artefacts and scientific objects to draw together the links between science, history and time.
- Investigate the science that takes place at this time of year – what is happening as nature changes and evolves?
- Go back in time: research and learn about the extinction of the dinosaurs, or inventions in the industrial revolution.
- Learn how to make time-measuring devices such as sundials. Explore how sundials and clocks were decorated in the past and try recreating some of the designs.
- Get pupils to think about science experiments from a different angle. How can we focus on the time aspect of a chemical reaction, for example?
- Explore historical monuments in your local area and ask pupils to discuss how they may have evolved over time.
- Organise a live demonstration: local science centres and museums often have education specialists who will do school visits.
- Invite a parent, colleague or local expert or science figure to come and speak to pupils about their science-related job or hobby.



Gordon West is head of science 5–11 at Stephen Perse Cambridge Junior School.



Amira Mitchell-Karam is head of STEAM at Dame Bradbury’s Junior School, Saffron Walden.

Saffron Walden.



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DID YOU KNOW?

We The Curious is packed with engaging activities for learners – its two floors are host to over 200 things to do!

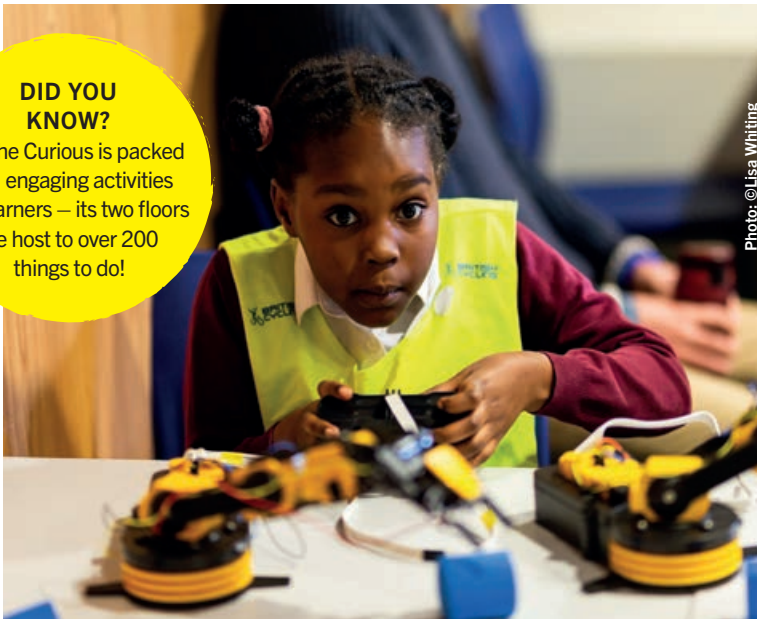


Photo: ©Lisa Whiting

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, which reopened this summer. 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 or visit www.wethecurious.org

Birmingham Stage — Horrible Histories

HORRIBLE HISTORIES is touring the country with its live stage productions of TERRIBLE TUDORS and AWFUL EGYPTIANS. Using actors and amazing 3D special effects, these two acclaimed shows are suitable for pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2 to help you cover the national curriculum. All venues have daytime performances and reduced prices for school groups. In the words of the *Times Educational Supplement*, "Mortgage the school if you have to! No child or adult should be denied the chance to see this: live theatre and history at its rip-roaring best."

For your nearest venue and to download teacher packs, visit www.birminghamstage.com

**Chessington World of Adventures**

Chessington offers a school trip on the wild side, with amazing rides and attractions for all ages and 1,000 animals of many different shapes and sizes. Pupils can step into Britain's Wildest Classroom and experience engaging educational workshops for every key stage, covering subjects such as classification, adaptation, conservation and much more. Whether you're planning an educational trip to teach pupils about the animal kingdom or an end-of-year treat, there is something for everyone. Schools can enjoy two free teacher tickets upon payment to visit the resort and plan their school trip, and also take advantage of a 'book now, pay later' scheme.

For more information, email cwschools@chessington.co.uk or visit www.chessington.com/schools

National Holocaust Museum

Give your Y5 and 6 pupils the opportunity to explore the emotional journey of Leo, a 10-year-old Jewish boy fleeing Nazi Germany on the Kindertransport in 1938. Using a variety of artefacts and testimony from survivors, Leo's journey raises important questions about identity, friendship, and the treatment of refugees. It also explores the impact of prejudice and isolation and promotes British values like democracy, tolerance, and mutual respect. This workshop covers key social and historical issues, offering a powerful way to help your students grow as responsible, open-minded citizens. To book, email bookings@holocaust.org.uk or call **01623 836 627** for more info. Tickets are free for schools with a Pupil Premium above 25%.



CLASSROOM RESOURCES

The National Holocaust Museum has developed an interactive story app for Y5–6, based on its award-winning 'The Journey' exhibition.



Celtic Harmony Camp

Travel back to ancient Britain at Celtic Harmony Camp, the outdoor Prehistory centre in Hertfordshire. Featuring seven roundhouses located in a tranquil woodland setting, the centre invites pupils to journey from Stone to Iron Age with costumed educators. There's a range of day and residential trips to bring classroom learning to life. Children can train as Boudicca's Celtic warriors, grind grain as Iron Age farmers, build dens as Neolithic hunter-gatherers and get creative with cave art, covering over a million years of Prehistory in a day! Teachers return year upon year to bring new groups to experience the "brilliant and immersive" activities on offer. Check availability and secure your WOW Prehistory trip at www.celticharmony.org

Paultons Park

Award-winning Paultons Park is the ultimate venue for school visits, with over 70 exhilarating rides and attractions, all set in beautiful gardens, plus a fine selection of birds and animals. Whether your focus is learning, reward, or a mixture of both, the dedicated education team will be on hand every step of the way. Schools can supplement their visit with a workshop in the Learning Lab, where a range of topics are covered, including forces, programming, literacy and cross-curricular STEM. All workshops are linked to the park and rides. From planning visits to a 'pay after' facility, booking is simple.

For more information, email Education@paultons.co.uk or visit www.paultonspark.co.uk/tickets/school-trips



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 or visit www.knowsleysafariexperience.co.uk/education



Young V&A

Embark on a journey through the ancient past to the modern day with your students and discover the stories of Ancient Egypt's makers, myths and gods in Young V&A's second exhibition, Making Egypt. The exhibition opens on 15 February and is free for schools. Children will encounter creative works spanning over 5,500 years, uncover the landscapes, stories and people that inspired ancient Egypt's creativity, get hands-on with deciphering hieroglyphics and designing their own amulets, and explore how an ancient culture continues to inspire the makers of today.

