

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Visit Handbook

Welcome to the Education Department at Wells Cathedral!

Your visit to the Cathedral will be a special experience for the students and remembered long after the topic is over!

We specialise in tailoring every visit, so please ring to agree the most suitable date and programme for your party.

The Department is led by a teacher, and the majority of Education Guides and Assistants are from teaching backgrounds.

Various visit options are possible:

- **Visit only**
During the summer, this may be the only option available if all guides are already booked.
Students should remain in small groups supervised by an adult.
A donation of £2.50 per pupil is requested.
- **Guided Tour**
A tour with our trained guides of approximately an hour. This can be a general tour, or focus on a particular aspect, for example, symbolism, vestments, altar frontals. There is no extra cost.
- **A Programmed Day**
The cost is £3.50 per pupil; accompanying adults are free. Your day will begin with a welcome in the Nave. Most full day programmes have three sessions – a tour; a themed activity working in groups to produce items for school; a craft activity relating to their visit creating a souvenir to take home.

At the end of the morning session pupils have the opportunity to say a prayer, either at the clock (where prayers are said every hour April-October) or delivered from the pulpit over the cathedral PA system. Writing the prayers can be a literacy project prior to the visit. A class prayer can be formed using lines from each child's text. 'Speaking with confidence in a range of contexts, adapting their speech for a range of purposes and audiences' is, of course, a key aspect of the English National Curriculum.

Summer picnics on Cathedral Green or in the more private Camery Garden are popular. The Education Room is available as a wet weather venue. This is free of charge for groups doing a day programme, and £15 for others.
















The day closes with a time of reflection. This may be a form of Circle Time in the Chapter House, or the class may end the day with favourite song, and then proudly state that they have sung in Wells Cathedral Quire!

Themes












These are some of the most popular requests:



Pilgrimage

-  Signs and Symbols
-  Water
-  Glass
-  Time
-  Saints
-  Church Furniture
-  Bishops
-  Light and Colour
-  The Reformation
-  Writing (Chained Library visit)
-  Carvings & Masons' Marks
-  Sound
-  Architecture
-  Vestments & Embroideries
-  Treasures

Activities

-  Sketching
-  Laminated Placemats
-  Clay
-  Cross Stitch
-  Illuminated Lettering
-  Lady Chapel Paper Window Collage
-  Badge Making
-  Fridge Magnets
-  Glass Painting
-  Acetate Windows
-  Latin

Special Schools

We organise a multi-sensory tour around the cathedral, involving touching different textures and materials; hearing a variety of sounds – organ, singing, clock (and the amazing silence in a large space); smelling fragrant floral displays, incense and candles; and enjoying the visual diversity of light, colour, art, architecture, carvings, stained glass and the display at the clock! This has been enjoyed by pupils with complex learning difficulties.

The majority of craft activities are suitable with differentiation. Pupils with hearing loss and visual impairments are welcomed and guided in a very small group.

Helpful Advice

All groups must pre-book their visit. Please give at least two weeks notice. There are no Guided tours during the Cathedral's Quiet Hour, between 12 noon and 1pm from April to October. We suggest you allow additional time for follow-up activities such as a short act of worship, visiting Vicars' Close or worksheets. Please send a copy of any worksheet you intend to use, so that it can be given to the guide. Worksheets are not encouraged during a guided tour, and unguided groups using a school-produced activity sheet must remain in a supervised group.

Packed lunches can be eaten in the Camery Garden or on Cathedral Green. If it is wet, lunches may be eaten in the East Cloister. Groups on programmed visits have free use of the Education Room as a lunch venue. Other groups may book the room for £15.







Arrival

There is a designated coach setting down point in Sadler Street, just off Cathedral Green. The teacher in charge is asked to register at the Information Desk.

Cathedral Courtesy

Please share this with pupils before your visit and on the coach.

The cathedral is open to all and continues to welcome visitors and pilgrims while school events are in progress. Some visitors may be seeking solace at a difficult time. Please respect their needs:

-  Keep the calm and quiet atmosphere – don't talk too loudly.
-  Don't consume food or drink in the cathedral.
-  Walk, not run.
-  Keep to one side in aisles, so that others can pass.
-  Keep all belongings with you – don't leave coats or bags behind on seats.
-  Carefully replace any hymn or prayer books or kneelers which may fall onto the floor.



Please enjoy this special space and atmosphere! If you would like to sit quietly for a moment, light a candle, or write a prayer card for someone close to you, do ask an adult helper.

Risk Assessment

Wells Cathedral is regarded as a low-risk venue for school visits. We are a verified provider under the Somerset County Council scheme for external visits.

Whilst taking all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and security of pupils, we are unable to accept responsibility for any accident or misadventure throughout the duration of the visit. All participants are advised to check their insurance.

The Cathedral Health & Safety policy covers all visits and guided tours.

A planning meeting investigates issues for special days, but staff are welcome to make a site visit prior to the day, if they have particular concerns.

