



## BLUEBELL RAILWAY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### SCHOOL VISITS

The Bluebell Railway is a great place to visit and has a great deal to offer schools and their pupils. We can cater for groups of up to 60 children on our service trains or for a whole school by way of a special charter.

This leaflet describes the usual format of our school visits but these can be adapted to meet your particular needs and interests.

Details about costs, risk assessments and the availability of briefing material for school parties can be found under the Education tab on our events website — [www.bluebell-railway.com](http://www.bluebell-railway.com). If you require further information or would like to discuss aspects of your visit before booking then please contact the Education Officer at -

[education@bluebell-railway.co.uk](mailto:education@bluebell-railway.co.uk)

Bookings should be made via our Sales and Information Office -

Tel: 01825 720800

[info@bluebell-railway.co.uk](mailto:info@bluebell-railway.co.uk)



### General Visit Programme

- Visits normally start from Sheffield Park Station, which provides for a more conveniently timed programme, but an East Grinstead start is also possible..
- Arriving at Sheffield Park Station about 10am you will be met by Bluebell Guides, who will accompany the party throughout the visit. The children will be shown the museum, the locomotive shed and signal box and, if possible, the footplate of a working locomotive.
- You will then join the 11am steam hauled train for the 22 miles round trip to East Grinstead via Horsted Keynes and Kingscote, arriving back at Sheffield Park Station at 12.37 pm.
- Lunch can be taken either on the train or in our picnic area by the River Ouse after arrival back at Sheffield Park.
- After lunch there will be time either to complete the activities listed above, or for your own study projects, before departure for school around 2pm..



## WWII Evacuation Exercise Programme

- Arriving at Sheffield Park Station about 10am you will be met by Bluebell Guides, who will accompany the party throughout the visit. The children will be shown the museum, the locomotive shed and the signal box and, if possible, the footplate of a working locomotive.
- A team of actors in WW11 uniforms and outfits will be present and will engage the children in role play, including any billeting or other exercise that you may wish to undertake.
- You will join the 11 am steam hauled train for East Grinstead via Horsted Keynes and Kingscote —arriving at 11.41am— then departing for the return journey to Horsted Keynes at 12 noon and arriving at 12 22 pm.
- The party will alight here for the evacuation exercise. The children's ID cards will be checked and stamped, the air raid alarm signal sounded and the party proceed to shelter in the station subway—providing an opportunity to involve the children in period activities.
- After the all clear the party return to the station platform.
- Lunch may be taken either on the station platforms or in the picnic field, before conducting, with the assistance of the actors, a billeting exercise
- Departure for school from Horsted Keynes Station about 2pm (Coach drivers will be given directions from Sheffield Park Station to Horsted Keynes).



## Enrichment Days

The Bluebell can also provide an ideal venue for pupils' end of term enrichment visits. On top of an enjoyable 22 mile steam hauled round trip through the scenic Sussex countryside, in the company of experienced guides, pupils have the opportunity to learn about the astounding social impact that railways had upon society in the 19th century, a society where previously many had not even travelled to the next village.

They can then research and discover the reasons for the development of the network, its decline and the more recent renaissance. Equally important they can discover how it is possible for a determined and well read individual to influence Government policy in such a way as to ensure the preservation of a country railway for future generations to enjoy.

The Bluebell possesses three historic stations—Sheffield Park, Horsted Keynes and Kingscote (plus a modern station at East Grinstead). These are popular with film and tv producers and have featured in programmes such as Downton Abbey and date from the construction of the line in 1882. It possesses an historic fleet of steam locomotives—these can be seen in the locomotive shed at Sheffield Park Station and a comprehensive collection of railway carriages dating from the late 19th century to the 1960s.



Add to that a superb new Museum at Sheffield Park Station and the Bluebell can truly bring history to life.

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