To book your place, visit www.vam.ac.uk/info/schools

Black Country Living Museum

Explore the rich history of a small region that made a big impact on the world at Black Country Living Museum. Historic characters bring history to life in the Museum's open-air setting, which is made up of rebuilt and replicated houses, shops and industrial areas. From becoming a "history detective" to a "time traveller", there are so many ways your students can discover the tales of Black Country folk from the past. Journey into an underground mine, head to the Edwardian era for a school lesson you'll never forget, discover 1940s-60s trends, and watch sparks fly at the chain-making workshop.

To find out more, email learning@bclm.com or visit www.bclm.com

LOTS TO SEE!
The award-winning Black Country Living Museum covers more than 250 years of history across a 29-acre site.





Chessington World of Adventures Resort

From engaging workshops to thrilling rides, this is the perfect day out for pupils of all ages

1 Educational workshops

Experience engaging workshops from trained staff in Britain's wildest classroom! From classification and adaptation to forces and conservation, there are 12 STEAM and curriculum-based workshops for all key stages, covering a broad range of subject areas.

2 Zoo & SEA LIFE Aquarium

Come face to face with over 1,000 animals of all different shapes, sizes, and colours in Chessington's Zoo & SEA LIFE Aquarium. From towering Rothschild's giraffes to majestic California sea lions and Bolivian squirrel monkeys, there is so much to discover.

3 Attractions for all ages

Venture out on a riverboat journey with The Gruffalo, fly through the skies on Vampire, or take an expedition into the jungle on Mandrill Mayhem with Chessington's FIRST inversion! From Brave Adventurers to Little Rangers, Chessington has rides for pupils of all ages to enjoy.

4 Fascinating feeds and talks

Discover the wonder of the animal kingdom around us with educational feeds and talks from expert zookeepers. Learn about a whole host of fascinating creatures as your pupils come face to face with them around the resort.



5 Free resources

For fun, on-the-go learning, take advantage of free educational activity resources focusing on some of Chessington's resident animals. From penguins to monkeys and amazing aquatic creatures, there are options for all key stages.

www.chessington.com/schools

E: cwschools@chessington.co.uk

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Hillsborough Castle & Gardens

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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.

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You might even meet King Henry VIII himself!

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Company information: Historic Royal Palaces
Email: schoolsfestival@hrp.org.uk

Setting up **CAMP**

Making use of resources already available to schools can provide pupils with affordable opportunities for glorious residential experiences, says **Martin Smith**

As families across the country continue to grapple with the cost-of-living crisis, many have had to make the difficult decision to forego their family holiday, meaning children are missing out on important opportunities to build their socio-emotional skillsets. For this reason, school-led residential trips are crucial, as they are increasingly becoming the only chance many children have to access overnight visits.

In a survey by Learning Away, 82 per cent of KS2 pupils said that residential trips enhanced their learning, while 78 per cent reported that their confidence in trying new things had increased after a residential trip, and 71 per cent felt they were connected better with their classmates. It's clear that, where possible, prioritising residential trips can help schools ensure pupils are equipped with enriching experiences and valuable life skills.

A simple solution

Families are experiencing economic pressures, but so too are schools, and it can be challenging to secure the funding and resources needed to organise residential trips.

Identifying the need to make overnight trips available to all pupils, leaders at Greenwood Academies Trust (GAT) came up with the plan to organise camping residential trips on the grounds of two of our academies. In this way we were able to offer children the chance to stay overnight at a site already available to the trust at no additional cost. Our



main campsite was close to the beach, while the other bordered a lovely woodland, providing two enriching opportunities for pupils to engage with nature, with no travel needed.

Over the course of nine intakes, our campsites accommodated more than 350 pupils from six of our academies. We planned exciting educational activities for the children, including a bug-hunting mission in the forest and a sandcastle-building competition on the beach.

For many pupils, it was the first time they had ever seen the sea, an experience which they are sure to remember forever. Pupils also cooked over a campfire (with supervision) and slept in tents after a serene round of stargazing. They learned about the moon and tides, trees and wildlife, enjoyed s'mores, and built lasting bonds with their classmates. We also made sure the various activities brought classroom learning to life, prompting

pupils to pretend that they were real-life scientists busy studying the outdoors.

Behind the scenes

We worked for several months ahead of the first trip to plan out how everything would operate. An early and crucial step was to create a list of all the equipment that would be needed, and to ensure orders for new kit were placed in plenty of time. We also bought a large container to store all the camping paraphernalia in on-site, for ease of access and to reduce transport requirements.

It was vital to be strategic with our equipment. For example, we used 'blackout' tents to combat early sunrises, making a good night's sleep more likely for pupils and staff.

Our colleagues played a paramount role in the project. To make sure everything ran smoothly and all staff could feel confident in their roles and responsibilities, we held a training day where

we covered the necessary procedures, activities and emergency protocols. This was also essential for safety, as safeguarding was our top priority. We assessed all areas of risk thoroughly for any potential issues and implemented clear procedures for each. This meant that all staff felt supported and reassured that they could carry out their roles safely, and enjoy the experience too.

How it went

While there are natural challenges to planning and organising a programme of this size, the best outcomes came from getting everyone fully on board with the vision. With all staff and pupils excited and believing in the positive impacts the experience would have, the benefits were realised.

Our campsites were buzzing with happy pupils creating core memories and engaging with learning in new ways. Staff who helped build a meaningful and profound experience for some very well-deserving children came away inspired. Ultimately, we at GAT are incredibly proud and grateful to have provided our pupils with the opportunity to grow and learn in such an impactful way and look forward to expanding the experience in future years.



Martin Smith is senior adviser for academic resilience at Greenwood Academies

Trust in the East Midlands.

[greenwoodacademies.org](https://www.greenwoodacademies.org)

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**...

Everyone 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 interaction for that. It could just be one object that a room guide points out or a

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.

“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!”

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.



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.

 @BCLivingMuseum

 www.bclm.com



Black Country Living Museum

Experience the Black Country of yesteryear as you explore over 250 years of history

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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Step back in time and explore the past

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Kew for schools

Inspire pupils to discover the power of plants and fungi in sustaining life on Earth.

