NOTTS Outdoors

St Michael's Environmental Education Centre (StM)

School Visit Information 2024-25

NOTTS Outdoors

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Important documents:

StM Specific Risk Assessments 2024-25
StM Safety Codes of Practice 2024-25
StM Dormitory List – Fire Roll call
StM Information for Parents & Carers
StM Menu Choices
StM Kit List
StM Wildlife Boot List

Website link to further information and visit document:

St Michael's | Notts Outdoors (nottinghamshire.gov.uk)

Contact Details:

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1. Introduction

Welcome to St Michael's Environmental Education Centre (StM)

Living and Learning Together

Nottinghamshire County Council maintains StM in Hathersage as part of its provision to encourage and facilitate outdoor learning. The centre, which caters mostly for pupils from primary Key Stage 1 & 2 and special schools, provides residential accommodation for 34 pupils plus four staff. The adjoining cottage has four additional staff places.

Whilst at StM we aim to enhance and enrich the curriculum and develop pupils' awareness, understanding and appreciation of the environment through participation in a range of outdoor studies and activities.

A residential experience creates tremendous opportunities for personal, social and health education.

These aims are developed in the context of its location in Hathersage, a rural village in the Peak District National Park.

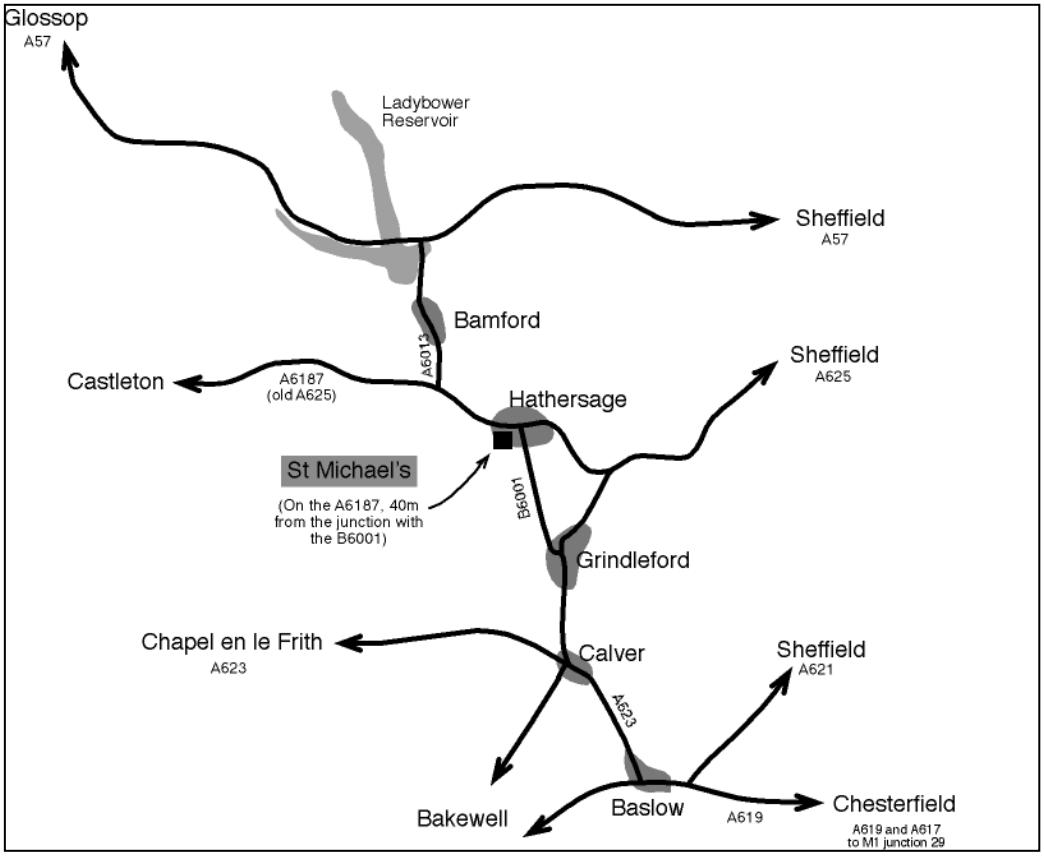
The centre has been accredited to enable groups to complete the 'Discovery Level' of the John Muir Award as part of their visit. **Please see further details on page 10**.

