

Education Policy

2013 – 2016

1. Introduction

Mansfield Museum seeks to collect and interpret items that celebrate the history of Mansfield District and is committed to encouraging participation in cultural activities by local communities and visitors, for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

Breaking this down, the Mission Statement sets out the purpose of the Museum as follows:

- To collect, preserve and display items relating to Mansfield, the surrounding area and its people
- To provide exhibitions and events
- To carry out projects and outreach work
- To help promote lifelong learning

2. Definition of Education

Mansfield Museum and Art Gallery believes 'education' to be a core function of its service, which enables all sections of the community to make connections with the building, its collections and exhibitions.

3. Aims

- To provide an enjoyable, useful and well-used educational resource, incorporating the fullest range of positive and fun life-long learning opportunities, for the widest possible audience, including mixed-age groups with a range of interests.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the local heritage and environment, including contemporary and historical issues such as environmental change, sustainable development and the part the Museum's visitors might play in these.

- To interpret the Museum's collections imaginatively and actively for all levels of interest and ability.
- To extend the formal learning experience for local schools in ways not feasible within school, across an array of National Curriculum topics.
- To provoke visitors' curiosity and create an atmosphere of enjoyable exploration and discovery for all.

4. Methods

- Providing maximum opportunities for engagement and interaction with the collections via such enjoyable and stimulating resources as the ArtCart and the various Gallery Trails.
- Producing Outreach services such as Memory Loans Boxes for the use of community groups.
- Stressing the Museum's relevance to its visitors and their lives.
- Maintaining a welcoming and stimulating Education Room which reflects the Museum and its activities, in which the youngest of pupils can feel stimulated and safe.
- Ensuring that formal materials for school visits have close links to the National Curriculum and cater for a broad spectrum of learning styles.
- Delivering thought-provoking, active, child-centred, concrete sessions in the Education Room.
- Hosting a website which invites the visitor's active engagement with the Museum's collections.
- Providing a changing programme of informal ArtBeat workshops during school holidays featuring as varied a selection of crafts as possible for children of all ages.
- Facilitating informal art and other drop-in activities on occasional weekends
- Staging special one-off events such as Volcanoes Week and Stardome.
- Celebrating national events such as the Big Draw and National Museums Month in creative, informal ways.
- Exploring links with outside partners such as local colleges and Carr Bank Park.

- Providing active materials to enhance the appeal of temporary exhibitions, where appropriate.

5. Audience

- The Museum's aim is to be as inclusive as feasible, drawing in as wide a cross-section of local people as possible. The Museum remains, however, particularly focused on:
- Families with young children with increased emphasis on meeting the needs of all members of such mixed parties.
- Older children, independent of their parents.
- Formal local school groups.
- More 'hard to reach' young people.
- Ethnic minorities

6. Public awareness

- Mailshots to all Nottinghamshire primary schools and beyond, once a year, detailing the range of formal sessions available.
- Engaging visiting teachers in discussion of facilities which might be of future use to them and their colleagues.
- Providing visiting teachers with up-to-date written information on all aspects of the formal school visits programme.
- Utilising the local press to celebrate successes
- Maintaining an ArtBeat mailing list.
- Production of a thrice-yearly Newsletter.
- Welcoming teachers and other interested parties to visit informally, to see how they might build Museum resources into their schemes of work.

7. Evaluation and Consultation

- Formal teacher evaluation questionnaires issued at the end of every session.
- Comments in the various Visitors' Books.
- Verbal feedback.
- Unsolicited written responses from teachers.
- Feedback from visiting schools in the form of children's work
- The number of repeat visitors
- The number of word-of-mouth recommendations
- The number of paid for bookings.