- Curriculum-linked, inquiry-based education sessions
- Interactive teaching resources
- Teacher training and CPD

Find out more at [kew.org/kew-gardens/school-visits](https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/school-visits)



DT, Art,
Outdoor
Learning,
Wellbeing



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- How nature can be used as a tool for wellbeing and relaxation
- How green spaces are designed to help the community
- Teamwork and communication skills when creating a design
- DT design processes and using nature in art

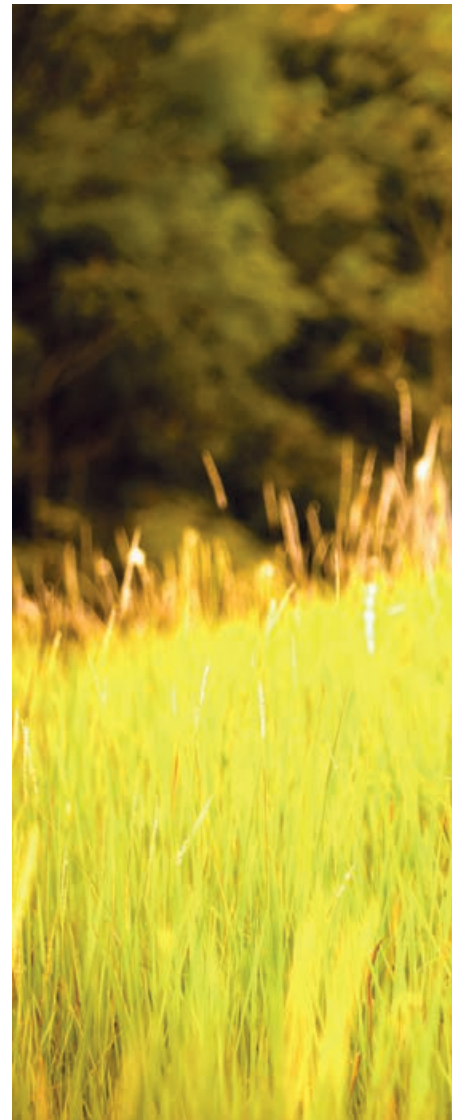
Design your own perfect pocket parks



Explore the children's local green spaces and design a recreational space in this project from **Emily Azouelos**

[in](#) emily-azouelos-227502220

This lesson gets children out into their local green spaces and helps fuel their imagination by designing a small pocket park space where people could relax and enjoy nature. Pupils will be encouraged to look at different design elements, explore art in nature, and think about how nature can help them relax. They will then be asked to suggest improvements they may want to see in their community that could be pulled into their design, helping to make their case for change. Finally, they will share and discuss their completed designs with their classmates.



START HERE

Introduce the term 'pocket park' and ask the children to suggest what they think it might mean. Explain that it means a small area of green space that is open and accessible for the public to use for relaxation and enjoyment. Ask pupils if they can think of any examples of small green spaces in their community. Are there any near school? Use Google Maps to look at the children's suggestions on the whiteboard. Discuss how nature can be used for wellbeing, describing and sharing how being in nature makes us feel. Pull out key vocabulary for the children to use when explaining their experiences and feelings, and display it in the classroom for inspiration.



MAIN LESSON

1 | SCAVENGING FOR INSPIRATION

Conduct a local nature walk to some of the small green spaces you discussed when getting started.

As you're walking to the green spaces, take photos of things the children spot so that pupils can use them for reference and inspiration when designing the parks.

Collect natural items to inspire art that could feature in the children's pocket park designs. Assign groups of pupils an egg box to be filled with the different items they gather on their walk. Egg boxes are a great way to display natural objects. Holes can be poked through the cardboard to display items like twigs, leaves and flowers.

Back in the classroom, arrange the children's findings to form a display. Then use the collection to inspire the creation of art. For example, you could make animals or fantastical new creatures out of the objects.

Ask the children to think about the little details, like how they could make the eyes of their creature, what colours go together to create an interesting pattern, or whether they could use contrasting textures to create an animal that stands out.

Once pupils are happy with their arrangements, they should glue them down onto cardboard bases.

Local green spaces often feature artwork from members of the local community, so discuss how the children's creations could be displayed in their own pocket park.



“This lesson gets children out into their local green spaces and helps fuel their imagination”

Once they're happy with their designs, give them time to show their creations to other groups, reflecting and adapting their work as they think necessary.

3 | MAKING IT 3D

Start a nature collection in the classroom and encourage children to bring in a range of natural materials, textures and colours. Ensure the material collected is dry and can be easily stored; plastic tubs with lids are a good storage solution.

Using this collection, along with masking tape and junk modelling items, children can turn their 2D drawings of pocket parks into 3D models displayed on their tables. Masking tape can be used to create a bird's eye view of their pocket park design and map out the landscape details.

Notes and thoughts can even be written on the tape for further information. Another way to encourage children to add detail to their designs is to suggest they use sticky notes to label some of their pocket park features.

Give time for the groups to 'visit' everyone's designs and share feedback about what they liked or would have adapted from their observations.

Emily Azouelos is an experienced primary teacher who moved to the world of heritage and arts-based organisations two years ago. She creates educational-related content for a variety of settings.

there differences of opinion that were unexpected?

Next, provide A3 sheets of paper to pairs or small groups of children and signpost them to the display they have created of the photos, reflections and nature art to be used as a tool for inspiration when designing. Remind them of the checklist they need to refer to alongside their design, and emphasise the importance of teamwork to create something that showcases all their ideas.



2 | REVIEWING YOUR WALK

Use these images to hold a class discussion about the features they liked in the green spaces and things they would improve.

Talk also about what they feel is missing from their local community, that they could pull into their designs.

Scribe some of the children's reflections, or encourage them to write down their thoughts on strips of paper. Display the reflections alongside the images.

Make a checklist of important elements from this discussion that children can refer back to during the design process. Is there something that all pupils feel there should be in a local green space, or were

EXTENDING THE LESSON

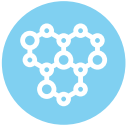


- Using the teacher-in-role drama technique, pretend to be a pocket park inspector and walk around the tables while students present their design ideas, trying to convince you to choose their design to bring to life.
- Ask pupils to write a persuasive letter to their local MP or councillor, outlining their ideas to transform their local community through pocket parks and highlighting the importance of green spaces as a source for wellbeing. Focus on persuasive language and use photos from the walk to remind them of the areas they felt needed to be improved and why.
- Involve the community by reaching out to local garden centres or allotments to see how they grow and plant items in their area. Encourage the children to use this knowledge in their designs.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Is it important to have green spaces in communities?
- What are the most important elements of a pocket park design?
- Describe and explain the reason behind your group's design choices.
- What would you change about your local community and why?

Science



WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- That moss is a microhabitat that changes daily and with seasons. It can be very wet, or dry out completely, and can freeze in the winter
- That a microscope can make very small animals visible
- That there are five microscopic animals with adaptations to survive living in dry or frozen moss

Let's have a microscopic adventure!



