

The magic bus

Museums and Galleries Inspiring Children



2008 Report

RENAISSANCE NORTH EAST
museums for changing lives

Content

- 1. Overview**
- 2. Aims**
- 3. How it came about and what happened**
- 4. Vital Statistics**
- 5. Partners**
- 6. Strengths and Weaknesses**
- 7. School sessions Generic Learning Outcomes**
 - Knowledge and Understanding
 - Skills
 - Attitudes Values and Feeling
 - Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity
 - Activity, Modified Behaviour and Progression
- 8. Summary**
- 9. Some of the Children's comments**
- 10. Appendix**
 - Options
 - Schools involved
 - Sample timetable
 - Magic Bus Song
 - Evaluation

Magic Bus

Overview

The magic bus is an outreach project developed by the Educational Team of the North EAST Regional Hub.

The aim of the project was to raise awareness in schools of the wide ranging opportunities to engage with museums educational services in the North East. (magic is an acronym for museums and galleries inspiring children).

In 2008 the magic bus was targeted specifically at primary schools which were identified by the MLA North East as being low or non participatory, with the further aim of providing a positive first experience of museum education in schools. This involved a fun interactive assembly to introduce the day, followed by museum education professionals from the region's museums delivering 'taster' sessions of their education programme.

The day involved a fun interactive assembly to introduce the magic bus and the museum involved, followed by museum education professionals from the region's museums delivering a 'taster' session of their education programme.

The magic bus also carried a wide range of information and promotional; material related to museum education service which were distributed to the schools it visited. A member of staff from the Hub Education Team was always on hand to provide further information and expertise about museum education in the region and schools were encouraged to hold a short staff meeting at the end of the day to ask any question they may have.

The magic bus was a completely free service to schools.

Aims

The 2008 the magic bus projects targeted specifically at primary schools which were identified by the MLA North East as being low or non participatory. The aim of the project was to give these schools a well supported, high quality, positive first experience of museum education. It was planned that this positive experience should then act as a catalyst to encourage these schools to start to engage with museum education services.



How it came about and what happened

Targeting

While the magic bus project had already ran successfully for two years in 2006 and 2007 it was acknowledge during the evaluation that there were still primary schools who had a low or non participatory with museums in the north east of England.

So it was decide to carry out the magic bus project for another year. Schools which were identified by the MLA North East as being low or non participatory schools who had either not engaged or have only one recorded engagement with museum education services were sent a letter by sub-region inviting them to take part and were allocated places on a first come first served basis.

Options

The schools were given a list of options of topics and sessions available to them on the following themes: Romans Anglo Saxons, Victorians, World War II, Toys and Games and Art The schools were invited to pick one topic for all sessions during the visit and were offered up to 4 sessions in a day. Although in some cases five sessions were carried out and workshops were adapted to the age range of the class. This system worked well, schools had a clear idea of what was available before they booked and what was going to happen on the day. Schools were also required to produce a timetable for the day in advance. This was given to the museum staff who were leading the sessions so that they also knew what was going to happen and when.

These targeted schools were slow to respond and booked more slowly than schools that have a high participatory record. This meant the initial planning and matching of schools and museums took much longer. These schools also need a lot more support when making a booking

Assemblies

All schools had an assembly at the beginning of the day, performed by as freelance artist. A song was commissioned in 2006 was used again. The song was written and recorded by Tony Wilson, who also performed several of the assemblies. The assemblies were used to introduce the children to the idea that the session were provided by a museum and that the magic bus had brought everything that they were going to experience that day.

Handling sessions

The handling sessions took place in the classroom or school hall. Although this is not as exciting as a visit to a museum it was still provided a fun and inspiring experience. For those children who are not use to visiting a museum the school provided them with a safe familiar setting allowing them to engage better with the museum involved. Museum educational professionals from museums across the region delivered a wide variety of 'taster' sessions of their education programmes in schools. The taster session were chosen by the school from the list of options (see appendix1). These sessions were all very different and unique to the museum which was being represented. Although each museum involved had sessions based on handling and exploring a variety of real and replica museum objects. Other elements involved role play, drawing and sketching, literacy and carpentry. Children were also encouraged to use a variety of skills including speaking and listening, empathy, investigation and enquiry skills.