This document contains practical information about the centre, its resources and domestic arrangements which will assist you in preparing for your visit.

It is essential that the StM 'Safety Codes of Practice' booklet is also kept at hand during your visit. This important document lists all emergency procedures and telephone contacts and has guidelines for each activity.

If you need any further advice, please contact the centre.

2. Location maps

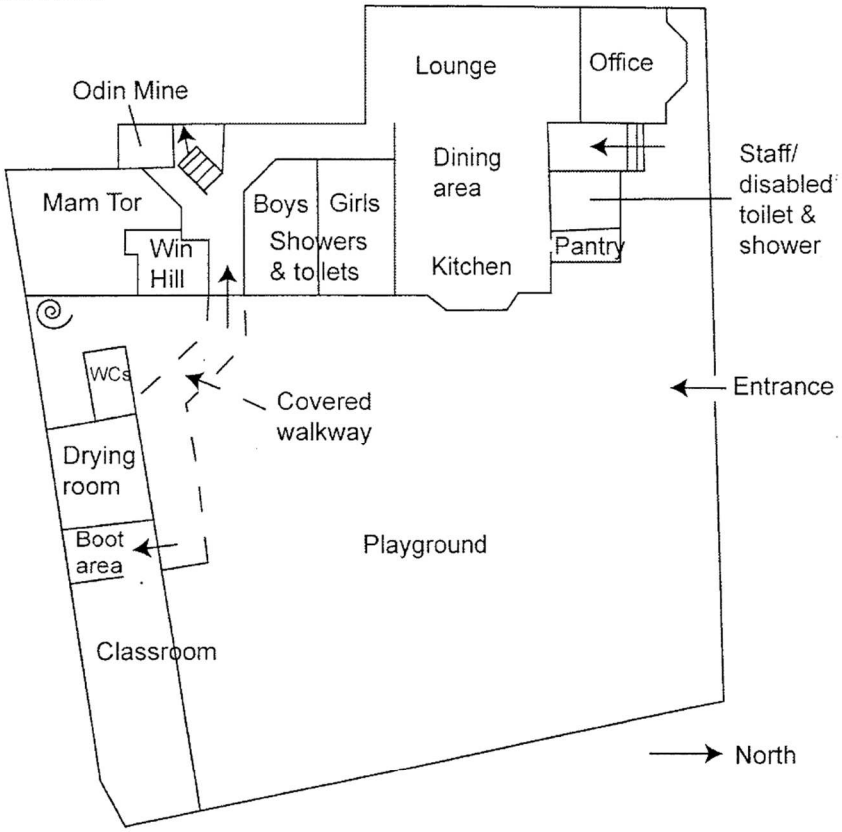


3. Site Plan

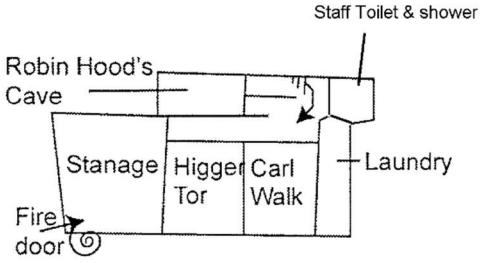
St Michael's Environmental Education Centre, Teacher Planning Pack

Site Plan

Ground Floor



First Floor



No of Beds	GROUND FLOOR
1 or 2*	Odin Mine (staff)
10	Mam Tor
4	Win Hill
	FIRST FLOOR
1 or 2*	Robin Hood's Cave (staff)
8	Stanage including fire exit
6	Higger Tor
6	Carl Wark

*These rooms are designed as staff bedrooms with a single bed and a fold away bed on top.

COTTAGE

The cottage is next door, self-contained and accommodates up to four adults (no pupils).

4. Visit Preparation Checklist (actions required by the school)

Action Required	Required when	Completed
Visit dates confirmed and confirmation email received. StM visit coordinator (VC) allocated to your visit	On booking	
Planning email and pre-visit documents sent to school at least 12 weeks before visit dates. Activity programme agreed with VC.	12 weeks	
Teaching staff who are unfamiliar with the centre should arrange a pre-visit (Contact StM to arrange)	Pre-visit	
Confirm that the school has suitable first aid provision. (First aid training available through StM)	Prior to visit	
Complete EVOLVE or your own in-house safety system as required	Approval prior to visit	
StM catering menu choices returned	At least 4 weeks before visit	
Wildlife Boot List & Dormitory list returned	2 weeks before visit	

5. Advice on visit preparation

- A visit coordinator (VC) will be allocated to your school and support you during the planning process.