You can go on safari without even leaving the school playground, says **Dr Andy Chandler-Grevatt**

@mosssafari mosssafari.com

Have you noticed moss growing around your school grounds? Inside these small moss cushions and moss mats lives a hidden ecosystem of bizarre organisms. These animals are too small to see with the naked eye, but by using a simple microscope we can look into their world. Within this extreme microhabitat are five microscopic animals that are easy to identify by their unique features. Each has special adaptations to survive in moss. Take your class on a Moss Safari – a tiny adventure – in search of the microscopic Big Five animals.



START HERE

Start by asking children where they see moss around them. They might say along walls, on roofs, between paving slabs, on trees and within grass. Discuss the types of places that moss likes to grow, which are usually damp and shaded. Some can survive periods of bright sunlight on roofs and on walls. Ask for descriptions of what mosses look like: *small, green, furry*. Then ask what moss needs to survive. Establish that moss is a plant and that it needs space to grow, light to make food, water and oxygen. Do they think any animals live in moss?



MAIN LESSON

1 | THE MOSS SQUEEZE

Collect a small sample of moss, about the size of a thumbnail, from the school grounds, placing it in a small plastic bag. Put the moss sample in a shallow dish and pour some water on it. If the moss is dry, leave it to soak in water overnight. Take care not to collect moss from out-of-reach places, and always wash your hands afterwards.

For this investigation you'll need a digital microscope, a stereomicroscope or a compound microscope. You'll also require a shallow dish, a plastic pipette and,

if using a compound microscope, a glass dimple slide and a coverslip.

Take the soaking moss and squeeze it into the dish; all the animals will be in this water. Place the dish under the digital microscope or stereomicroscope. Use a lamp to sidelight the sample. For a compound microscope, use the pipette to transfer a few drops of moss-squeeze onto the glass slide and place on the cover slip. Place the slide on the microscope stage. You are now ready for your Moss Safari.

2 | WHAT TO LOOK FOR

On your Moss Safari, you'll need to look out for five animals that are less than a millimetre in length. The



“You’ll need to look out for five animals that are less than a millimetre in length”

Tardigrades, too, can curl up into a tight ball when their habitat is dry or freezing, and wake up when conditions improve.

The **gastrotrich** looks like a hairy worm. In fact, its name means ‘hairy belly’. It is the smallest of the Big Five. It glides around using the hairs on its body to swim, and has a forked tail. Gastrotrichs cannot survive drying out or being frozen, so instead they lay eggs that are adapted to withstand these conditions. The eggs hatch when the conditions get better.

3 | THE MICROSCOPIC SAFARI

Once the children have been introduced to what they are looking for, send them on the Moss Safari using a microscope to scan the dish or microscope slide in search of the Big Five.

Alternatively, if you have a camera attached to your microscope, you can project the Moss Safari onto a large screen.

Go on a Moss Safari together, stopping at the Big Five, describing them, identifying them and talking about how they are adapted to deal with drying out or freezing. Encourage children to record what they find, and justify their identification.

Visit tinyurl.com/tp-Moss to download identification sheets.

Dr Andy Chandler-Grevatt is a senior lecturer in science education at the University of Brighton. He founded Moss Safari and does outreach to promote microscopes and inspire future scientists.

microscope will magnify the animals. A magnification of $\times 20$ or $\times 40$ will allow you to see these creatures.

As you spot each animal, discuss its characteristics and adaptations with the children.

The **moss mite** has a dark, round body, a small head and eight hairy legs. Some people say it looks a bit like a beetle. Moss mites have a thick exoskeleton to help them keep water in their bodies. When conditions get too dry or too cold, they move away and hide in soil or crevices.

The **nematode** is a long, thin and often wiggling worm. They are often called thread worms. Nematodes appear pale or transparent and are adapted to living in

moss by curling up when the moss is drying. When it is freezing, they grow a thicker skin, like a sleeping bag, to sleep in until conditions improve.

The **rotifer** is known as a wheel animal because when it feeds or swims it uses two large organs on its head that look like spinning wheels. It is adapted to live in moss by being able to shrink into a protective ball and sleeping when it is too dry or too cold. When normal conditions return, the rotifer wakes up.

The **tardigrade**, also known as the water bear, is a sausage shape with eight stubby legs, a wrinkled face with a pig-like snout and long claws at the end of each leg. It is a pale or red colour.

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- When looking at the moss-squeeze, there are a lot of objects on the slide. What clues could tell us if an object is living, non-living, or dead? How might you record and display the number of objects in each category?
- Using the information provided during the lesson, design a key to help identify the Big Five animals.
- Write a story of how one of the Big Five animals survives in a moss cushion over a year.
- Make a map of the school grounds and mark on it all the places moss is found.
- Lots more resources, including worksheets and a slideshow all about adaptation, are available for free on the Moss Safari website (mossafari.com).

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What does the animal look like?
- Which of the Big Five could it be?
- How is it adapted to survive in moss when it dries out or when it freezes?

10 TO CONSIDER: INSPIRING IDEAS

From theatre trips and hands-on science workshops to fun in the fresh air and immersive insights into the past, you're guaranteed to find a visit for your class here...



GOOD TO KNOW

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

Historic Royal Palaces

Do you want to bring history to life for your children? Historic Royal Palaces provides unique, engaging experiences for students in some of the country's most iconic palaces.

Using the sites and their stories as inspiration, its schools programmes are designed to excite learners and make history more real and immersive in the places where so many significant events actually happened. As well as providing schools subsidised entry, the on-site programmes offer an extensive range of curriculum-aligned learning sessions for children from EYFS to KS2.

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



Forestry England

Inspire your class to become the next generation of tree scientists, foresters and wildlife rangers. Join Forestry England for a visit and enjoy hands-on learning filled with adventure and discovery. Reap the benefits of outdoor learning, reducing stress, boosting confidence and improving relationships while taking part in curriculum-linked, meaningful activities. No matter the age or ability, there's something for everyone with forests across the whole of England. Engage your children with guided and self-guided visits and extend the life of your trip with free, downloadable resources.

For more information, visit

www.forestryengland.uk/learning

Winchester Science Centre

Book an educational visit to Winchester Science Centre, and your group can get hands-on with one of six 45-minute curriculum-linked workshops, be wowed by a bespoke planetarium show, and explore two floors of interactive exhibits. You can even save 10% on a second activity. To end the year with a bang, consider the centre's summer celebration, too. There'll be an explosive live show, a spectacular planetarium experience, and lots of interactive fun.

If you can't make it to Winchester, the team can bring the science 'wow' to you.

Choose from three expert-led workshops, or, for something totally unique, turn your school into a space portal with the mobile planetarium!

