

# Museum and heritage learning audiences – a checklist

*Note.* Individuals can belong to and move between different audiences: for instance, children visiting in formal groups will also come as informal visitors with their families, and adult independent learners may at other times come in a formal adult learning group. When moving between audiences, individuals may use different learning styles: for instance, a seven year old will learn in one way when with her peers on a school trip and in another way when visiting a museum with her family.

| Informal visitors                 |  |
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| Audience                          | Characteristics  |
| <b>Adult independent learners</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wide variations in literacy skills</li> <li>2. Visiting with an enquiring mind – receptive to inspirational information, images and activities</li> <li>3. Discover through casual discussion, not formal or packaged information</li> <li>4. Constructivists: they make meaning of what they learn by relating it to their own (extensive) experience</li> <li>5. Volunteers fit in with this category</li> <li>6. On the lookout for new learning opportunities and places to visit that tie in with their interests</li> <li>7. Consider themselves part of a ‘learning community’ where learning does not mean isolation. Networks very important.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Senior citizens</b>            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quieter, more leisurely learning style.</li> <li>2. Very wide audience, only linked by age: differences in age, education and disposable income. Includes holidaymakers on short breaks as well as local retired people and adult learners.</li> <li>3. Some older people may be interested in the subject but unable to visit if they are in retirement homes, etc.</li> <li>4. Grandparents like to visit with their grandchildren</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Family groups</b>              | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Family visits are driven by the child, especially with younger ones. The choice of visit may be proposed by parents but the success of the visit depends on how well the needs of the children are being accommodated.</li> <li>2. Adults see the visit as educational but need information and points for discussion. If the information is not readily available they will make it up.</li> <li>3. Typical family group size is 2-6 people.</li> <li>4. Children typically 13 and under. The younger the children, the more likely they are to be learning with the family group. Older children may explore on their own, or with a friend of a similar age.</li> <li>5. Parent(s) accompany these visits but grandparents may also lead groups.</li> <li>6. Adult / child ratio may be as high as 1:1</li> <li>7. Social interaction and shared learning are valued elements of family visits.</li> <li>8. Family groups value a comfortable learning environment, made easy for them by convenient facilities such as parking, access, a good shop and a café.</li> <li>9. Family visits are often relatively local and favour natural rather than cultural experiences.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Under 7s on family visits</b>  | <p><b>Babies (0-3 years)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Like to experience the visit from the pushchair</li> <li>2. Like to be spoken to by family members</li> <li>3. Like to use all their senses</li> <li>4. Like to cause things to happen</li> <li>5. May like to get out and crawl</li> </ol>   |



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|                                    | <p>6. Need regular feeding, watering and changing.</p> <p><b>Toddlers (2-4 years)</b><br/> NB. It is said that it takes three adults to look after one toddler!</p> <p>7. Use their pushchairs as ‘support vehicles’</p> <p>8. Like to move around, use their senses and play with everything around them</p> <p>9. Like to cause things to happen (again and again)</p> <p>10. Are often uninhibited</p> <p>11. Like to watch what other children are doing</p> <p><b>3 to 7 year olds</b></p> <p>12. May want to work independently from their parents, but will still want to be able to see them nearby</p> <p>13. Like to talk, watch things, listen to stories and discuss all of it</p> <p>14. Like to do more than look – definitely want to handle things.</p>  |
| <b>Youth: 14-25s</b>               | <p>1. Groups, either via formal education (see FE, below) or community.</p> <p>2. Identity is very important to this age group, as they work out where they fit into society as individuals.</p> <p>3. Use creative activities as a means of expressing their identity.</p> <p>4. In depth involvement, almost on the level of a volunteer, but without long term commitment.</p> <p>5. Transitory – tend to move on after a few months.</p> <p>6. Considering future career path.</p>   |
| <b>Foreign visitors</b>            | <p>1. Looking for pleasurable and entertaining activity.</p> <p>2. Want to raise awareness of British culture and life.</p> <p>3. Probably going round fairly fast</p> <p>4. Weak grasp of English language?</p> <p>5. Cultural background may lead them to a different interpretation of the displays from that of a British audience.</p>  |
| <b>Local community</b>             | <p>1. Will make repeat visits</p> <p>2. May bring family or guests on a visit; in this case act as ‘tour guides’.</p>  |
| <b>Formal visitors</b>             |  |
| <b>Audience</b>                    | <b>Characteristics</b>   |
| <b>Pre-school groups (2-4 yrs)</b> | <p>1. See info for 2-4 year olds, above</p> <p>2. Work through teachers and leaders in Primary School nursery units and playgroups, referring to the guidelines for Foundation Stage education.</p> <p>3. Teachers accompanied by many untrained adult helpers (i.e. mums!); teachers mainly occupied with management of the group rather than ‘teaching’.</p> <p>4. Short attention span.</p> <p>5. Can follow up or prepare for visit at playgroup.</p>  |
| <b>Schools – common features</b>   | <p>1. All visits must relate to the skills identified in the National Curriculum.</p> <p>2. May also relate to one or more of the QCA schemes of work.</p> <p>3. Recent relaxation in requirements to teach to the National Curriculum content has brought back more topic based work to primary schools, but core skills as defined in the NC are still essential.</p> <p>4. Relationship with teacher paramount as far as planning, management and follow up of the visit are concerned.</p> <p>5. Need resources for use in school to support their visit.</p> <p>6. Teachers expect a professional service that responds to their own needs. They will only visit if they are confident that learning has been planned into the day.</p> <p>7. Teachers closely focussed on their curriculum needs and may not recognise the educational potential of new centres.</p> <p>8. Arrive 9.30-10.30; leave 2.00-2.30 if on full day visit. May be interested in combining the visit with another local venue, especially with a large, multi-class group.</p> <p>9. Financial considerations include coach travel, cost of entry, supply cover for absent teachers (min £130 per teacher per day – more significant in KS3-4 and KS1-2, where one class and one teacher are absent at once). Higher prices lead to optional visits; lower price more likely to achieve full class visits linked into school</p> |



