



# PRESS RELEASE



## **GTR offers 9,000 train tickets for children to celebrate bicentenary of rail at historic Bluebell Railway**



Britain's biggest train operator, Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), has joined forces with one of the country's finest preserved heritage rail routes, the Bluebell Railway, to celebrate 200 years of train travel. GTR is offering 9,000 schoolchildren and college students from Surrey and Greater London, free rail tickets to East Grinstead with Southern and Thameslink for educational visits to 'Railway 200 @ Bluebell Railway' this summer.





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The school visits, every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 2 June to 2 July, will focus on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) learning with a chance to see historic steam engines in action. There will be history workshops delivered by industry experts, displays of cutting-edge rail technology highlighting the future of rail, and educational activities designed by the London Transport Museum. GTR and Network Rail staff are lending their expertise for rail safety lessons and advice about careers in the industry.

**Angie Doll, Chief Executive Officer at GTR, said:**

*“Two hundred years ago the modern railway came into existence and utterly transformed our society. “The inventions, science and technology that created it makes for fascinating learning, which the Bluebell Railway is the perfect partner to deliver in a fun, engaging way.*

*“Working together, we hope to educate and inspire young people in rail’s past and future. We want to attract a new generation from all backgrounds into an industry with a rich heritage that remains relevant today. The railway is great for the climate, and helps our local communities thrive.”*

**Neil Glaskin, Chairman of the Bluebell Railway, said:**

*“We’re excited to be working with the rail industry to celebrate Railway 200. Education visits are an important part of our Railway 200 event, which runs from June to September. GTR’s generous donation of free travel tickets will make education visits even more affordable for schools close to Southern stations in London and Surrey.” School visits to ‘Railway 200 @ Bluebell Railway’ are heavily subsidised, and schools taking advantage of GTR’s free tickets will save further on travel costs. Interested schools should email [railway200event@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:railway200event@bluebell-railway.com) or visit [www.bluebell-railway.com/railway-200](http://www.bluebell-railway.com/railway-200).*

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## Editors' Notes

### What is Railway 200?

The Stockton & Darlington Railway opened on September 27, 1825, connecting places, people, communities and ideas and ultimately transforming the world.

Railway 200 is a year-long nationwide partnership-led campaign to celebrate 200 years of the modern railway and inspire a new generation of young pioneering talent to choose a career in rail.

Railway 200 will showcase how the railway shaped and continues to shape national life.

<https://railway200.co.uk/about-railway-200/>

### The Bluebell Railway

The Bluebell Railway is the oldest standard-gauge preserved public railway in the world and celebrates its own 65th anniversary in 2025. The Bluebell Railway is one of Sussex's top tourist attractions and is the custodian of probably the finest collection of heritage railway vehicles in Britain. The railway regularly features in films, on TV and in print. Visit [www.bluebell-railway.com](http://www.bluebell-railway.com) or contact [ruth.rowatt@bluebell-railway.com](mailto:ruth.rowatt@bluebell-railway.com) for more information.

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