

## **APPG for Museums meeting with the Minister of State for School Standards, Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP**

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020: 11.00-12:00**

### **In attendance**

Lord Boswell	Baroness Ludford
Felicity Buchan MP	Andrew Nelson, The Wallace Collection
Tony Butler, Derby Museums	Oli Oldfield, Department for Education
Sam Cairns, Cultural Learning Alliance	Stefano Pozzi, Department for Education
Antonia Canal, Museums Association	Susan Raikes, Science Museum Group
Helen Charman, V&A	Beth Reynard, NMDC
David Cole, NMDC	Paddy Rogers, Royal Museums Greenwich
Gillian Crumpton, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust	Sarah Saunders, British Museum
Jonathan Djanogly MP	Lord Selkirk
Janet Dugdale, National Museums Liverpool	Emma Seymour, Department for Education
Karen Eslea, National Gallery	Chris Skidmore MP
Kate Fellows, Leeds Museums and Galleries	Liz Smith, National Portrait Gallery
Jo Gideon MP	Alex Sobel MP
Camilla Hampshire, Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery	Miranda Stearn, The Fitzwilliam Museum
Yvonne Hardman, Leeds Museums and Galleries	Beth Stone, Natural History Museum
Edward Impey, Royal Armouries	Suzie Tucker, NMDC
Emmie Kell, Cornwall Museums Partnership	Dominic Tweddle, National Museum of the Royal Navy
Di Lees, Imperial War Museums	Esme Ward, Manchester Museum
Andrew Lovett, Black Country Living Museum	Alex Whitfield, British Library
Steve Miller, Norfolk Museums Service	

### **Speakers**

**Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP**, Minister of State for School Standards, Department for Education

**Kate Fellows**, Head of Learning and Access, Leeds Museums and Galleries

**Susan Raikes**, Director of Learning, Science Museum Group

### **Minutes**

The Chair, Chris Skidmore MP, welcomed all attendees to the meeting. This meeting is important as one of the six core priorities of the APPG is to promote education and learning experiences. School closures have given rise to more digital learning and whilst school visits

are not able to take place, museums have stepped up to the plate looking at what they can do for schools.

## Presentations

Kate Fellows, Head of Learning and Access at Leeds Museums and Galleries, presented to the group on the museum's unique membership scheme for primary schools and how the museum supports whole school curriculum planning. She explained how the museum tailored their offer to support learning during school closures. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

Susan Raikes, Director of Learning at the Science Museum Group, discussed how the Science Museum Group supports teaching science and promotes science, engineering, technology, maths and medicine to children. Susan also shared how the Science Museum Group has continued these activities during school closures. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

Additionally, the APPG have put together a briefing note consisting of case studies on museum learning activities during the pandemic. The briefing note can be found [here](#).

## Q&A with Kate Fellows and Susan Raikes

Q: Chris Skidmore asked if the changes museums were forced to make during the lockdown led to any innovations that will become permanent practice?

A: Kate Fellows responded that Leeds Museums and Galleries learnt that some workshops work better in a digital format as learners can do more in a session and the session is less cost prohibitive for schools. Cultural capital can be gained digitally and these sessions can still be an immersive and sensory experience.

Susan Raikes added that the Science Museum's outreach service that in normal times takes huge science experiments out to different settings had to stop. The museum repurposed films for the BBC to continue to bring these experiments to learners which is much more sustainable. In future, the live and exciting experiments can go to places which would not usually see them.

Q: Jonathan Djanogly explained that he is a trustee of a small museum who recently advertised for a learning post and were overwhelmed by the number of applicants. He asked what have the implications been for learning teams during this lockdown? Is it a tough time to be a museum educator? Are there many talented candidates looking for employment and what can be done to help?

A: Susan Raikes responded that many museums have been forced to make redundancies so there are many high calibre candidates searching for work. Susan had a similar situation when advertising for a post within her own team. Within museum learning, there are some people who choose to have portfolio careers with lots of work across many museums and these people have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

Kate Fellows gave another perspective of how the pandemic has affected staff within museum learning teams as Leeds Museums and Galleries is run by the Local Authority so some staff across the service were reallocated to roles within different services. This has presented a set of challenges around staff wellbeing.

## Discussion with Minister Gibb

Nick Gibb thanked Chris Skidmore for the invitation to speak with the group and Kate Fellows and Susan Raikes for their interesting presentations.