Risk	Safety Measures	Further advice
Risk from members of the public e.g. abduction, assault	Students must be accompanied by an adult. A ratio of 1:10 is advised. Students should not be left unsupervised at any time. Pupils should not be sent to the public toilets alone. Secure, private toilet facilities are available in the Friends Building; both these toilets and the lunch room are free of charge for groups on day programmes.	Guided tours are free. Please give at least 2 weeks notice for us to organise guides. The lunch venue, bag storage and toilet facilities can be hired for £15.
Fire	In the event of fire, Cathedral staff will direct all visitors to the nearest safe exit. Teachers are responsible for doing a roll-call and informing cathedral staff immediately should anyone be missing.	
Tripping and slipping	Medieval doorways in the cathedral often have stone or wooden thresholds, so pupils will need to step over them as they pass through. In some areas this step over is followed by steps down to a lower level. The Chapter House Steps are worn and very beautiful; they are a popular photo opportunity. Please use the hand rail on these steps at all times. Groups must ascend/descend with a maximum of 2 students per step and slowly. Absolutely no running or jumping! Please be aware of other visitors using the steps, who may also need the handrail.	The paving slabs around the cathedral may become slippery when wet . Please give warnings as necessary, according to the weather on the day of your visit. Also take care in icy weather when arriving and leaving the cathedral.
Burning	Children are welcome to light a candle and say a prayer at the various points, but please supervise. It is safer to position votive candles next to, or directly under those already lit.	

Graves and tombstones	In fine weather outdoor picnics are popular on Cathedral Green and the more private Camery Garden . The Camery is also the site for interment of ashes and a higher section for graves. Please do not allow students to exercise in this area, where there are raised kerbs, tombstones and changes of level. It is a sanctified space and inappropriate as a play area.
Asthma attack	The cathedral cat has favourite spots for a snooze in most areas of the cathedral! He is inquisitive and may come to investigate your group. His reaction to being stroked is variable.

Security

Bags cannot be left unattended in the Cathedral. Secure storage is available, and can be accessed once during the visit.

Donations

Entry to the Cathedral is free, however a donation of £2.50 per child is appreciated. For programmed tours, a donation of £3.50 is requested to cover the cost of materials. Accompanying adults are free. Group leaders are asked to contribute at the Information Desk, if a donation has not been returned with the booking form.

Photography

Group permits are available at £3.00 for cameras and videos. Flash photography is not permitted in the Quire or Archives at any time. The Education Department may take photographs for promotional purposes. Please discuss if this causes a problem.

Gift shop

Due to size restrictions of the shop we recommend groups of 10-15 pupils accompanied by an adult. Our service of **pre-ordered souvenir bags** has proved immensely popular, thus avoiding the stresses of shopping, avoiding lost purchases and disparate spending power! The box of bags is given to staff at the end of your visit, for distribution on the coach or back at school. Various options are available:

Souvenir Bags @ £1.50:

- An A5 hardback notebook with West Front cover
- A Wells Cathedral pencil
- A notecard to colour in
- A word search puzzle (KS1 & KS2 versions available)

Souvenir Bags @ £3.50:

- A Wells Cathedral small wind-up torch OR
small teddy with key ring and Wells Cathedral backpack purse
(please specify how many of each)
- A notecard to colour in
- A word search puzzle (KS1 & KS2 versions available)

Links to the National Curriculum

Your visit will enhance topic work, consolidate your teaching at the end of a unit, and have many other benefits relating to children's spirituality and an experience of a medieval building. For example, subject-based links for **Key Stage 2** include:

✓ **Religious Education:**

AMV 2004 (Awareness, Mystery and Value) syllabus for Religious Education in Somerset, NE Somerset and Bath & NE Somerset

Units 2,3,4,6,7 & 8;

- QCA Units
- 1F What can we learn from visiting a church?
 - 2D Visiting a place of worship
 - 3A What do signs and symbols mean?
 - 3C What do we know about Jesus?
 - 3D What is the Bible and why is it important to Christians?
 - 3E What is faith and what difference does it make?
 - 4C Why is Easter important for Christians?
 - 5C Where did the Christian Bible come from?
 - 5D How do the beliefs of Christians influence their actions?
 - 6A Worship and Community
 - 6C Why are sacred texts important?
 - 6E What can we learn from Christian religious buildings?
 - 6F How do people express their faith through the arts?

QCA National Framework for Religious Education Draft 2004

"Religious Education asks about meaning and purpose in life from beginning to end. It gives space for individual reflection..." and pages 24-25

✓ **Art & Design:**

- QCA Units
- 2C Can buildings speak?
 - 3C Can we change places? (Sculpture)
 - 4B Take a seat
 - 4C Journeys (Signs and Symbols)
 - 5B Containers
 - 6B What a performance (Costumes)
 - 6C A sense of place
 - 9 Visiting a site

✓ **Mathematics:**

- NCMa3 4a Chronological order

✓ **English:**

- NCEn1 1a; 1b; 1c; 1d; 1e;
2b; 2e;
6a; 8a; 8b; 9c.
- En3 1a.

✓ **History:**

- NC
- 1a Chronological understanding
 - 2b Knowledge and understanding of events, people & changes in the past.
 - 4a Historical enquiry (from historic buildings and visits)
 - 4b Ask and answer questions about the past.

✓ **PSHE:**

1b; 2e.

✓ **Geography:**

QCA Unit
NC

11 Water

1a Geographical enquiry