Each child in the schools also received a goody bay from the magic bus.

Family Learning

Libraries, museums and sure start in the region were sent invitation to take part in the project during February half term in order to raise awareness of educational opportunities provided by museums for children and families. These visits were structured and were co-ordinate by **the Hub Education Team's Family Learning Officer**.

The Family learning session during the February Half term were booked in advance but were not as formal as school visits with the emphasis being that museums are fun and exciting places for children and families to visit. Children and adults could examine objects, take part in craft sessions, try on a variety of costumes and listen to a story teller and sing the magic bus song. All the children received magic bus goody bags.

The bus visited

- Durham, Library
- Durham Cathedral
- Sandhill Centre Library
- Hetton Library
- Houghton Library



These sessions engaged with over 300 families' members in four days and the evaluation from the sessions showed that the families taking part found them very enjoyable and worthwhile.

The Bus

The magic bus was a fully liveried mini bus which was big enough to transport all the resources necessary for the project and still be visually appealing and compact enough to be accommodated by small schools. The magic bus vehicle was hired through Burnt Tree and the design and wrapping of the vehicle was **xxxx**. A professional driver was employed to drive the bus for the length of the project. These made the project easier to control and manage. The bus was house at Whithouse in a secure garage throughout the project

Following the evaluation of the magic bus it was commented that if the project was carried out once more to use a van rather than a bus as the seats made access to the collection and materials hard were the van would have been easier to back and unpack.

Evaluation

Teachers and children's evaluation was carried out in 2 sessions throughout the day. Teachers' and children's evaluation responses were analyses using the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) from the Inspiring Learning for All framework. Each response was analyses for evidence of impact in the 5 GLO categories. The majority of evaluation feedback from the teachers was positive fitting mostly into the category of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity. It was also established how much the teachers themselves benefit from the session. The schools have limited artifacts to show the children so the sessions were really good showing the children a wide variety of objects from each period. They also developed new ideas to use in their classroom from the session for example wanted to use the Who, What, Why song to help their children in literacy and many found it a great introduction to their topic.

The pupils' evaluation feedback was also positive with the majority commenting that they enjoying the visit and had learned something new. One of the main aspects that came out of the evaluation was the opportunity the children had to handle the artifacts both children and teachers saw this as one of the best experiences of the sessions. They also enjoyed the interactive nature of the sessions, being able to do lots of new activities and be creative. Furthermore, they enjoyed the assemblies and learning the magic bus song finding it fun and entreating.

Vital Statistics

Museum Visits:

In total the magic bus visited 39 schools, Durham Cathedral and 6 libraries (see appendix 2), engaging with over 7,000 children in school visits and a further 400 in family visits during the February half term.

Budget:

Mini bus hire 13 weeks	£3,000
Driver 16 weeks + advert	£6,500
Safety wear	£250
Fuel @ £25/day	£1,250
Garaging	£1,000
Wrapping & unwrapping	£4,000
Design of wrapping	£500
Photography	£1,000
Assemblies	£4,000
Freelancers (incl S.S)	£2,000
Promotional Items	£3,000
Training/ Evaluation/ Report	£500
Travel and accommodation	£1,000
Materials	£1,000
Contingency	£1,000
Total	£30,000

Partners

34 staff representing 27 of the region's museums delivered sessions for the magic bus. Museums who provided sessions or information and support are:

- Stockton Museum Services: Preston Hall Museum
- Ormesby Hall
- Durham Cathedral
- The Bowes Museum
- Bede's World
- South Shields Museum
- Beamish: Open Air Museum
- Hartlepool Museum
- Hatton Art Gallery
- Bailiffgate Museum
- Darlington Railway Centre and Museum
- Kirkleatham Museum
- The Dorman Museum
- Tyne and Wear Museums
- Durham Light Infantry Museum and Art Gallery
- Mima
- The Captain Cook Birthplace Museum
- Housesteads Roman Fort
- Hexham Old Gaol
- Roman Vindolanda & the Roman Army Museum
- Heatherslaw Corn Mill
- Lady Waterford Hall
- Souter Lighthouse
- Durham University Oriental Museum
- Lindisfarne Priory
- Chester Roman Fort & Museum



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strength:

- All the sessions were closely linked to the National Curriculum (making close links creates less work for the teachers)
- The teachers had a list of different topics to choose from (the topics covered a wide range of periods)
- The magic bus engaged with schools that would not normally make a visit to a museum or engage with them.
- The magic bus created good contacts with schools from the visit and hopefully will result in follow up visits to a museum
- The evaluation showed that the magic bus was well received by teachers and pupils involved
- The evaluation showed that the magic bus met its aims and objectives
- Teachers already knew about the magic bus from previous years
- A lot of schools said they had been to a museum or planning to

Action:

- Make sure further projects are linked to the National Curriculum and make sure that this is clearly stated to the teachers
- Make sure that the teachers are given a wide range of topics to choose from so they are not constricted
- Continue to evaluate all projects to make sure that they meet their aims and objectives
- Make sure that projects' aims and objectives are obtainable and realistic
- Keep trying to attract new audience and develop new contacts
- Continue to work with a variety of different partners to achieve Hub goals

Weaknesses:

- Some of the Victorian Toys were broken during the workshops
- It was suggested it would have been nice if there were costumes from each period for the children to try on
- Some children thought they were actually going to go on the magic bus
- Some of the museums pulled out at the last minute leaving us without an artist
- Some of the teachers commented that they would have liked longer to look at the artefacts and play
- Some of the teachers said they would only be able to visit a museum if costs allowed

Action:

- Have replica toy replacement ready for when they are broken
- Have the costumes on the bus all the time rather than just for Family February Half session
- Make it clear to teachers when booking that the children will not be going onto the magic bus
- Make it clear to the museum involved that if they accept to take part they cannot pull out and if they do they have to give appropriate notice and have a replacement

Knowledge and Understanding

School sessions

The sessions encouraged the children to have a better understanding and knowledge and learn fact and information about the area covered during each session. For example, the Victorian washed session was a great way to introduce the children to the Victorian period.

Some school who were already studying the subject covered in the workshop found that the children were keen to make links with work they had already done. Teachers found that the session provoked a lot of discussion.

Teachers found the sessions very useful as starting points to a topic for example one school used the Victorian session to introduce the children to electricity. It allowed the children to discuss what life was like before electricity.

“They were so engrossed so hopefully”

“Very, very much so”



Skills

School sessions

The majority of teachers felt that the session encouraged their children to develop and use the following skills: teamwork, thinking, speaking, listening, observational and social. They also developed their investigational and deduction skills.

Children learnt about different materials and different designs. For example sessions involving looking at Victorian Toys showed the children how most toys were made out of wood and how easily made they were.

The teachers felt the session were very interactive which is conducive to learning and developing new skills. They also felt it appealed to all styles of learning visual, oral and kinaesthetic.

Not only did the session help develop the children's thinking skills but also their imagination.

“super hands on experience with artefacts”

“P.S.E- working together skills”

“Discussion, cooperation and knowledge”

“The visit was super for helping children with their Observational skills”



Attitudes, Values and Feelings

School sessions

Teachers felt that the session definitely encouraged the children to what to learn about more. They were engaged and enthusiastic throughout the session. The children were motivated to learn about more and talked enthusiastically about their experience. The children used their experience to learn in new ways and provided them with hands on experience. All the children looked and handled the artifacts with care. The children also gained a greater appreciation of their toys today. For example, children looking at Victorian toys learnt a greater appreciation of non-electrical toys. The session also helped them to reflect on their own work.