Find out more at

www.winchestersciencecentre.org



PLAN YOUR DAY

To help you get the most out of your trip, the centre offers free teacher preview visits, allowing you to explore and speak to staff.



Photo: Manuel Harlan © the RSC

Matilda The Musical

Matilda The Musical is the multi-award-winning musical from the Royal Shakespeare Company, inspired by the beloved book by the incomparable Roald Dahl. With book by Dennis Kelly and original songs by Tim Minchin, *Matilda The Musical* is the story of an extraordinary little girl who, armed with a vivid imagination and a sharp mind, dares to take a stand and change her own destiny. Winner of over 100 international awards, including 24 for Best Musical, *Matilda* has been delighting audiences of all ages live on stage in London's West End for over a decade.

Find out more at

www.matildathemusical.com

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 or email education@colchesterzoo.org



CREATIVE CLASSROOMS

The National Theatre’s bespoke offering for primary schools includes 14 age-appropriate productions plus tailored resources to support creative learning.



The National Theatre Collection

The National Theatre Collection for primary schools brings world-class filmed plays into the classroom, accompanied by teaching resources to enrich creative learning. All children should have the opportunity to experience the magic of theatre, and the National Theatre Collection makes this possible while enhancing cross-curricular learning in subject areas like literacy, history, art and PHSE. Spectacular plays available to stream include adaptations of well-known children’s stories like *Treasure Island* and *Peter Pan*, as well as Greek myths, Grimm Tales, and Shakespeare for younger ages. Access is free for UK state schools, so subscribe today at www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/ntcollection

National Museums Liverpool

National Museums Liverpool offers a range of curriculum-linked workshops for schools across its museums and galleries. Sessions are led by experienced facilitators who use fascinating collections and exhibitions to engage pupils. At World Museum, children can explore its planetarium and aquarium, and enjoy sessions on topics like Ancient Egypt. Over at Museum of Liverpool, there are workshops about Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, the Victorians, trade and industry, and more. Maritime Museum is an amazing place to learn about RMS Titanic, while International Slavery Museum, located in the same building, offers workshops exploring the impacts and legacies of transatlantic slavery. Finally, the Walker Art Gallery offers gallery tours as well as sessions on subjects like Greek mythology.

Find out more at www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learn/workshops



Photos: © Robin Clewley

JCA School of Coding

JCA's new School of Coding workshops offer students a unique opportunity to build critical skills for the future. At Condover Hall in Shropshire, these tech-focused sessions combine coding, robotics, and drones with residential trips and exciting outdoor activities.

Now available to visiting schools, these fun workshops aim to inspire the next generation of tech leaders.

To find out more about the workshops available, visit www.jca-adventure.co.uk/school-of-coding



York Archaeology

York Archaeology offers learning programmes from pre-school up to post-grad, from school visits to training digs.

Educational Visits

Bring history to life for your students with a visit to JORVIK Viking Centre, DIG: An Archaeological Adventure or Barley Hall.

Virtual Outreach

Wherever you are in the world the team can deliver a digital history lesson straight to your classroom via video conferencing.

Loan Boxes

Put history in your students' hands by hiring an exciting collection of real and replica objects, drawing on discoveries from York Archaeology's excavations.

Visit the website for more details:

www.learning.yorkarchaeology.co.uk

Shakespeare's Globe

Introduce your class to the magic of Shakespeare's stories with a Lively Action workshop from Shakespeare's Globe, for Key Stages 1 and 2. Workshops can take place at Shakespeare's Globe on London's Bankside, or they can be delivered in your school, wherever you are in the country.

Tailored to the play of your choice, and led by a Globe Education Practitioner,

Lively Action workshops are packed full of drama activities to get pupils on their feet and having fun with Shakespeare.

Find out more at

www.shakespearesglobe.com/learn/primary-schools



CPD AVAILABLE

Shakespeare's Globe also has a thriving CPD programme linked to popular teaching texts on the national curriculum and social justice themes.

Bringing it HOME

Wish you could bottle that school trip excitement? Grab available learning resources with both hands, and you'll keep the magic alive, says **Jodie Greene**

Have you ever been on a fantastic school trip where the kids are buzzing, everyone learnt lots... and then the next day when you come to talk about it no one can remember anything? Or worse, their highlight was their lunch, with everything else forgotten?

I know the scenario all too well. I remember a particular trip I took my class on: I spent ages looking for the perfect destination, did my pre-visit and knew exactly how I wanted the day to go. I spent a lifetime getting permission slips back (that deserves a whole article of its own!) and

than the study topic itself. Being outside in a natural environment, in fresh air, is so beneficial for all our health, both physically and mentally. Taking part in real hands-on activities is great for encouraging problem solving, communication and building friendships. We all also know children who

planning is and how a great trip is a satisfying reward for all the hard work. That's where the learning resources available at various trip venues come in. If you're not tapping into them already, they could be a great source of support.

Utilise resources

Of course, after a trip teachers (and children) need resources with relevant learning outcomes... but also materials that excite and inspire them to continue that learning. At Forestry England we've been working on just that. Visits to the nation's forests are a popular choice; a guided or self-guided trip is a great way to reap all the benefits of being in nature, but we also know the value of free, downloadable resources. Our resources for primary-aged pupils are linked to some of our most popular activities, such as our Superworm trail, and can be downloaded and used back in the classroom to harness that excitement post trip. We've also worked up separate lesson plans and activity sheets linking to the curriculum that can be used in any outdoor space. Or if you can't get outside,

“I felt utterly deflated, and I spent hours creating resources for my class to work with after the trip, trying to keep the magic alive”