- **IMPORTANT note on arrival/departure timings:** Many of our schools are opting to book 2-night residentials which allows for two visits each week. The following policy aims to maximise the time that schools spend with us, whilst providing our domestic staff the time required to prepare the centre to a high standard.

- Schools have **several arrival** options:

    1. Earliest arrival time **10.30am** store bags, use classroom for intro talk, equipment issue and an activity. Outside toilets available for use by pupils. Lunch could be off site or StM outdoor space; the main lounge is available from **12.30pm**. Access to the dormitories from **1pm**. Afternoon activities planned as normal.
    2. Plan morning activity before arrival, groups have previously been cycling, visited local villages such as Eyam/Castleton, show caves, Chatsworth, lunch off site, arrival and access to the main lounge at **12.30pm** and dormitories from **1pm.**

Note: Self-catering schools can store food in the kitchen at any time after 10am and teaching staff are welcome to use the ground floor staff toilet.

- Schools have several **departure** options. Please vacate the dormitories and kitchen area by **9am**. This allows our domestic staff time to prepare the centre:

    1. Schools can arrange transport for **10am** (Please ask them to be prompt).
    2. Schools can store baggage at StM, depart the centre at **10am** for planned local activity, lunch on or off site and arrange transport after lunch. Outside toilets available for use by pupils. Tutor will be available throughout the morning.
    3. Plan morning/afternoon activity after departure at **10am**, groups have previously been cycling, visited local villages such as Eyam/Castleton, show caves.

- A course tutor will work with you for the duration of your visit. They do **not work overnight or evenings**, however we can discuss any special requests with you. On arrival day they will be available from 10.30am until 5pm. On full activity days, 8.30am until 4.30pm and on departure days 8.30am until departure.

- Transport to and from the centre is not provided. Most of our schools arrive by coach. Hathersage has a train station, and some schools travel by train. We **strongly recommend** that you consider having a staff vehicle onsite to transport children if required. There are no centre vehicles.

- Ensure that you have suitable insurance and first aid provision. Remember that StM staff will not be on site overnight.

6. Programme Planning - Activity Summary

A week's residential experience offers unrivalled opportunities for personal and social growth as the children share the centre as their home. A balanced, varied programme should provide challenge and interest for each member of the group. The following is a summary of the activities which can be planned into your visit.

Programme Planning

1. If you have visited us before, please look at your previous programme.
2. Decide on your arrival and departure times (Note arrival/departure policy page 7).
3. Decide on any additional activities/visits to take place prior to arrival or after departure.
4. Look at our activity descriptions and decide what you would like to include. Remember that a residential stay can be very tiring for children and staff so consider quality social time.
5. Throughout your stay you will have a course tutor. Whilst some of the activities can be self-led by suitably experienced teaching staff, our tutors offer a wealth of local and environmental knowledge which will enhance your children's learning experience.
6. Your visit coordinator (VC) will agree the activities with you and provide a completed programme. A sample programme is attached.

Activity	Description	Programme considerations
Adventure Walk	We have 4 fabulous options which all explore multiple Peak District landscapes and cover numerous areas of the curriculum including PE, History, Sciences and Geography. These are full day activities and teaching staff can discuss the theme of the adventure with the VC All walks can be done as a whole group. Some schools opt to split groups.	*Walks can be adapted to suit different age groups.* *Please discuss with your visit coordinator any SENs.* *Course tutor led ideally, but self-led is suitable with competent teaching staff.*
	Padley Adventure Groups can take the train to Grindleford (Some opt to walk), visit Padley Chapel for a historical talk by your tutor, hide and seek in the ancient oak woodland, exploration of Bole Hill Quarry (a super quarry where 1.2 million tons of stone were quarried to build the Howden and Derwent dams), lunch in the quarry and den building at Whim plantation. Return StM 3.30/4pm.	*Distance: 8.5km walking from the centre.* *Train taken to Grindleford (9.44am) then 5.5km walk back to centre.*
	Stanage Adventure Depart from StM, follow the course of Hood Brook to the Warren (ancient oak woodland), lunch in the plantation below Stanage, walk onto Stanage, explore Robin Hoods cave (weather permitting) and return StM 3.30/4pm.	*Distance: 7.5km* *Stanage may require a second tutor if done as a whole group. Discuss with VC*
Adventure Walk	**Eyam adventure – The Plague Village** 09:34 bus from Hathersage (opposite the Little John pub) Explore the history of	*Distance: 5 to 6km* *Eyam Church must be requested and booked by StM, 3 options:*

