

Learning at Lewes Castle & Museum



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Explore Lewes Castle with our range of curriculum link learning offers

Lewes Castle dates to the time of William the Conqueror. In 1264 it was the setting for one of the most important battles in medieval England – when King Henry III was defeated by the Earl of Leicester Simon de Montfort.



The neighbouring museum illustrates the fascinating history of Lewes. Over the last 1,500 years the town has been an Anglo-Saxon settlement on the front-line of Alfred the Great's war with the Vikings; has witnessed religious turmoil during the reigns of Henry VIII and Queen Mary I; and civil war during the time of King Charles I.

Lewes was a source of inspiration for the American War of Independence and the French Revolution; and the setting for Britain's worst ever avalanche in 1836.

What we offer

- Interactive actor led workshops and tours for Key Stages 1 to 3, and SEND
- Activity trails tailored by Key Stage and aligned to the National Curriculum
- Exclusive access for your group to the Lewes Town Model audio-visual presentation
- Free time to explore the castle and museum

School visits - what's included

The following is available for all school visits and included in general admission, which is £3.80 for children.

Activity sheets tailored for Key Stage 1, 2 and 3

Through a series of curriculum-linked trails, challenges and games, pupils discover what the archaeological remains reveal about life in a medieval castle - the sort of people who lived in it, the jobs they did, their leisure time activities and the food they ate.

Pupils will also learn about how the medieval castles were designed to fend off attackers.

1 activity sheet for every 2 pupils; clipboards and pencils provided

Lewes Town Model – audio-visual presentation

This large scale, highly detailed model shows what Lewes would have looked like in 1880.

The accompanying 12-minute film describes the 1,000 year history of Lewes – its founding as an Anglo-Saxon town; the building of the Norman Castle; its role in the Battle of Lewes; the religious turmoil during the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary I, and the English Civil Wars; the home of Thomas Paine – the political philosopher who inspired the American and French revolutions; and the scene of Britain's worst ever avalanche.

The location of each of these events is highlighted on the model along with the story of how Lewes developed over the centuries as a centre of industry, trade and leisure.

Free time to explore the Museum of Sussex Archaeology

The Museum of Sussex Archaeology contains a fascinating collection of artefacts and artworks dating from the first Neolithic settlers to the Victorians. Among the many intriguing items in the collection, pupils can see flint axeheads to fossils and Roman pottery.



Key Stage 2 - Bookable Workshops

In addition to a Key Stage 2 specific activity trail, Lewes Town Model audio-visual presentation and free time to explore the Museum of Sussex Archaeology, the following workshops are bookable.

Actor-led tour of Lewes Castle

Join William the castle steward or Alice a servant, for an engaging interactive tour of Lewes Castle. Find out how the Normans built this impressive military fortification and why they placed it in the middle of Lewes.

Discover how it has been cleverly designed to repel attackers and what it was like to live in one.

Learn about the role Lewes played in one of the most important battles of medieval England when King Henry III faced the rebel baron Simon de Montfort.



Curriculum links

History

- A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends the pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066.
- A local history study: a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality; a significant turning point in British history

Cost: £114 per class (max 30 students + accompanying adults) plus general admission

Duration: 30 minutes

Book by emailing LearningLewes@sussexpast.co.uk

Key Stage 2 - Bookable Workshops

Workshop - The Story of Beowulf

In this interactive workshop the famous Anglo-Saxon tale of Beowulf is brought to life by our actor with the help of your pupils.

Heroes and heroines are called to battle, dragons and monsters are defeated, and out of tragedy emerges honour.

Experience the Anglo-Saxon version of a blockbuster movie and learn about the lives of people living during this fascinating period of history.

Curriculum links

History

- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots - Anglo-Saxon invasions, settlements and kingdoms: place names and village life. Anglo-Saxon art and culture.
- The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England.
- A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends the pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066.

English

- Spoken language
- Increasing pupils' familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally.

Cost: £114 per class (max 30 students + accompanying adults) plus general admission

Duration: 30 minutes



Book by emailing LearningLewes@sussexpast.co.uk

Key Stage 2 - Bookable Workshops

Workshop - The Black Death Comes to Lewes

In this interactive, actor-led workshop your pupils will meet Wilfred a 14th century survivor of the Black Death. A third of the population has died and English society has been changed forever, but Wilfred has survived to tell the tale.

With the help of your pupils Wilfred will describe how this terrible pestilence came to England, what happened to his family and the people of Lewes, and why he believes he was spared. He will even pass on some tips for avoiding the plague in future.

What does the future hold for Wilfred and for the rest of Lewes? How has England been changed and what does the future hold for our intrepid story-teller?



Curriculum links

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Making a booking

Booking your school visit

If you'd like to make a booking, please email LearningLewes@sussexpast.co.uk with the following:

- The site you would like to visit - Lewes Castle or Anne of Cleves House
- 2 to 3 possible dates for your visit
- School address, phone number and email address
- The number of students and year group
- The workshops you would like to book

We aim to respond to you within 5 working days.

Visit our FAQs page

To find out more information, visit www.sussexpast.co.uk/learning-in-lewes-faqs.
Alternatively, contact us at LearningLewes@sussexpast.co.uk.

We offer school visits across multiple Sussex Past heritage sites, including Anne of Cleves House and Fishbourne Roman Palace.

Find out more at www.sussexpast.co.uk

**We look forward to
welcoming your school soon.**