

### CASE STUDY

#### Devonshire Primary Academy, Blackpool

(453 pupils)

This case study has been devised to support primary schools who are working on their Second Stage Planning Phase of the Clare Duffield Foundation's School Trips Grant.

It has been written by **Nicola Horabin**, Deputy Headteacher at Devonshire Primary Academy in Blackpool.

Nicola and her team took a strategic, thematic approach to the planning of their school trips programme to ensure their pupils would have a wide range of high quality experiences to support the curriculum, broaden horizons and raise cultural capital.

Read on to find out how Nicola and her team approached putting together their school trips plan.

#### Tell us about your school...

Our school is a two-form entry primary school in Blackpool, where approximately 67% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium and the vast majority live locally.

When we received confirmation of the grant award, we had a limited timeframe to submit a detailed plan. To ensure maximum impact, we decided to theme the trips to provide breadth and variety. **Our six themes** were carefully chosen based on the context of our school and the current needs of our children.

We shared these themes with teachers and invited suggestions for each category. As the **Grant Programme Lead**, I then curated a definitive list, which was submitted for approval. This approach ensured that every child would experience six varied trips, including at least one visit to a city.



Nicola Horabin, Deputy Headteacher



## Second Stage Planning for Primary Schools

### PLANNING

#### What themes did you choose?

- **Local Area Visit:** Despite being based in central Blackpool, many of our children have never visited iconic attractions such as Blackpool Tower, Blackpool Zoo, and Stanley Park.
- **Museum:** Previously, our offer was limited to Showtown Museum. We expanded this to include museums linked to our curriculum and others designed to build cultural capital and provide city experiences.
- **Adventure:** Activities aimed at pushing children beyond their comfort zones to build resilience and confidence.
- **Heritage:** Linked to our curriculum, including visits to Lancaster Castle, Haverthwaite Steam Railway, Murton Park, Beeston Castle, and Carlisle Castle.
- **Arts:** The whole school (except Year 6) attended the Blackpool Tower Circus, while Year 6 will visit London to see The Lion King.
- **Countryside:** Experiences ranged from Blackpool Beach to Lake Windermere.

Research for the trips combined **teacher input** (at least three suggestions per theme), staff experience, and online research. The **themed approach** made planning more **structured** and will give our children a breadth of experiences that significantly enhances their **cultural capital**.

#### Any challenges? And what were the solutions?

One major challenge was the lack of direct contact with venues—many rely solely on booking forms and email, which increased workload and caused confusion, especially when managing group sizes for a two-form entry school. Liverpool Museums were a notable exception, offering phone support and excellent customer service. The **Clore Duffield Schools Programme Manager** can help support with connections to trip venues, do seek out their support if you are hitting a brick wall with any organisations.

A member of teaching staff supported me throughout, which was invaluable. We learned that focusing on **one term at a time** made the process more manageable, except for the London overnight stay planned for the summer term.

### PLANNING

#### Any other advice on your approach?

We created an additional spreadsheet which tracks the status of each trip. It adds more detail such as: contact with the venue, confirmation, transport booked, times of workshops, lunches booked/organised, EVOLVE completed, staffing etc.

To maintain **consistency and quality**, we decided that myself and the member of the teaching staff would complete all risk assessments (EVOLVE). While this added to our workload, it ensured thorough planning and provided staff with a strong example of best practice.

As a two-form entry school, we had 42 trips to plan and execute. We chose to **manage this centrally** to avoid adding to teachers' workload and to **maintain control over timelines and compliance**. Other schools may prefer to delegate this responsibility, but this approach worked best for us.

### TOP TIPS

- **Theme your trips for breadth and impact**
- **Gather teacher perspectives early**
- **Stay highly organised** – our spreadsheet tracking contacts, confirmations, transport, and timings was essential.
- **Draw on the support of the Clore Duffield Schools Programme Manager**

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