

Information for Teachers

Victorian Medicine KS2+ Session

at Peterborough Museum



From 1857 to 1928, the museum building was the Peterborough Infirmary, the first hospital for the city. Step back to 1901 and experience Victorian life in rare original spaces.

Before your day, you will be sent the name, age and occupation of patients who were recorded on the 1901 census records. Why not come on the day as patients with these names!

As the pupils arrive at the start of the day, they are given a Victorian ailment. Throughout the day, pupils will discover how their symptoms would have been treated in this late Victorian period and are asked to consider the responses and impact of the new ideas at this time.

Meet the Doctor in the Original Operating Theatre



The late Victorian era saw many great advances in medical practice. In 1901 the operating theatre was only a few years old. In this session the Doctor will explain and demonstrate how their Victorian illnesses and ailments were treated in this impressive new light, clean and airy operating theatre.

As well as the impact at that time, how have these Victorian inventions and ideas impacted on modern medical practice today?

Please note that our original operating theatre is not wheelchair accessible. There are approx. 20 steps to this space. Please contact us if this is an issue – we can move the activity to a more accessible space if needed.

Make Medicines with our Apothecary and Meet Nurse Reynolds



Still in role, discover how plants were used to treat symptoms and mix a few remedies yourself in the original Victorian kitchen with the Apothecary.

Nurse Reynolds was a training nurse in 1901. Go down to the cellars (Priestgate Vaults) and discover more about her life.



(For this part of the visit, the class is split into two smaller groups and will rotate between the two activities. The vaults has a capacity of 17 people at a time.



National Curriculum links: History, English, Science, PSHE.

Learning objectives:

In this ‘Victorian Medicine’ day, pupils will:

- learn about the changes in medical practice (an aspect of social history) and the international medical practice achievements of certain individuals: Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole, Edith Cavell, Joseph Lister, Alfred C Taylor.
- learn about a significant historical site in their own locality.
- show an understanding of aspects of Victorian life and be able to note change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.
- understand how past knowledge of medicinal herbs has been useful in developing modern drugs.
- understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
- participate in discussions, role-play, improvisations and debates.
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.
- show an understanding that good practices can contribute to good health.

“It was all so well organised. The fact that the staff were dressed up for role play made it so much more interesting. The children learned so much and now want to learn more.”

(Teacher from Anthony Curton CEVA Primary School)

“Brilliant! Engaging activities, friendly staff and excellent learning. The children loved it” (Teacher from John Clare Primary)

Other information:

Duration:	10 am – 12:30 pm.
Cost:	£200 per group of up to 35. Minimum cost for 15 or less pupils is £150. This cost includes use of lunchroom.
Maximum group size:	Maximum number per group is 35 pupils. We can cater up to 2 classes in one visit.
Recommended ratio:	Minimum 1 adult to 10 students.
Booking information:	To book, please contact us by phone or email. When the activities and date are agreed, a booking form and risk assessment is emailed to you. To confirm the visit we ask that you complete the booking form and email it back to us.
A note about behaviour:	School teachers have overall responsibility for the behaviour of their pupils and we expect you to support Museum staff with this where necessary. As you know, pupils benefit significantly when school staff and adults also get involved in the activities so please join in where appropriate.
Outreach?	The Victorian doctor can visit your school. Contact us to find out more at schools@cityculturepeterborough.org.uk
Covid-19 precautions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and spaces cleaned before and after use. • Museum teachers will be wearing face shields/masks and will keep their distance to you. • All school adults asked to wear face shields/masks when moving around museum. • Spaces will be ventilated where possible. • No cancellation charge if we have to cancel at short notice due to following Covid regulations – we can reschedule.