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|   | <p>curriculum. £7-10 total cost per pupil quoted as acceptable; £2-3 might be the portion of this charged by the venue.</p> <p>10. Co-educational.</p> <p>11. Need dedicated school space and administration of education service if large numbers of school visits are planned.</p>  |
| <b>Schools: Key Stage 1 (4-6 yr olds)</b>     | <p>1. All of the features of pre-school groups apply with KS1 groups.</p> <p>2. National Curriculum skills uppermost, principally literacy and numeracy</p> <p>3. Groups of 30+. Often 2 classes (50-70 pupils) to economise on coach transport.</p> <p>4. Normally accompanied by 2 trained teachers and perhaps 10 parent helpers per class. Only one teacher can be expected to be well informed about the background to the visit; the helpers will act as childminders, probably minding their own child and his/her friends.</p> <p>5. Workshop and creative work popular.</p> <p>6. Particular KS1 curriculum focus: Literacy and Numeracy</p>   |
| <b>Schools: Key Stage 2</b>                   | <p>1. Group size 25-35 + 1:10 adult/pupil ratio. Often 2 classes (50-70 pupils) to economise on coach transport.</p> <p>2. Some visiting schools will be staying at field study centres. These residential centres attract groups from outside the region for study weeks mixing outdoor and cultural / heritage activities. Typically, indoor visits are less of a priority than the fieldwork activities. May use a museum or heritage visit as a last minute venue in wet weather. Some visits will therefore be relatively unplanned. Pupils often highly motivated as they are in a 'hothouse' setting, out of school. Teachers often prepare their own study booklet for these visits, often taking the form of a diary. Links to work done in school not strong – the visit is often self contained. However links to the Citizenship / PSHE curriculum's social skills agenda very relevant.</p> <p>3. Primary school classroom multi-disciplinary.</p> <p>4. Like visitors in school.</p> <p>5. Like competitive games and activities.</p> |
| <b>Schools: Key Stage 3</b>                   | <p>1. Group size varies: from whole year group curriculum based visits (up to 240 pupils, or fractions thereof), to minibus groups on visits opted for by parents.</p> <p>2. Residential centre visits as for Key Stage 2, but more of a focus on fieldwork, e.g. Geography. Often take place after May, when teachers freed by GCSE exams ending.</p> <p>3. Secondary school classroom single subject-focused; co-ordination between teachers and negotiation over time and lesson cover behind all school visits.</p> <p>4. On visit, tend to work independently in peer groups. 'Bored' by direct teaching!</p> <p>5. Like competitive games and activities.</p>   |
| <b>Schools: Key Stage 4</b>                   | <p>1. Small groups, 1-2 minibuses.</p> <p>2. Many visits entirely geared to GCSE exam coursework.</p> <p>3. Year 10 do work experience weeks, often in summer term.</p> <p>4. On visit, work in small peer groups. Not keen to get involved in activities which involve communication with any other than peer group, so can appear very uncommunicative. However this does not mean they are not taking things in, or benefiting from the experience. Can in fact contribute high level discussion and debate in the right setting.</p>  |
| <b>FE / Key Stage 5 ('Post 16') / VI Form</b> | <p>1. Arrive in groups but may not stay together.</p> <p>2. Curriculum led, with the emphasis on coursework rather than exams.</p> <p>3. Likely to be researching to meet specific course objectives, so may not require formal input – more likely to want knowledgeable experts to answer questions.</p> <p>4. Great ranges of ability, from vocational to highly academic, the percentage of the former increasing. Studying GCSEs, GNVQs (now AVCEs), AS levels, A2 levels, Key Skills courses.</p> <p>5. Career / vocational interest.</p>   |
| <b>Out of school groups</b>                   | <p>1. Include Scouts, Brownies, St. John's Ambulance, Boys Brigade, Sports Clubs, social clubs.</p> <p>2. Don't want a 'school' experience.</p> <p>3. Often competitive.</p> <p>4. Run by non-teachers. Leaders prefer control and discipline; not always happy</p>   |



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|  | <p>with unstructured activities.</p> <p>5. Visiting weekends, half terms, and after school hours, but not normally during school holidays.</p> <p>6. Older children may get involved through Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.</p>   |
| <b>Students of English as a Foreign Language</b> | <p>1. 13-16 year olds staying at local EFL colleges and group travel hotels.</p> <p>2. Main purpose of visit is to learn English. This mainly takes place in the EFL college. Cultural visits tend to be recreational.</p> <p>3. Accompanying teachers normally from native school, not EFL college. Not always committed to the educational value of the visit; looking for an afternoon off! This is partly due to their perception that education should take place in the classroom, not on a school visit; UK is much more advanced in the area of extra curricular visits. Teacher/student relationship different to that in British schools: more detached, less 'in loco parentis'. Teachers often leave students on their own for parts of the visit.</p> <p>4. Colleges rarely give students work to do, so students tend to collect in groups and 'hang about'. Not normally a behaviour problem, however, as do not tend to interact with other visitors.</p> <p>5. Students respond well to being spoken to in own language (tend to be French, mainly, also Spanish, Italian).</p> |
| <b>Adult education</b>                           | <p>1. Courses arranged in regional network of adult education centres, often linked to libraries.</p> <p>2. Treat individual learners as the 'adult independent learner' audience (see above), but offer more formal input to tie in with their course.</p> <p>3. Potential to develop own courses on vocational themes. These could be run in partnership with adult education centres.</p> <p>4. May be taking in service training.</p>  |

