



Learning at Ely Cathedral

Primary



Primary History Workshops at the Cathedral

Building Ely Cathedral (60 minutes)

How do you build a cathedral? Through a series of hands-on activities, students explore the amazing skills that helped create Ely Cathedral. From building arches and investigating stained glass to uncovering stories hidden in its artwork, pupils discover how this extraordinary building was made and how it has changed over time.

Curious Cathedral Creatures (60 minutes)

From dragons to strange hybrid beasts, Ely Cathedral is full of mysterious creatures waiting to be discovered. On a scavenger hunt, pupils explore carvings and stained glass before learning how medieval bestiaries gave animals symbolic meanings. They then design and make their own clay creature to take home, combining imagination with symbolism.

Hidden Marks, Hidden Stories (60 minutes)

Look closely and you'll find hidden symbols carved throughout Ely Cathedral. In this creative workshop, students explore the mysterious marks left by medieval stonemasons and discover how these acted as signatures, symbols of pride and marks of quality. Inspired by their discoveries, pupils design and make a unique mark of their own.

Monastic Life (60 minutes)

What was it like to live as a medieval monk? Taking on the role of a brother at Ely Monastery, students experience the daily routines of prayer, work, and worship through a range of hands-on activities. From making candles to singing plainsong, they discover the skills, traditions, and challenges of monastic life.

Monks, Medicines and Herbs (60 minutes)

How did people stay healthy before modern medicine? In this hands-on workshop, students explore the herbs, remedies and treatments used by medieval monks to care for the sick. From diagnosing patients and preparing medicine bags to searching for cures, they discover how people used the natural world to heal illness hundreds of years ago.

The Pilgrim Trail (60 minutes)

Why did people travel hundreds of miles to visit Ely Cathedral? Working in small groups, students follow a self-led trail through the building, uncovering clues about the lives and journeys of medieval pilgrims. Along the way, they explore historic objects, complete challenges, and discover why pilgrimage was such an important part of life in the Middle Ages.

Wonder and Wonderings: Uncovering St Etheldreda's Miracles (60 minutes)

Follow the clues and uncover the miracles of St Etheldreda in this interactive, escape-room-style adventure. Through games, challenges, and hands-on activities, students piece together the story of Ely's patron saint, collecting items along the way to create a story stick and retell her remarkable journey.



Primary Religious Studies Workshops at the Cathedral

A Journey Through Prayer (60 minutes)

From prayer trees and labyrinth walks to worry stones and creative crafts, this hands-on workshop introduces students to the many ways Christians pray. Through a range of activities, they explore how prayer can be used to say thank you, ask for help, share concerns, and take time to reflect on what matters most.

A Place of Worship (60 minutes)

From colourful windows to sacred spaces, this self-guided trail explores how Ely Cathedral is used as a place of Christian worship. Along the way, students uncover the meanings behind key features and learn how Christians express their faith. This self-led trail is supported by your school staff using our Teacher's Guide.

Crack the Creation Code (60 minutes)

Can your team crack the Creation Code? Pupils solve challenges, unlock mystery boxes, and uncover the story of Creation day by day. As they discover the wonders of the natural world, they explore Christian beliefs about creation and make their own pledge to care for it.

CSI: Easter Day (3 x 60 minutes)

This full day investigation challenges pupils to solve the mystery of the empty tomb using forensic clues, witness testimony, and detective skills. As they analyse the evidence and reconstruct the events of Easter, they discover why the resurrection is one of the most important beliefs in Christianity.

The Life of Jesus Trail (60 minutes)

Follow the story of Jesus on a trail around Ely Cathedral. In small groups, students discover key moments from his life and teachings through a series of activities and challenges. As they move through the building, they learn how Christians remember and share his story today.

Saints and Stories: A Pilgrim's Choice (60 minutes)

What makes someone a saint, and why do people travel to visit them? Guided by Alys the pilgrim, students explore Saxon saints and the idea of pilgrimage through drama, storytelling, and hands-on activities. As they compare different saints and their shrines, they decide which one Alys should visit and why.

Shared Origins Trail (60 minutes)

What do the world's major religions share? Exploring Ely Cathedral and its artwork, students discover stories, ideas and beliefs that appear across different faiths. Through guided activities and discussion, they learn how religions can be both different and surprisingly similar.



FAQ's

At Ely Cathedral we are passionate about learning and we can't wait to share our wonderful building with you and your students. Expect to meet characters from history, enjoy hands on workshops and get creative when you visit.

How many students can I bring?

We usually like to limit student numbers to around 100. This means we are able to work with manageable group sizes to ensure that everyone has a great experience. However, we can sometimes accommodate slightly larger groups depending on the activities you choose.

Can you accommodate different learning needs?

Absolutely. Everyone is welcome at Ely Cathedral. When you complete your booking form, you will be able to give us some more information about the needs of the students you are bringing with you. We have a range of resources to support all learners, including sensory resources and a sensory room for children who might need a break.

Do you have risk assessments?

Yes. You will be able to find downloadable Risk Assessments for visits to the Cathedral in the Schools section of the Learning and Families pages of our website.

Do you offer pre-visits?

Yes. Please ask us about these when you send your initial enquiry and we will be able to arrange for a pre-visit. Please do note that we are not able to accommodate pre-visits during the weekends but can often arrange them during school holidays if you are not able to come during working hours.

Do you have materials that I can use with my students before we visit?

A number of our current workshops do have pre-visit materials that we can send you so please do ask.

Do you have a lunch room?

Yes, we are able to accommodate your students in our classroom for lunch. In the case of larger groups we may also be able to offer you an additional space or we may have to build a split lunch into your timetable to ensure that everyone can eat comfortably. If you are booking a full day with us the use of the lunch room is included in the cost of the visit.



FAQ's

Can visiting staff leave the site during breaks?

All of our staff and volunteers have up to date and relevant DBS checks. However, for safeguarding purposes we do ask that all staff remain on-site with students throughout the day. We are pleased to provide tea, coffee and light refreshments to all visiting teachers to reduce the need to leave the site.

What are the timings of school visits?

A school visit will usually start at 10.00am. A half day would usually finish at 12.00pm and a full day at 2.00pm. If you need a slightly different arrival or departure time we can usually accommodate this so please do ask. You will be sent a timetable for your day as part of the booking confirmation. Please check these timings carefully and let us know if you need to arrive or depart at a different time.

How much does a visit to the Cathedral cost?

Full day (3 learning sessions, use of the lunch room and refreshments for staff): **£7.50 pp**

Half Day (2 learning sessions): **£5.00 pp**

Self-Guided Visit: **£3.50 pp**

Use of the lunch room (if not visiting for a full day or self-guided): **£50.00**

A **10% discount** is applicable for all visits during **September** and **January**. We are also pleased to be able to offer some free places for pupil premium students. The number of places offered will be determined by the FSM % published for your school on SchoolDash. All accompanying staff and adults visit for free. There is a minimum charge of £100 for full day visits and £75 for half day visits.

How do I book?

Email us at learning@elycathedral.org with your **preferred dates** and **workshop choices**.

Once your date is secure, we'll ask you to complete a booking form, which we will use to put together your itinerary for the day. We sometimes work with other providers in Ely such as the Stained Glass Museum, Ely Museum and Oliver Cromwell's House so do ask us about joint visits.