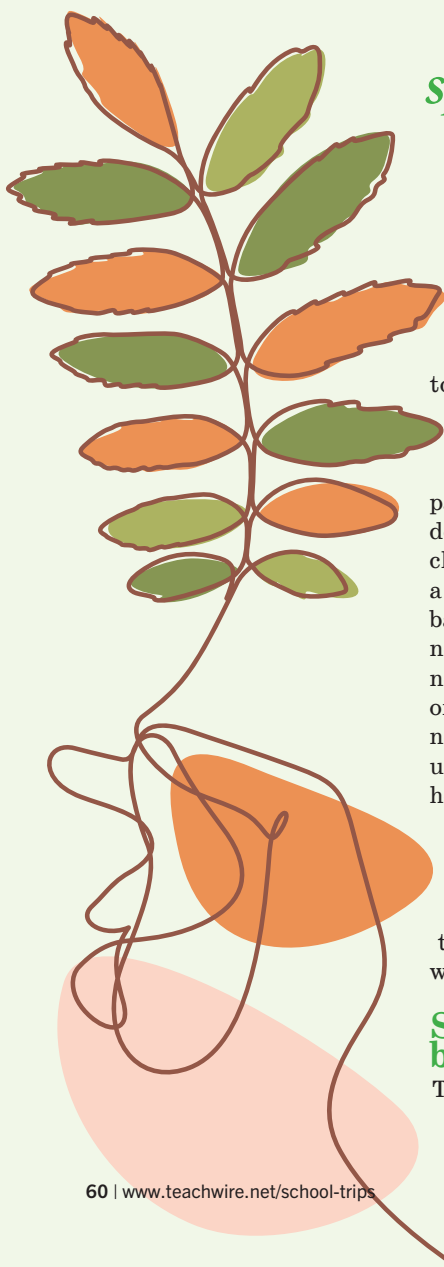
finally we were ready to go. The trip itself was lovely, albeit a bit stressful (anyone who manages children and parents outside of school deserves a medal). The children learnt loads, had a great time and we all got back in one piece. But the next day it was like we'd never been; the excitement of the trip had vanished, never to return, and I felt utterly deflated. I spent hours creating resources for my class to work with after the trip, trying to keep the magic alive. I thought then, 'Surely there must be an easier way?'

Stretching the benefits

The benefits of a school trip are so much wider

struggle with day-to-day learning, bouncing off the walls while you scramble to find ways to inspire and engage them. For them, trips are even more important. What would be great for these children is to stretch out the positive effects of the trip, keep their engagement and honouring their needs.

So what's out there? As teachers, we want the best for our children and to make the most out of every learning opportunity. What I would have loved were some resources my kids could have used back in the classroom: something to keep the excitement alive but also revisit the learning. And something I didn't have to spend hours trying to create myself. I remember how time-consuming



some that you can just use in the classroom too. We've designed our geography lesson plan to be utilised before, during and after a trip: the perfect way to make a teacher's life that little bit easier.

Whilst our resources, and those supplied by other local school trip providers, are aimed towards a school visit to a specific location, you could also use them in your local woodland or park. With the current economic climate being what it is, I'm all too aware that many schools won't have the capacity or the finances to go on school trips. The beautiful thing about free nature-focused resources like ours is that they can be used anywhere outdoors. You could take your class on a local walk or even around the school grounds. There are plenty of ways to use them that still offer fun and interesting learning opportunities, whether to build wonderful connections with nature, encourage children to share their experiences and bring the outside back into your classroom and utilise the beauty of nature

without needing to go anywhere.

Most resources can also be repurposed and used in other year groups or even in school clubs. As a teacher you can hang on to them, knowing that they'll stay current, which makes them shareable with your colleagues and any nature clubs you might have.

Being a teacher is hard; we all want to make that magical learning experience much more than a distant memory once the children are back at school. It's difficult to understand until you've been there, but I know that important element of continuing the magic from a trip can take a lot of work once back in the classroom. Make sure you grab every resource you can to help you and your class; free resources do the hard work so you don't have to (for a day at least)!

VISITING LOCAL WOODLAND

1. GET FAMILIARISED. Whether you're going to your local woods or further afield, a pre-site visit is a must. You'll want to feel confidence that on arriving with a gaggle of 30 kids you know exactly where you're going. Forestry England has a sample risk assessment to help with your planning.

2. FIND THE PERFECT SPOT. Decide what you want to get out of your visit and plan around that. Maybe you want to go on a walk first and foremost, or you want to focus more on spotting wildlife? Either way, plan accordingly and remember to identify a great place for lunch and the nearest loos!


3. MAKE SURE ALL YOUR CHILDREN ENGAGE. To keep children together as a group and engaged, it's important to give them something to do. Will they have a checklist for their walk? Will they use a spotter sheet? Could they write down describing words as they go along?


4. KEEP IT SIMPLE. Yes, we all want our children to do some great learning on a school trip, but sometimes giving them a chance to reconnect with nature, to de-stress and have fun is more than enough.

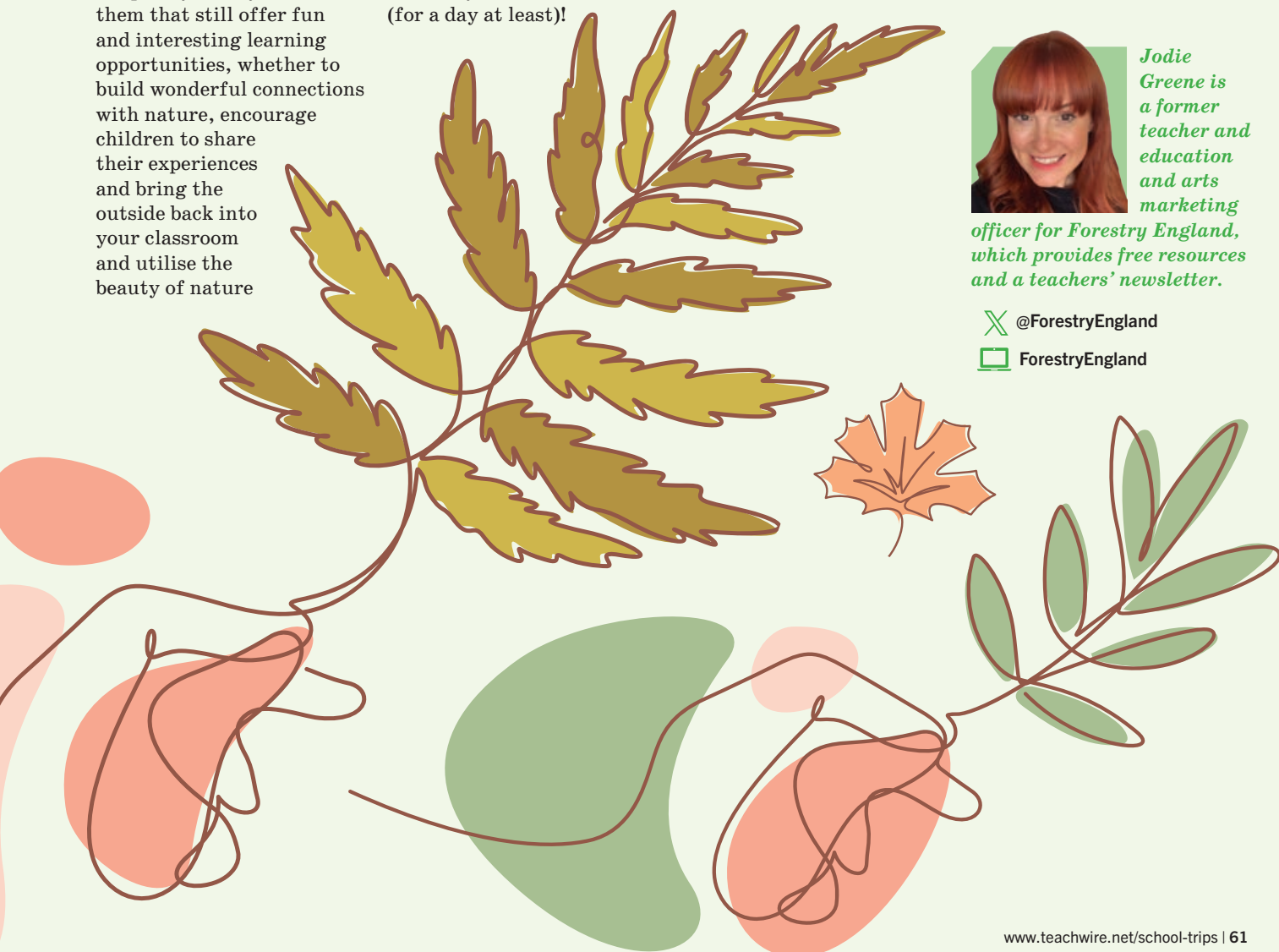
5. FORAGE MATERIALS TO CONTINUE THE LEARNING. Make sure you take some natural bits of the woodland back to school with you. Fallen leaves, pine cones and sticks can be used for displays, for further learning or for some beautiful artwork!



