

Information Sheet and Self-guided Resources for Primary Teachers

Kildare Place Society & Schooling in the Nineteenth Century

Exhibition dates: September 2012 - end of June 2013

Suitable for: 4th - 6th class

Recommended duration of exhibition visit: 15 minutes per group of 10 – see below section on 'During the visit', followed up by 30 – 45 minutes in the Learning Resource Room.

Exhibition summary:

The Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland, known as the **Kildare Place Society**, was founded in Dublin in 1811 with the aim of providing non-denominational education. The Society's pioneering work included the building of schools, teacher training, the publication of an extensive library of reading books and the establishment of an inspectorate to monitor schools. The Society's influence on teaching was significant and many of its innovations influenced the National School system.

Many intriguing objects associated with 19th century education in Ireland are exhibited, including the Darton Scroll, a colourful scroll used to teach grammar, geography and other subjects, slates, a desk, school bell, needlework projects, and many more.

Recommended aims of the visit:

- to investigate what school was like in 19th century Ireland
- to examine objects that were used in 19th century schooling
- to encourage the pupils to work as historians
- to create an awareness of the change and continuity between 19th century schools and schools today

Specific Learning Outcomes:

Participants gain an understanding of:

- What school was like in 19th century Ireland
- A comparison and contrast between the objects and books used then and those used today
- A comparison and contrast between the teaching methods (monitor system, merits and punishments) used then and those used today

Primary Curriculum Links:

- SESE: History
Working as a Historian
Local Studies: Schools
Life, Society, Work and Culture in the Past: Life in the 19th century
Continuity and change over time: Schools and education, and Literature, art, crafts and culture
- Arts
Visual Art, Drama
- SPHE
- English

Booking a visit:

To book a self-guided visit, contact the bookings office on +353 1 6486453 or bookings@museum.ie. The bookings office is open Tuesday to Friday, from 10am to 1pm.

Preparing your class for the visit – before your visit:

- The more you prepare your class for their Museum visit, the more they will get from it.
If it's possible, visit beforehand to get familiar with the displays. If you can't visit in advance, go to the [National Museum's website](#) or to the CICE's website section on the [Plunket Museum](#).
- Get your class thinking before they visit the Museum. A questions and answer session or class discussion could help them start to imagine what school life might have been like in the past.
- Talk to your class about museums and what they expect to see.
Record their answers to look at later, following their visit. Are their views the same or have they changed?
- See the Using Artefacts and Exemplar 11 in the [Primary School Curriculum Teacher Guidelines/using artefacts exemplar](#).
- Look at the resource *'Slates Up!'*, a publication by the Church of Ireland College of Education (see link below).
- Plan a project around your visit. Have an idea of what you would like to achieve from the visit. [Contact](#) a member of the Museum's Education staff about how the workshop could become part of a bigger project back in school.

During the visit:

Use the **'School around the Corner' activity sheet** to explore the exhibition – this activity, along with two other activities can be downloaded from the Museum website and photocopied.

As the exhibition is in a small space, it is advised to split your class into smaller groups, and take turns, while combining the visit to nearby exhibitions, for example *Curators' Choice* (Decorative Arts) or *Soldiers and Chiefs* (Military History). Resources for these exhibitions can be found online at the Decorative Arts and History 'Explore and Learn' section of www.museum.ie. Please note that all groups need to be accompanied by a supervising adult.

The **Learning Resource Room** at the Museum can also be booked. This room can be used for follow-on activities such as drawing, writing or discussion and can accommodate up to 30. In this room, a number of objects relating to the exhibition can be handled and discussed by the class. Please indicate when [booking a visit](#) if you would like to also book the Learning Resource Room.

After your visit to the exhibition, we recommend doing two of the activities below in the Learning Resource room. Each activity takes approximately 20 minutes:

- **Make a 21st century Darton Scroll!** Each student picks a letter of the alphabet, thinks of an object relating to life today that begins with that letter and draws the object. In this way the drawings can be combined together to make a new version of the Grammar page of the Darton Scroll. This activity, along with two other activities can be downloaded from the Museum website and photocopied.
- **Handwriting in the Past:** Have a go at copying a headline exactly as it is printed, as the KPS students would have done. This activity, along with two other activities can be downloaded from the Museum website and photocopied.
- **Use the Object Factsheet** to discuss some of the objects that would have been used in school in the 19th century. Suggested questions and topics are on the sheet. The Factsheets can be downloaded from the Museum website and photocopied.
- **Be a Journalist:** Through group discussion, prepare a set of questions that each student can use to interview a family member at home about what school was like for them. After the students interview family members, they can present the answers to the rest of the class when they are back in school. Possible questions for a family member include: Did you enjoy school? What kind of things were in the class room? What objects did you use to write with?

Back in school – ideas for follow-up work:

- Ask students to write a review of their Museum visit.
- Some suggested activities from *'Slates Up!'* (see link below) can be related to the exhibition:
 - **'Posters from the Past'** examines how the Darton scroll was used for teaching grammar
 - **'Rewards'** examines 'Merit Cards' and other means of rewards for KPS pupils
 - **'Reading a Story'** is a group activity which recreates a classroom scene from 1825.
- Plan a project around the visit, such as designing a mural based on the images of the Darton Scroll, or developing short plays on the theme of school days in the past.

Useful Links/ Bibliography/ Glossary:

- See [Primary School Curriculum Teacher Guidelines/ using artefacts exemplar](#).
- Willoughby, Karen (2005) *Slates Up!*. Dublin: The Church of Ireland College of Education. Available in Collins Barracks shop or online at <http://www.cice.ie/AboutCICE/CICEPublications.aspx>
- Parkes, Susan (1984) *Kildare Place: The History of the Church of Ireland Training College 1811-1969*. Dublin: The Church of Ireland College of Education.