The session allowed the children to gain increased confidence while learning. For example teachers found that children who were less eager to participate in class discussion became more animated and wanted to be involved. It also gave them an insight into what life use to be like and how different it is compared to their own. The children were very inspired by the session

“The artifacts were great the children will probably want to buy these Victorian toys now”

“One child in particular became more animated and wanted to be involved”

“It helped bring our history topic to life”

“They asked a lot of questions and showed curiosity”

Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity

School sessions

There was clear evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity. Both children and staff thoroughly enjoyed the visit. Children were enthusiastic and inquisitive asking lots of questions. The children really enjoyed experimenting and looking at the artefacts. They thoroughly enjoyed dressing up.

When asked if they had enjoyed the days visit the majority of them replied yes. Some of the children were clearly interested talking seriously about the artefacts and what they could be. The majority of children were actively engaged throughout the sessions and were keen to investigate. Some children even looked at ways they could make things themselves. The session also gave teachers ideas for future lessons for example one teacher was given an idea for a technology projects for the session she planned to make moving toys.

The children’s evaluation showed that they really enjoyed the sessions. The evaluation card showed that the children enjoyed a wide range of different aspects of the sessions particularly the interactive elements; getting to try new things for themselves, making their own art and role play.

“Everyone wanted to play with the Victorian toys”

“Children looked at ways they could make and use toys themselves”

“It helped the children visualize what the Victorians use to play with, wash, eat and wear”

“They learned in fun hands on way”



Activity, Modified Behaviour and Progression

School Sessions

Teachers felt that the majority of children were inspired by the session and many wanted to find out more about the topic. Teachers were impressed with how many children asked questions and talked about the session wanting to learn more.

Most of the sessions carried out were and introductory to the subject they were about to study in the school or as an addition to what they were already studying. For example, one school looked at African Masks and the school was studying Africa. Furthermore some schools planned to carry out a follow up lesson to the session.

Majority of the schools planned to make a visit to a museum in the near future. Also some of the children were keen to visit a museum after the assembly and session.

“We are going to Beamish in February and Wakefield mining museum in March”

“Hope to visit Newcastle Keep soon”

“Hope to visit the local Greendragon”

“We visit Captain Cook Museum in December”

Summary

Overall the magic bus was successful meeting its aims and objectives. The teachers and children enjoyed the sessions and assembly and found them fun and interactive. Children expressed their desire to learn more and visit a museum while teachers were overall pleased with the skills the children developed and the fun they had.

The only points of improvement that came out of the evaluation were more costumes for the children to try on and longer time spent on the activity. Teachers felt that children had used and improved their skills, had been inspired and creative and they themselves felt that the session had helped them with developing ideas for class work. The sessions allowed the teachers to observe the class in their learning which they often can not do giving them an insight into their children's progression.

From the evaluation gathered from the children it was apparent that they thoroughly enjoyed the session. All the children had something that they had enjoyed throughout the day.



Some of the Children's comments

- "I liked the fact that it was magic"
- "The magic bus made history fun, it was really cool"
- "My favourite part was when everyone got dressed up as Victorians it was really funny"
- "I had lots of fun on the magic bus, I hope you come again"
- "I liked it when we got to see all of the different stuff that they have in there houses, I really loved it thank you"
- "My favourite thing was dressing up as a poo road cleaner it was really interesting, it was awesome thank you"
- "I liked the Victorian kitchen because it was interesting"
- I liked looking at the Anglo-Saxon belt and learning about weaving"
- "my favourite thing was learning about the aborigine because they gave me a lot of information"
- "When Phil made the teachers sing"
- "It was a great learning experience"
- "I learnt a lot and had fun thank you xx"
- "I enjoyed learning new painting techniques"
- "I liked the soap it smelt horrid but it was a lovely colour"
- "I hope I will visit your museum soon I loved looking at the artefacts"
- "I liked it when you had solve the, mystery in each suitcase and find out who it was. The objects were interesting and I liked been able to hold them"
- "I liked the candle snuffer because I though it was weird how it worked"

Appendix 1

Options

The following topics are available as lesson options:

Romans or Anglo Saxons

Victorians (can be used to support QCA unit 2: what were homes like a long time ago)

WWII

Toys

Art

Please note that these topics are subject to availability. You may be asked to choose an alternative topic.