Jodie Greene is a former teacher and education and arts marketing officer for Forestry England, which provides free resources and a teachers' newsletter.

 @ForestryEngland

 ForestryEngland





WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- Geographical skills, including use of the eight points of a compass and grid references
- How to locate and find the name of UK cities on a map
- How human activity influences natural systems and how pupils personally contribute to this

Environmental science – on the plastics trail



Lara Jeffries from Surfers Against Sewage explores the issue of marine pollution and plastic use

[@sascampaign](#) sas.org.uk

It's estimated that over 12 million tonnes of plastic waste ends up in our oceans every single year. It flows everywhere, from rockpools to the very depths of the seabed. Whether it's turtles tangled in 'ghost' fishing gear or birds ingesting microplastics, uncontrolled use and dumping of plastic is one of the greatest threats to marine ecosystems. In this lesson, children will explore what plastic is, the effects it has on the environment, and how we can track plastic pollution. As well as learning and practising geographical skills, pupils will also explore what they can do to combat plastic pollution.



START HERE

Explain that in this lesson you're going to find out where floating plastic pollution is building up around the UK coast. Plastic has become such an established part of our lives, but what exactly is it? Use the PowerPoint provided (tinyurl.com/tp-PlasticPollution) to give a brief introduction; teacher notes are provided with the slides. Ask pupils to work with a partner to try to answer the question 'What is plastic?'. It may be useful to have a wide variety of plastic products available, e.g. water bottle, pen, chair, carrier bag, computer. Share answers and the diversity of responses before revealing the dictionary definition.



MAIN LESSON

1 | UNDERSTANDING PLASTIC

To be able to work out where it is accumulating and what problems it creates, we need to understand plastic better. Discuss the information contained in slides 3 and 4 with pupils.

Display slide 5. Ask the children to think of some life-changing plastics that they couldn't imagine living without; examples are given on the PowerPoint notes. Talk about the David Attenborough quote. What does he mean? The problem is the quantity of plastic produced; single-use plastics, lack of recycling and poor waste management allow plastic to travel into our oceans and causes significant

damage to habitats, endangering wildlife and polluting communities.

Use slide 6 to introduce the focus of this lesson: floating plastic and where it accumulates. (We won't be looking at the spread of microplastic or submerged plastic.) Focusing on where plastic accumulates, explain the term 'gyres' and look at the map to understand how these currents trap plastic (slide 7).

Ask pupils to work with a partner or small group to think about the geographical factors affecting UK coastlines and how these might also transport plastic waste from the seas back to land.

Finally, explore ocean currents and prevailing winds and their impact on UK shores in more detail (slides 9 and 10).



“Single-use plastics, lack of recycling and poor waste management allow plastic to travel into our oceans”

of summer visitors generating plastic waste. The tourist industry is notorious for utilising single-use plastic products such as miniature bottles of shampoo and bottled water. The Think About Plastic group that has formed on the island has worked hard to raise public awareness about this, and change business behaviour.

Question 2 looks at Bristol. How could plastic waste reach the ocean from this city? One answer is that it could be blown from urban areas into waterways then transported to local rivers and then out to sea. The River Avon runs through the city and joins the Bristol Channel.

Finally, discuss the last question on the map skills worksheet, ‘What can I do to reduce plastic pollution?’. Children should have an awareness that their actions, regardless of where they live, have a global impact.

3 | ADDITIONAL MAP SKILLS

If you have a higher ability group, you can challenge them to complete the following activities:

- On your map, label the three longest UK rivers: Severn, Trent and Thames. How close to urban areas are these and what impact does that have on the amount of plastic pollution reaching the ocean?
- Label the largest cities in the UK: London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Bristol, Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dublin, Belfast, Cardiff. Allocate a six-figure grid reference to each city. Investigate recycling success stories for one of these cities.

Lara Jeffries is education manager at Surfers Against Sewage.

2 | GEOGRAPHICAL SKILLS

Give each pupil a copy of one of the maps provided at tinyurl.com/tp-PlasticPollution. You can choose to use a blank map, a partly completed map or a fully completed one depending on year group, ability and time available.

Ask pupils to use what they’ve learned so far to do the following:

- Draw an arrow and label prevailing winds using the compass points. (In the UK we have prevailing winds coming from the SW.)
- Draw a directional arrow and annotate the North Atlantic Drift. (Explain that an annotation is a descriptive label such as, *The North Atlantic Drift is a powerful warm current that helps maintain UK temperatures.*)

- Label the Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, Irish Sea, English Channel, and Bristol Channel. (Children can use Google Earth/Google Maps/class globe if necessary.)
- Label England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Ask pupils to complete the map skills worksheet, then discuss the answers as a class.

Question 1 refers to the Isle of Arran. Using the images on the PowerPoint, ask pupils to discuss why this area, with a population of just 5,000, has lots of plastic along its coast. Children should be able to identify prevailing winds, currents and storm frequency due to its location.

