

3. Hosting a cultural residency

What does your cultural organisation currently offer schools? Whether it's hands-on workshops, self-guided visits or teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD), creating an extended cultural residency gives the opportunity to add to, inform and inspire this offer.

'As a result of developing stronger partnerships with schools, museums learned more about how to tailor activities to the curriculum and how to cater for specific age groups'

(My Primary School is at the Museum Report, 2016)

Successful school-museum residencies and relationships have the potential to generate repeat visits and embed your organisation in a school's annual planning. School-museum residencies can add to the wider 'ecology' of your museum's work, its place in the community and family learning offer:

'Crucially each of the participating museums raised their profile within their local communities and with local families.'

(My Primary School is at the Museum Report, 2016)

Planning time for meetings with school staff is a key part of understanding school priorities and any focusses for improvement. Conversations will give you a feel of the organisational culture and ethos of the school, what staff want to get out of an extended residency and how they assess learning impact. Co-creating learning opportunities that meet the needs of children and link to the curriculum is a vital part of a cultural residency. The links below give "big picture" curriculum information and the government education policy context schools operate in.

Use 'Hosting a Cultural Residency' to:

- Prepare staff across the museum for a cultural residency.

Information and Inspiration in 'Hosting a Cultural Residency':

- Top Tips for creating a successful cultural residency
- Links to useful toolkits, reports, webpages and organisations.

3.1 Top Tips for creating a successful cultural residency

These top tips were formulated by the project team and provide 10 tips for running a successful cultural residency. The team have drawn upon their knowledge gained through the first-hand experience of planning, establishing, and running the original three pilots, along with knowledge gained through extensive research into establishing a successful and long-lasting relationship between schools and museums.

1. **Plan for the life of the school** – when planning ensure you take into account the life of the whole school when designing extended school residencies, for example, assemblies, school plays, lunch clubs etc.
2. **Draw from the experience of others** – there's a wealth of best practice examples of teaching the whole or parts of the curriculum in museums and cultural organisations to a very high standard across the sector that can help inform planning – check out our blog for ideas.
3. **Think creatively about spaces** – museums have lots of existing spaces and it's useful to think about their use really creatively when planning a cultural residency, don't just use your usual school spaces. Child protection issues are particularly important to tackle early on in planning.
4. **Evaluate!** – collecting robust evidence will help everyone involved learn as much as possible from the experience and show evidence of impact to advocate for future school residencies.
5. **Training** – provide training in how to maximise cross-curricular learning, using not only the collection but also the physical building, behind-the-scenes storage, shop and café facilities and external spaces.
6. **Develop bespoke resources for literacy skills** – as well as improving children's oral communication skills, extended residencies can develop their literacy skills.
7. **Co-create educational experiences** – with teachers and museum staff working collaboratively, extended residencies offer opportunities for deeper engagement and for involving children in co-creating learning experiences.
8. **Engage all museum staff** – from front of house and security to curatorial departments, all museum staff can play an important part in an extended residency. Training and briefings should be organised so that all staff are clear about their contribution and the value of such experiences for children.

My Primary School is at the Museum

9. **Understanding** – extended residencies require both schools and museums to understand each other’s organisational cultures and ways of working. Regular meetings and briefings with museum and school staff are essential.

10. **Explore the use of outdoor spaces** – when planning a residency, staff should consider the most effective use of the museum’s external spaces in order to provide children with access to outdoor play and learning. Outdoor spaces might not be at the museum per se but might be in the local area, within a cultural quarter or neighbourhood – think creatively about what outdoor space you can use.

3.2 Links to useful reports, webpages, toolkits and activity ideas.

3.2.1 Preparing for the new primary curriculum – Supporting Burwell Museum

Easy to follow analysis of the new primary curriculum and how museums can maximise their potential to help schools teach it. South East Museum Development Programme. [3]

[https://southeastmuseums.org/wpcontent/uploads/PDF/Burwell Museum Preparing for the new curriculum.pdf](https://southeastmuseums.org/wpcontent/uploads/PDF/Burwell_Museum_Preparing_for_the_new_curriculum.pdf)

3.2.2 The ABC of Working with Schools

The ABC of Working with Schools is a hub of useful information about how museums can support School learning. Although it was last updated in 2010, it remains a useful resource for insight into how schools work. It also has inspiring examples of museum and school collaborations.

www.abcofworkingwithschools.wordpress.com

3.2.3 Arts Award and Artsmark

A residency could be an opportunity to work towards Artsmark for the partner school or for your organisation to become an Arts Award centre. Children could work towards their Arts Award as part of the museum-school residency.

- Artsmark

Is the school you are partnering with an Artsmark school or aiming to be one? Artsmark is a systematic way of helping teachers to plan, develop and evaluate arts, culture and creativity across the curriculum. A museum-school residency might be a vehicle to help a school towards an Artsmark award or benefit from the training and support Artsmark provides.

www.artsmark.org.uk

- Arts Award

Arts Award is an external accreditation for children (Discover, Explore, Bronze, Silver or Gold standards).

www.artsaward.org.uk

3.2.4 Learning Outside the Classroom: Quality Indicators

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC) award a Quality Badge to education outside the classroom providers who meet the requirements of the LOTC Quality Indicators. The LOTC indicators include meeting the needs of learners and having safety management processes in place. The indicators are good practice elements to incorporate into a School and Museum partnership model. Some cultural institutions may want to investigate accreditation via the LOTC Quality Badge.

[Learning Outside the Classroom: Quality Indicators](#)

3.2.5 Special Schools and Museums Toolkit

A Toolkit of useful advice and checklists focused on creating accessible experiences for children and young people with special educational needs.

<https://southeastmuseums.org/resource-library/special-schools-and-museum-toolkit/>

3.2.6 Play

Playtime is part of the rhythm of the school day and an important part of any museum-school residency. This comprehensive range of downloads put together by OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) is about creating space to play. It includes links to 'Play for Today: National Museum of Childhood Report on Play', and a guide from Learning through Landscapes on: 'The Playtime Revolution – Developing School Play times to support the curriculum and nurture happy, healthy children.'

<http://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/home/for-schools/downloads/>

3.2.7 Museum of London – Early Years Toolkit

Practical suggestions, guidelines, checklists and inspiring case studies about welcoming and meeting the needs of Early Year learners and their families.

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/supporting-london-museums/information-services/early-years-toolkit/full-toolkit>

3.2.8 Now and the future – A review of formal learning in museums – Arts Council England

Chapter 7 explores partnership with teachers, identifying curriculum needs and place based learning.

https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Now_and_the_future_formal_learning_in_museums_NOV2016.pdf