It is only possible to cover **one** topic in a day for led sessions but it may be possible for other classes to borrow artefacts, for the day, from a wide range of alternative topics from the magic bus, please ask for details.

Appendix 2

Schools involved

14/01/2008	Mill Lane Primary School	Carol O Brien (H)	TS18 1QX	01642 860055
15/01/2008	Wingate Infants School	Zoe Martin (HIS)	TS28 5AQ	01429 836843
16/01/2008	St Joseph's, Blackhall	Mrs McDaid (H)	TS27 4HE	0191 586 4308
17/01/2008	Harewood Primary School	Sue Bell	TS17 7JJ	01642 355425
18/01/2008	Bewley Infants School	Val Watkins	TS23 3LH	01642 371647
21/01/2008	St Mary's, Long Newton	Mr Moorfoot (H)	TS21 1DL	01642 581716
22/01/2008	St Cuthbert's, Stockton	Jenny Amlin (coor)	TS18 3SY	01642 601567
23/01/2008	The Links Primary School	Margaret Bushel	TS16 9ES	01642 785950
24/01/2008	Teesville Infants School	Alison Ashton (H)	TS6 0DD	01642 453310
25/01/2008	St Mary's, Wingate	Joanne Walton (DH)	TS28 5AN	01429 838294
28/01/2008	St Joseph's Juniors, Birtley	Margaret Coleman	DH3 2PN	0191 4102231
29/01/2008	St Columbas Primary, Wallsend	Mr Meek	NE28 8EN	0191 2007235
30/01/2008	St Joseph's Infants, Birtley	Lynn Smith	DH3 1LU	0191 4102324
31/01/2008	Otterburn First School	Anne Corbett (ART)	NE19 1JF	01830 520283
01/02/2008	Wetherwack Primary School	Emma Hull	SR5 5RZ	0191 5535365
04/02/2008	ST.Joseph's RC Primary, Blaydon	Mr Hannah	NE21 4BG	0191 4143108
05/02/2008	St Michael's, Houghton le Spring	Anne Boyle	DH5 8NF	0191 5536535
06/02/2008	Swalwell Primary School	Anne Bjelis (admin)	NE16 3HZ	0191 433400
07/02/2008	The Drive Primary School	Alison Orton (s)	NE10 0PY	0191 4210390
08/02/2008	Wellfield Middle School	Mr Collinson (H)	NE25 9QW	0191 252 9486
11/02/2008	Hamsterley Primary School	Sandra Lawrence(H)	DL13 3QF	01388 488279
12/02/2008	St Joseph's, Ushaw Moor	Mrs Lightfoot	DH7 7LF	0191 3730355
13/02/2008	Acre Rigg Infants School	Lynne Laws	SR8 2DU	0191 5864437
14/02/2008	St Joseph's, Gilesgate Stanhope Barrington Primary School	Mrs Steele Diane Wilson	DH1 2JQ DL13 2NU	0191 386 611 01388 528218
February Half Term Literacy and Library				
18/02/2008	Durham Library			
18/02/2008	Durham Library			
19/02/2008	Durham Library			
19/02/2008	Houghton Library	Laura Warnock	DH4 4AF	0191 5205029
20/02/2008	Sandhill Centre Library	Laura Warnock	SR3 4EN	0191 5205123
20/02/2008	Bunny Hill Library	Laura Warnock	SR5 4BW	0191 5205203
22/02/2008	Durham Cathedral	Elizabeth Baker	DH1 3EH	0191 386 4266
22/02/2008	Durham Cathedral	Elizabeth Baker	DH1 3EH	0191 386 4266
25/02/2008	Tow Law Millenium Primary School	Dianne Appleby	DL13 4LF	01388 730283
26/02/2008	Bowburn Junior School	Lynne Lyons (H)	DH6 5DZ	0191 377 0497
27/02/2008	Witton le Wear Primary School	Mark Stephenson (H)	DL14 0BG	01388 488350
28/02/2008	Eslington School	Mrs Stokes (ART)	NE8 2EP	0191 478 5198
29/02/2008	Bedlington the First School	Andrew Layton (ART)	NE22 7JQ	01670 822 326
03/03/2008	New Delaval First School	Angela Appleby	NE244DA	01670 353 255
04/03/2008	Broomley First School	Mrs S. Coulson (H)	NE43 7NN	01661 842271
05/03/2008	Acklington First School	Linda Gordon	NE65 9BW	01670 760335
06/03/2008	Haltwhistle First School	Mr Roberts Green		01434 320467
07/03/2008	Henshaw First School	Sally Timmons	NE477EP	01434 344 324
10/03/2008	Harbottle First School	Sue Joyner	NE65 7DG	01669 650271
11/03/2008	Prudhoe Castle First School	Jane Van	NE42 6PH	01661 833122
12/03/2008	Netheron Northside First School	Hilda Blythe	NE65 7HD	01669 630234
13/03/2008	Stamfordham First School	Mrs McKinney (H)	NE18 ONA	01661 886 358
14/03/2008	Amble Middle School	Mr J. Butler	NE65 OND	01665 710217