	Eyam and visit many of the famous plague sites. A visit and talk can be arranged with local volunteers at the church. Return to StM via Eyam Moor. Various drop off options.	*1: £1 per child, self-guided tour (30 mins)* *2: £1.50 with 20 mins DVD and guide* *3: £1.50 guide/talk (no DVD, 60 mins)* *Bus (Jan 2022) £1.30 child, £2.60 adult (Pay on bus)*
	Explore Castleton/Hope/Edale Take the bus or train to a number of destinations and explore the fascinating history and geography of these areas. Call us to discuss the options.	*Walks of various lengths and contents, depending on age of children, transport used and available time:* *1. Show caves (charges apply)* 2. *Peveril castle (Free self-led visits, application with English heritage)* 3.
	Shorter local walks These are suitable during limited time or for younger children, or when groups arrive mid-morning/early afternoon. These short walks are nice introductions to the local area and allow children to test their boots. Options include, Mill Pond, Stepping Stones & Thorpe Farm.	*Discuss with VC* *Can be adapted to cater for the time available, however a rough timescale is a 2/3-hour period.*
Stream Study	Hood Brook is a short walk from the centre and offers a perfect environment for a stream study session. The stream is full of life, from Crayfish, various mayfly nymphs and much more. Using appropriate equipment, we sample the stream and complete a biotic index. The children are allowed to play in the stream after a period of study. During the lambing session (April & first two weeks in May) the stream study moves to a location on the opposite side of the village.	*Course tutor led ideally, but self-led is suitable with competent teaching staff having been inducted into the activity.* *Requires minimum of 2 hours, groups often split group with an orienteering session as they are both located in Brookfield Manor.* *During the lambing session when Brookfield Manor is closed the orienteering/stream study split does not work due to their alternative locations. The village study may work better during this period as an alternative with either orienteering or the stream study.* *Stream study is not appropriate during the winter months due to a lack of wildlife.*
Boat Building	Children can build rafts from natural materials and race them down the Hood Brook.	*Can be included as part of the stream study and orienteering activity.*
Orienteering	This fun and physical activity is always popular and offers children the opportunity to learn about the basics of map reading. Our permanent course is in Brookfield Manor. During the lambing session (April & first two weeks in May) orienteering moves to an alternative location near the village church.	*Course tutor or self-led with competent teaching staff having been inducted into the activity. Requires minimum of 2 hours, groups often split group with a stream study session as they are both located in Brookfield Manor.* *During the lambing session the alternative orienteering/stream study split does not work due to their locations. The village study is more suitable during this period as with either orienteering or the stream study.*
Brookfield Manor	Brookfield is used for orienteering, stream study, night walk and children's games within a designated area (see map). It can be used either for an am, pm or eve session. Brookfield will be closed for the lambing season which is approximately a 6-week period, including all of April and the first two weeks of May. Brookfield Manor can occasionally restrict access for other reasons.	*Brookfield Manor has to be pre-booked through the centre and should not be used without permission.*
Village Study	The historic village of Hathersage has much to offer and we have a range of village study activities, including WW1 re-enactment challenge and church visit	*Discuss with your VC*