Note that the island is a tourist destination, which could mean that there are lots

EXTENDING THE LESSON



- Explore the other plastic-focused lessons created by Surfers Against Sewage. Our ‘Plastic Persuasion’ activity (tinyurl.com/tp-PlasticPersuasion) would follow on well from this lesson.
- Participate in Surfers Against Sewage’s Plastic Free Schools programme (plasticfreeschools.org.uk).
- Use the Plastic Adrift website (plasticadrift.org) to explore how long floating plastic takes to reach different locations.
- If you are lucky enough to live near a coastline or waterway, extend your lesson by leading a field trip to explore plastic pollution in your area. You could even include a beach clean or waterway cleanup as part of your trip. See our guide to organising your own cleanup (tinyurl.com/tp-CleanPlastic).
- Research other areas of the world, or specific species, that have suffered from serious environmental issues caused by plastic pollution.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What is a prevailing wind?
- How many plastic items do you think you’ve used today?



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To space and back again – IN ONE SCHOOL DAY

Dr Nikhil Mistry explains why planetariums make perfect educational visits

As a former science teacher, I've often asked myself, 'How can I make learning fun?' At Winchester Science Centre, I finally got the answer to my question: I saw a group of children enjoying a show in our planetarium. They were engaged, asking questions and excited by the topic they were learning.

At its core, a planetarium is a theatre with a 360-degree projection dome that can be used to provide education and entertainment about astronomy. But that's the dictionary definition. I want to tell you how a planetarium is so much more than that, how it can provide a vital resource when it comes to planning a school trip, and just how absolutely awesome it is to visit one.

For many of us, especially children, it's hard to imagine what the universe is like from facts and figures alone.

I can't picture what the 151.96 million kilometres between Earth and the Sun looks like. And can you imagine a planet so big it can fit over 1,000 Earths inside?

Being inside a planetarium helps make concepts like these much easier to understand. The audience becomes immersed in the solar system and can build a real connection to it.

A visit to a planetarium provides an enhanced experience that it isn't easy to reproduce in a classroom. You'll zoom into space on a journey of discovery, flying to moons, planets and constellations, while a

“It's hard to imagine what the universe is like from facts and figures alone”

presenter delves into topics like why Venus is so hot, or what the giant red dot on Jupiter actually is.

I encourage my team of planetarium pilots to get children to look more closely at the celestial world above them, to ask questions and be curious. By looking at the night sky, we can highlight key constellations that children can spot when they

go home. This is important, as once pupils leave us, there are few opportunities for them to interact with space, but the night sky is an easily accessible resource. It's moments like this that I love, and which make the topic of space become relatable, excitable and easy to digest.

What if your nearest planetarium is too far away to visit, though? Well, you can hire a mobile, inflatable one! Imagine how excited

your pupils would be if you turned your school lunch hall into a space portal.

A mobile planetarium is generally smaller than a fixed one. Ours fits up to 40 pupils, so if you had a full-day visit you could take around six classes on a space adventure. Just like a fixed planetarium, a 360-degree projector and planetarium expert bring space to life right in front of your pupils' eyes. The

children could be learning how to spot the North Star, discovering the scale of our solar system or building cross-curriculum links by looking at ancient cultures and locational knowledge.

Intrigued? Don't book just yet – I've got some top tips for you first.

It's important you find out as much as you can about the planetarium show before you visit, so you can prepare your pupils and tailor activities in the lead up to the trip. Or why not ask the venue what content they would suggest? They may be able to create a bespoke show that supports pupils' current learning, or something brand new that will stretch their horizons.

I'd also recommend asking how the venue can support the accessibility and sensory needs of your group. A planetarium can be an unusual environment for children who have never experienced one before. I promise it's a magical experience that they'll remember forever, but it can also be dark and loud. Most venues will be able to help with this through pre-show familiarisation, social stories, ear defenders and tactile resources.

So, are you ready to go to space and back again? Helmets on, ignition engaged, blast off!



Dr Nikhil Mistry is head of curiosity at Winchester Science Centre.



Are you getting the best school visit support and training?

Ensure fuss-free school trips that run smoothly from start to finish, with expert advice from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel

As a teacher, you should be able to take pupils on exciting visits that broaden their horizons. The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) can help you make the most of every school trip.

Established in 1978, the OEAP is the lead body for guidance, advice and training related to outdoor learning and educational visits in England and Wales. It has around 120 members and provides information and training to support these advisers in their work with schools.

The OEAP was initially set up as a professional support network for staff advising local authorities and schools on issues relating to outdoor education and educational visits. Prior to its formation, these advisers often worked in isolation. Over time, various government guidance documents defined the important role of these advisers. This advice has been refined over the years. You can now find it on the OEAP website (oeapng.info).

It's endorsed by the DfE, HSE, NAHT and NEU, among others. The OEAP believes that every child should have access to a comprehensive programme of high-quality outdoor learning, educational visits and adventurous activities as an integral part of their school curriculum. So, what can the OEAP do for you?

Specialist training and resources

Selected OEAP members can provide your school with up-to-date, focused and relevant training to ensure that your staff are working to the very highest standards. They also offer learning cards that feature a range of activities which can support schools in the delivery of outdoor and environmental learning.

Professional guidance

The OEAP has developed national guidance to help anyone who organises outdoor learning, educational visits and

adventurous activities (oeapng.info/guidance-documents). This includes residential visits and overseas visits. The guidance supports safe learning experiences for young people and is enabling, rather than restrictive. It covers provision across England and Wales, but much of it is applicable elsewhere, too.

The guidance helps visit leaders and schools to plan and deliver high-quality and safe learning experiences. The starting point for planning school trips is being clear about your rationale. Once you've identified your aims and thought about how you'll measure the trip's impact, you can effectively plan the location and method of delivery.

The OEAP's national guidance is referenced in DfE guidance and is also supported by Welsh government and the Health and Safety Executive. The guidance comprises eight sections, from basic essentials through to FAQs and more. It's an online resource that the OEAP continually improves and updates to reflect a developing understanding of good practice. Do remember that as a visit leader you should always follow your school's own trip policies and guidance as well.

Membership

So, can you as an educator join the OEAP? Absolutely!

Members progress through a series of membership levels as they develop. Ordinary membership is when your contracted role includes or supports the functions of an outdoor education adviser and/or educational visits adviser. An Ordinary member hasn't had their competencies verified by the OEAP, and employers may need to confirm those competencies to match up with the national guidance document defining the role.

Accredited members are verified by the OEAP as having the competencies to fulfil the role of an outdoor education adviser. A Fellow is an individual who meets the Accredited member definition and demonstrates through an application process that they have made significant contribution to the work of OEAP.

Thomas Booth is an education visits advisor employed by Rochdale Borough Council. He works with a number of neighbouring LAs and MATs to provide advice, guidance and training.



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