Appendix 3

Sample timetable

8.30 staff from the project arrive at school to set up

9.05 full school assembly including the magic bus song

9.30 – 10.30 Class 1

10.30-10.45 morning break

10.45-11.45 Class 2

11.45- 1 lunch break

1-2 Class 3

2-3 Class 4

3.10-3.30 staff meeting- staff from the magic bus will be available to provide information and to answer any questions about using museums.

NB: this is an example and can be adapted to fit your school day although we would appreciate flexibility over break times et



Chorus

You don't need to climb aboard the magic bus
The magic bus brings everything to you
Don't miss your chance (CLAP X 2) it really is a must
The magic bus brings lots for you to do

Verse 1

There's things for you to hold
And there's things for you to see
There's dressing up as dinosaurs too
There's costumes from long ago
And stories of the world
The only thing we really need is you

Chorus

Verse 2

Victoria would know about the things that you will see
The Romans would recognise them too
There're books, puppets
So many things to do
The only thing we really need is you

Chorus

Verse 3

You can find out about how your Great Granny lived
See how they survived in World War 2
The Egyptians will no longer be a mystery
The only thing we really need is you

Chorus

Song by Tony Wilson © 2006

Appendix 4 Teachers evaluation form

Name of School			
Name of Teacher			
Number of Pupils		Year Group	
Workshop Name			
Museum/ Gallery			



Please take a moment to answer the questions and add further comments in the spaces provided. Your feedback is essential to the development of our service. Thank you for your time.

[1] Do you feel that the visit increased your pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic?	

[2] In which ways do you feel that the visit encouraged or increased skills development?	

[3] Do you feel that the visit might encourage your pupils to want find out more?	

[4] Was there a change in your pupils' attitudes and values evident during the visit?	

[5] Was there evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity sparked by the visit?



Empty response area for question 5

[6] Do you anticipate visiting a museum or gallery with your class in the future?



Empty response area for question 6

[7] Did the visit fit in with your teaching plan? In what ways?



Empty response area for question 7

[8] How did you, as a teacher, benefit from the visit?



Empty response area for question 8

[9] Could the visit have been improved in any way for your pupils? For yourself?



Empty response area for question 9

[10] If you could choose just one outcome of the visit, what would it be?



Empty response area for question 10

**Please return to:
Hub Education Team
Segedunum Roman Fort,
Baths and Museum,
Buddle Street
Wallsend
NE28 6HR**

Or return to a member of staff at the end of your visit