	focusing on Little John's Grave and the Robin Hood story.	
Bat detectors	The centre has 10 bat detectors and identification guides which can be used on the evening to explore local bat activity.	*Your VC will provide an introduction to the use of bat detectors.*
Team challenge/ Problem Solving	Located at the centre, we have a range of team challenge/problem solving exercises, including: Stepping Stones, Roller Ball, Jumbled Jigsaw, Keypad and Roped Shapes.	*Self-led, suitable as an evening activity.*
Conservation	Dry stone walling activity available. This activity can be led by a StM member of staff or a Peak District ranger (additional cost applies, contact centre for further information).	*Please discuss this with your VC. Further conservation activities are being discussed with our partners.*
Minibeasting/ Weather Study	Minibeasting and weather study are best incorporated into many of the walks as a theme of nature exploration.	*Minibeasting is more difficult during the winter months due to a lack of wildlife.*
Swimming **Farm Visit** **Village Park**	Hathersage is lucky to have a heated outside pool, or lido. It's a wonderful experience for the children if you have the budget. Thorpe Farm, a short walk from the centre has an ice cream parlour, trailer tours and cows being milked by robots. Hathersage has a lovely village park with play equipment & open area for sports	*http://www.hathersageswimmingpool.co.uk/* *info@hathersageswimmingpool.co.uk* *01433 650843* *http://www.hope-valley.co.uk/our-farm-c4.html* *jane@hope-valley.co.uk 01433 650 659* *NOTE: We ask schools to book direct with these outside suppliers. Please discuss timings with your VC.*
Any other ideas?	We are happy to discuss other activity ideas, or options you have included in the past, so please speak with us.	*Specific topics you wish to cover or links with the curriculum.*
Advice on ratios	Local Authority guidelines for residential visits state ratios of at least 1 teacher to 20 pupils, along with other teaching staff & adults as follows: Y1 & Y2: 1 teacher/adult to 6 pupils Y3: 1 teacher/adult to 6-10 pupils Y4 to Y6: 1 teacher/adult to 10-12 pupils.	*Extra adults (including parents, governors, school staff etc.) can be a great help. A male and female adult should accompany every mixed party.*
Centre Shop	The centre shop offers small StM branded items such as bracken, teddies, pens, pencils, key rings, oval balls, playing cards, wristbands, postcards, torches and teddy sized rucksacks.	*This can be planned on the last evening and we recommend that children bring a maximum of £5. If possible please encourage children to bring silver change. There may be the opportunity to spend this on other visits.*
Centre Woodland & Campfire	StM has secured the use of a small woodland from Sept 2021. Located within a 5-minute walk from the centre it will allow for forest school, stream and environmental activities and a place for evening camp fires.	*This site is available for woodland campfire activities from Autumn 2021. During the evenings it is a teacher led activity. Schools are required to bring their own marshmallows. At least one member of teaching staff should be fully aware of the 'Risk Assessment' found in the 'StM Specific RA, Section A18' and follow the procedures in 'StM Woodland Campfire Guidance' as well as a verbal induction delivered by a StM tutor. Use of the woodland campfire needs to be agreed prior to the visit.*

Train travel Padley Adventure

Hathersage to Grindleford (Single) Depart 0944am – Arrive 0948am.

There is a new ticket machine at Hathersage station and signs warning passengers that they should buy a ticket before boarding the train. Therefore, we suggest you contact the group booking team at Northern Rail.

Contact details:
0113 8814604 or specialist.sales@northernrailway.co.uk
Specialised Sales
Arriva Rail North Ltd
The Travel Centre
Leeds Station
New Station Street
Leeds, LS1 4DY

- Group tickets must be booked at least 7 days in advance.
- Open Monday-Friday between 0900-1700.
- Group discount available (20 plus), receive one ticket through the post and 26% off the normal fare (Smaller groups should request the discount).
- Must travel on specific train time.
- Two ways to pay, card payment over the phone or via invoice/ school cheque.

Bus Travel to Eyam

Public bus from bus stop opposite the little John pub.

Depart Hathersage 0934 – Arrive Eyam 0955

Child: £1.50
Adult: £2.00
(Prices Jan 2024 in accordance with National Bus Fare cap)

Hulleys of Baslow, Derwent Garage, Calver Road, Baslow, Bakewell DE45 1RP
Tel: 01246 582246

7. Domestic Information and living together (PSHE)

A week's residential experience provides a unique educational opportunity for teachers and pupils. On an individual level it gives the teacher a chance to see aspects of a pupil which are not apparent in the more formal setting of a classroom. It gives the pupil a chance to see the teacher in a similar way. New insights can significantly improve the teacher-learner relationship. The shared experience can bond a new group together, give added impetus to an established group and provide a store of happy memories.

