



School Engagement Pack

Inspiring the Next Generation

Heritage Open Days provide a wonderful opportunity to introduce children and young people to one of Britain's most unique living traditions. A visit to a church tower can inspire curiosity about local history, engineering, music, teamwork and volunteering, while helping pupils discover the people who continue to keep church bells ringing today.

This pack is designed to help towers engage with local schools before, during and after Heritage Open Days. Whether you invite a class to visit, offer an assembly, or simply provide information for teachers, every interaction helps young people connect with their local heritage.

Why Engage with Schools?

School visits help pupils to:

- Discover the history of their local church and community.
- Learn about a living tradition that continues today.
- Explore the science and engineering behind church bells.
- Understand the importance of teamwork and communication.
- Meet volunteers who are preserving local heritage.
- See that bellringing is open to people of all ages.

For many children, it may be their first opportunity to visit a church tower or learn how bells are rung.

Curriculum Links

Bellringing offers opportunities to support learning across a range of subjects.

History

- Local history and heritage.
- How churches have served communities through the centuries.
- Important national and local events marked by church bells.

Science & Engineering

- Forces and motion.
- Gravity and momentum.

- Sound and vibration.
- Mechanical engineering.
- How bells and wheels work together.

Mathematics

- Counting and sequencing.
- Patterns and permutations in change ringing.
- Timing and rhythm.

Music

- Listening skills.
- Rhythm.
- Working together to create a performance.
- Understanding that change ringing is different from playing tunes.

Personal Development

- Teamwork.
- Communication.
- Patience.
- Volunteering.
- Community involvement.

Ideas for School Activities

Depending on your tower and available volunteers, you could offer:

- A short school assembly about church bells.
- Guided tower visits.
- Bellringing demonstrations.
- Meet the bellringers sessions.
- A "How Bells Work" presentation.
- Question and answer sessions.
- Local history talks.
- A heritage trail around the church.
- A simple rope handling demonstration (where appropriate and supervised).

Remember to adapt activities to suit the age of the children and follow all safeguarding and health and safety requirements.

Classroom Activities

Teachers may enjoy extending the visit with activities such as:

- Designing a church bell.
- Drawing or painting the church tower.
- Writing a newspaper article about the visit.
- Creating posters promoting Heritage Open Days.
- Researching the history of their local church.
- Exploring how sound travels.
- Finding mathematical patterns in simple ringing sequences.

These activities help reinforce learning and encourage pupils to continue exploring their local heritage.

Working with Schools

When contacting a school:

- Introduce yourself and your tower.
- Explain the educational value of the visit.
- Offer flexibility around dates and timings.
- Provide clear information about accessibility and supervision.
- Be prepared to answer questions from teachers and parents.

Many schools are looking for engaging local experiences that bring classroom learning to life.

Key Messages for Pupils

Keep your language simple and engaging.

- Church bells have been ringing in our communities for hundreds of years.
- Bellringing is a team activity.
- Every bell has its own ringer.
- You don't need to be musical to learn.
- Bellringers are volunteers who enjoy learning new skills and helping their community.
- Bellringing is still practised every week by people of all ages.

Encourage pupils to ask questions and explore with curiosity.

Inspire Future Bellringers

A Heritage Open Days visit may simply be an enjoyable day out, or it could be the beginning of a lifelong interest.

By welcoming schools into your tower, sharing your enthusiasm, and showing that bellringing is friendly, inclusive and rewarding, you are helping to inspire the next generation to appreciate and protect this remarkable living tradition.

Every young person who discovers what happens **Behind the Bells** becomes another ambassador for the future of church bellringing.