



The Investigate Centre

Please use this information to help you and your students get the most from your visit.



Your session

Session name	The <i>Investigate Centre</i>			
Location	The <i>Investigate Centre</i> is on the Lower Ground Floor in the Green Zone, next to the School Reception and Picnic Area.			
Start time	10.30	11.30	12.30	13.30
Duration	50 minutes			
Minimum ratio	For Year 2, 1 adult : 8 students For Years 3–9, 1 adult : 10 students			
Maximum group size	50 primary students (Y2–Y6) or 40 secondary students (Y7–Y9)			

Please ensure you meet the required minimum adult : student ratio.

Before your visit

Please tell your students they will be visiting the *Investigate Centre*. Explain it is a hands-on science space where they can touch and investigate a huge range of real natural objects from beetles and starfish to meteorites and skulls. While in the *Investigate Centre*, students will be encouraged to make observations, use a variety of tools, look for evidence and relationships and ask and answer their own questions. To support this, you may find it useful to discuss how real scientists are constantly asking and trying to answer questions.

About the *Investigate Centre*

Designed to engage seven to 14 year olds with the science curriculum, The *Investigate Centre* provides students with a range of tools to enable them to become scientists for the day – looking for evidence and making discoveries about the natural world.

Our enthusiastic science educators are always on hand to guide your students if they need help to orientate themselves in the space, locating specimens or using the ICT activities.

Health and safety

Please ensure students leave bags and coats to one side of the room to avoid trip hazards. Students are encouraged to handle all specimens except the living creatures. Please make sure everyone washes their hands after leaving the *Investigate Centre*.

A note about behaviour

Our experienced science educators will lead your session. We work to make it an inspiring and inclusive experience for all students and find we rarely have problems with behaviour. However, teachers have overall responsibility for the behaviour of their students and we expect you to support us with this where necessary. Students benefit significantly when teachers and accompanying adults also get involved, so please do join in.

Suggestions for follow-up activities at school

Learning to ask questions

Ask students to bring in natural or human-made objects and spend time coming up with questions about them. Support this by providing a list of question words (what, why, how, when, who, where, what if... etc). Can they answer any of their questions? You could have a competition to come up with the best/most interesting/most useful/most unusual etc question.

Literacy

Use the *Investigate Centre* experience to stimulate non-fiction writing, for example creating a fact file about their favourite specimen from the Museum. Alternatively, create some fiction. Ask students to choose a specimen – how did it come to be in the Museum? What is its life story? Or imagine what might happen to it once the Museum closes at the end of the day...

Art or DT

Draw on the students' experiences in the *Investigate Centre* to create a display representing a range of objects from the natural world. Ask students to choose their own natural object to draw, paint, sculpt, collage, photograph, etc. Why not experiment by repeating a drawing using different media (charcoal, pencil, pastels etc) or focus on a small part in detail.

Learning objectives

Students have the opportunity to be a scientist by:

- using specimens
- using scientific tools
- following their own lines of enquiry

(this may include developing scientific skills of observation, description and questioning and developing scientific vocabulary)

National Curriculum links

Key Stage 1

Pupils should be taught:

- Sc1 1 That it is important to collect evidence by making observations and measurements when trying to answer a question.
- Sc1 2a To ask questions and decide how they might find answers to them.
- Sc1 2b To use first-hand experience and simple information sources to answer questions.
- Sc1 2f To explore, using the senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste as appropriate, and make and record observations and measurements.
- Sc1 2h To make simple comparisons and identify simple patterns or associations.

Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught:

- Sc1 1a That science is about thinking creatively to try to explain how living and non-living things work, and to establish links between causes and effects.
- Sc1 1b That it is important to test ideas using evidence from observation and measurement.
- Sc1 2a To ask questions that can be investigated scientifically and decide how to find answers.
- Sc1 2b To consider what sources of information, including first-hand experience and a range of other sources, they will use to answer questions.
- Sc1 2e To use simple equipment and materials appropriately and take action to control risks.
- Sc1 2f To make systematic observations and measurements, including the use of ICT for datalogging.
- Sc1 2i To make comparisons and identify simple patterns or associations in their own observations and measurements or other data.
- Sc1 2j To use observations, measurements or other data to draw conclusions.

National Curriculum links

Key Stage 3

1.1 Scientific thinking

- b To critically analyse and evaluate evidence from observations and experiments.

2.1 Practical and enquiry skills

- a Use a range of scientific methods and techniques to develop and test ideas and explanations.

2.2 Critical understanding of evidence

- a Obtain, record and analyse data from a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including ICT sources, and use their findings to provide evidence for scientific explanations.

4 Curriculum opportunities

- b Pursue an independent enquiry into an aspect of science of personal interest.
- c Use real-life examples as a basis for finding out about science.
- e Experience science outside the school environment, including in the workplace, where possible.