Responsibility/Independence

The tutors at StM will have high expectations of the children. During our initial introduction we will provide a great deal of information, which will make the learning and living experience at StM an educational and enjoyable one. We will ask the children as a group and individually to take responsibility for many aspects of their stay, from helping in the dining area, managing their own and shared living space and looking after their personal belongings and the StM equipment. They will be encouraged to show independence and take responsibility to be in the right place at the right time with the right equipment.

Catering

A residential visit to StM gives the opportunity for shared and sociable meals. The Centre has a fully equipped kitchen and is run on an assisted catering basis. The caterer works Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 11.30am to help with food preparation to minimise work done by visiting schools, and to maintain hygiene and cleaning routines in the kitchen and dining room area. Schools can opt to self-cater.

There are two catering options:

A. Self-catering – schools plan menus and buy all their own food. Our caterer will still assist with some cleaning and food preparation. Local shops offer some supplies, but foods to meet special dietary requirements may not be readily available.

Please note that when self-catering the school and visiting staff are fully responsible for all aspects of food safety, selection and preparation. The school catering policy for health and safety, including training and qualifications for those involved with the selection and preparation of food should be considered. We would recommend as a minimum this should include a food hygiene certificate for the responsible person(s).

B. The Centre offers a catering package including menu planning, food purchase and catering support. The menus aim to provide healthy options by including a good range of fresh food, fruit and vegetables. The evening meal will be prepared so that it is ready to heat up and serve. This includes, for instance, preparation of salads and desserts. Visiting staff are responsible for preparing breakfast, cooking and serving (prepared) evening meals and most of the cleaning up after meals.

StM Centre takes on responsibility when the assisted catering package is booked. Visiting staff are covered by our food hygiene certificate as our staff take on responsibility for food safety, selection and preparation with thorough briefing and training for visiting staff.

Schools can select to have an evening meal out in the village. We ask the school to make this booking direct, recommendations available on request. When schools eat out the catering cost is reduced by 50% on that day.

Pupils can be encouraged to assist with the preparation of packed lunches as an evening activity. Please bring reusable water bottles and lunch boxes.

Food and drink must not be stored or consumed in the dormitories and children should not be allowed beyond the serving counter.

Sleeping

StM has bunk beds for 34 pupils and 4 teaching staff, as detailed on the dormitory list. Additional accommodation for up to 4 adults is available in the adjacent cottage.

The two bed staff dorms provide a single bed with an overhead folding bed. These should only be used by adults, please contact us if you wish to put children in these rooms.

All bedding is provided. Fitted sheets will be on the beds when you arrive, and the children will be expected to make their own beds and strip them at the end of their visit. Spare bedding will be available. Under bed storage boxes are provided for personal belongings.

Keeping Clean

Toilet and shower facilities are on the ground floor. The boys' bathroom includes 3 hand basins, trough urinal, 2 showers and 2 toilets. The Girls are similar. In addition, there are two outside unisex toilets – ideal for pupils as they are leaving for, or returning from, activities. Two staff bathrooms, the first on the ground floor contains wash basin with electric shaver point, shower and toilet. This room has been adapted for visitors with disabilities, including an adjustable height shower changing table. The second bathroom is located on the second floor and includes wash basin, toilet and electric shower.

Free Time

The main gate should be closed when children are in the centre or outside space. The area beyond is out of bounds. The main road is very busy with obvious risks. There is a selection of sports equipment and outside games. Please supervise the use of the outdoor equipment and be considerate to our neighbours and vehicles parked in the outside space.

There are a range of toys and games in the main hall, along with wide screen TV with digital channels, music system, DVD player and selection of DVDs.

Please do not allow children unsupervised free time in the dormitories.

8. Accreditation Schemes

Peak District National Park Ambassador Centre

Working together with the Peak District National Park, to educate young people about its special qualities and how we can protect it for future generations.

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

AMBASSADOR CENTRE

9. Data Protection

Nottinghamshire County Council's approach to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/global-content/privacy

If you have enquiries about this privacy statement or about use of your personal data, you can contact the County Council's Data Protection Officer (DPO) email: DPO@nottscc.gov.uk