

A young boy with light brown hair, wearing a red zip-up shirt, is looking intently at a museum exhibit. He is holding a magnifying glass over a display board that features several historical photographs and text. The background shows museum shelving with various items, including a red and gold ceremonial garment. A teal circle with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

WEST BERKSHIRE
MUSEUM

Learning and Participation Service

West Berkshire Museum reopened after refurbishment in August 2014. The museum is housed in two of the town's most historic buildings – the Cloth Hall and Corn Stores – and these are joined with a new purpose built link building containing a reception, shop, café and toilet/baby changing facilities. The entire museum is now fully accessible and has a lift at each end.

The museum's Learning and Participation Service plans to build on its school offer in the forthcoming years. The current offer includes: sessions, loan boxes, resource packs, museum visits and trails.

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C O U N C I L

Sessions

The Learning and Participation Service offers a range of national curriculum-based (please request a session overview for more details), cross curricular sessions that can be delivered **in school** or **at the museum**. These include:

An Everyday Object Through Time*

KS1/2 50-75 minutes

Examining real objects used to warm the bed over time, the materials they are made from, how they look and feel, and how to use the objects – there are two activities involving a simple timeline.



"The children were all engaged and interested and later said how much they had enjoyed the session."
Year 1 teacher.

"Really enjoyable session. The children were engaged throughout and talked about it all afternoon. Timings were excellent."
Year 3/4 teacher.

The Stone Age*

KS2 60-90 minutes

Using real Stone Age flint tools and a mammoth's tooth to see what they tell us about Stone Age life as well as looking at the role of archaeology in telling us about the past.



The Cloth Hall: how did they build that?

KS1/2 50-75 minutes

This session looks at the reasons the Cloth Hall was built, how it was built and some of its features. The children have the opportunity to make and use their recipe for daub (wattle and daub) – disposable aprons will be provided but do dress for mess – as well as explore the features of the Cloth Hall (inside and outside) through a trail. **Not available in school, museum only.**

Playtime*

KS1/2 60-75 minutes

This session looks at Victorian children and the toys (real and replica) they played with. It compares the toys from the past with modern ones and encourages pupils to think about how they are made and the materials used.

"We had a fantastic morning at the museum. The children really enjoyed themselves and the session's learning/activities were set at the right level for them. Thank you for a great morning – will recommend to colleagues as brilliant value for money."
Year 1/2 teacher.



Roman Britain*

KS2 60-90 minutes

Examining a range of real Roman artefacts to see what they tell us about life in the past as well as considering how 'Romanised' the native Britons became.



"The children really enjoyed the session and I know they could have spent the rest of the afternoon asking questions!"
Year 4 teacher.



Anglo Saxons*

KS2 75-90 minutes

This session explores Anglo Saxon culture and everyday life by examining the real objects on display (through a trail) and a small selection of replica handling objects; there is the opportunity to try on Anglo Saxon costume. In addition, you can choose an additional one to two activities for your group to experience (dependent on group size and time available). These are: cord-making, writing a message using runes, making a saucer brooch or decorating clay with replica stamps. **Please note:** activities must be selected well in advance of the visit – no changes allowed on the day. **Not available in school, museum only.**

"The children learnt a lot from and really enjoyed the session and visit to the museum."
Year 5/6 teacher.

Rocks*

KS2 60-75 minutes

Based around the three categories of rocks and the rock cycle, this session includes a classification activity using rocks from the museum's collection.



"The children enjoyed the session very much. They have been talking about rocks a lot since and building up their own collections of 'rocks' from the playground."
Year 3 teacher.

The English Civil War and Home Front in World War I sessions for KS2/3 have been discontinued due to the permanent exhibition replacing the exhibitions around which each workshop was based. However, if you are interested in either workshop then please enquire further.

***Session involves object handling.**

A session costs £45 (for no more than a class of 30).

For more information or to make a booking, please see contact information overleaf.

Resource packs

We also have a small selection of resource packs. They are available to buy for a small charge of £15 per pack.

For a list of resource packs available, please contact Clare (details below).



"Fantastic for the children to touch the artefacts and find out about their history...lots of discussion that encouraged them to look closer at the objects and ask questions."

Primary teacher.

Loan boxes

We have a small selection of loan boxes containing replica and/or real objects. They are available to borrow for three weeks and need to be collected and returned by the school. There is a small charge of £15 per box which must be made before or on collection.

For a list of the boxes available, please contact Clare (details below).



Museum visit

It is free to visit the museum and activity trails can be provided. Most activity trails are available free-of-charge but there is a small charge per trail made for the permanent exhibition trail.

The permanent exhibition, Lives and Landscapes, tells the story of West Berkshire; it is located in the four rooms on the ground floor (Corn Stores). The five rooms upstairs in the Corn Stores have special exhibitions which change every 3-12 months, and in the Cloth Hall (upstairs) is the story of the two historic buildings that make up the museum. The Cloth Hall downstairs, The Long Room, is our learning and community space.

If there is a topic you are studying then please ask Clare if there is an exhibition that will support it. Clare is also able to tailor-make trails to fit your topic if given enough notice; there is usually no charge for this service.

For more information on how to book a visit, please contact Clare (details below).



"Clare was very welcoming, patient and helpful – her passion for the exhibits and what you can learn from them is infectious!"

KS1 teacher.

Contact details

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