He shared that the Department for Education regard getting pupils to visit museums as very important, in both what they do at the museum and the whole experience of the visit. For some pupils, it will be the first time they visit a museum which makes the trips even more vital. 59% children had visited a museum in the last 12 months in 2019 and to build on that is the direction of travel policy wise. Young people should be able to go to museums, concerts and theatre to learn what it is like to have a cultural experience. Schools work with education teams to facilitate museum visits. In some cases, coach costs can be prohibitive but the Minister want schools to overcome that using pupil premiums etc.

Q: The Minister asked Kate Fellows if the curriculum work that Leeds Museums and Galleries undertake with schools is more with primary than secondary? What does the balance look like? Are museums working with the Oak National Academy? One issue that is being focused on by Ofsted and the department is the content of the curriculum and ensuring it is sequenced properly. There is a move away from the curriculum being topic based to more systematic way.

A: Kate Fellows answered that Leeds Museums and Galleries work mainly with primary schools on curriculum building and sequencing, however, they still deal with some topic inquiries. In terms of the teacher training programmes, they train more secondary school teachers than primary but do not undertake curriculum planning with them in the same way.

Sam Cairns added on the point of raising the quality of teaching, there is a huge amount of knowledge within museum learning teams who often act as a conduit through which curators and others work with schools. Teachers are really interested in twilight online CPD courses and pay approximately £20 to develop specialist knowledge that supports the curriculum. The world class learning teams within UK museums can support CPD at an international level with organisations like World Continuing Education Alliance.

Q: Esme Ward commented that at the Manchester Museum there are many new kinds of partnerships with a range of educational providers for example the museum is working with young neurodiverse people aged 16-25. What does the Minister see as the opportunities for collaboration across the sector or perhaps practice that includes shared posts or greater forms of collaboration across different sectors?

Q: Chris Skidmore agreed with Sam Cairns that it seems very important that to make sure that teachers are trained to take on the enriched curriculum with confidence. What kinds of partnerships and new structures could inspire these opportunities?

A: Nick Gibb responded that the priority for resources should be put into children visiting museums. In terms of curricular development, partnerships between museums and schools are positive but museums must understand the new paradigm in terms of curriculum development that it has to be sequenced and knowledge rich. Schools will require this because that is what they will be inspected against. When children visit museums and hold objects, the curriculum is brought to life.

Q: Helen Charman asked how can the sector best support schools to have confidence to bring school groups back to museums? Will there be a joined-up effort with the department for Education? There is some concern that the pivot towards digital could lead to a decrease in the number of school visits.

Chris Skidmore added that museums will be unable to open until 17<sup>th</sup> May which is slightly later than the sector would have hoped. What can be done to prepare and ready for the resumption of visits? Is there a way the sector could work with the department to highlight visit opportunities or could that come through the Oak Academy?

A: Nick Gibb will consider how museums, schools and the department can work together on the resumption of visits and overcome natural caution to make sure that after 17<sup>th</sup> May school visits resume as soon as possible. There were great statistics pre pandemic and he wants to return to that and increase the numbers.

Q: Lord Boswell asked to what extent are national and specialist resources able to teach pupils about the history of the multitude of cultures in Britain and to introduce young people to the reality of differences without this obviously tailored to a particular narrow purpose?

A: The issue was discussed at the select committee a few years ago. If you have a rich curriculum, there is an opportunity to bring in other nations and cultures and their shaping of multicultural Britain. Teaching in a sequenced way will bring a vast knowledge, not only about Britain and Europe but the entire world and that will create a diverse cultural education.

Q: Sam Cairns commented that it was encouraging to hear the discussion about visits. She asked about the plans for an arts premium and how that could be structured and supported? There are messages going out now to schools regarding the recovery premium and how could the sector support summer catch up activities?

A: Nick Gibb shared that the work on the arts premium was put on hold because of the pandemic. Sir Kevan Collins has been appointed as recovery commissioner so more will be said on that in the near future. £1.7 billion will be given to schools and much of that can be spent at the discretion of the school. There is £80 per pupil to be spent as wished for recovery so that could be used to fund visits to museums which would be a very good way to combine an activity that promotes wellbeing alongside learning.

Q: Chris Skidmore asked if the Minister could give examples of what he consider to be offering a sterling education service or outreach programme?

A: There are great examples of schools doing the work discussed. Would the APPG and interested parties like to speak with these schools? Michaela in Brent, the Reach Academy in Feltham, Inspiration Trust in Norfolk and North Suffolk, the STAR multi-academy trust in Sherburn and Tadcaster and the Future Academies in Pimlico are all ahead of the rest of the sector in terms of a knowledge-based curriculum. When working with schools the emphasis should be on how museums and their collections can support the school curriculum and not the other way round.

Q: Esme Ward said that the Manchester Museum had large natural history collections and they are very excited about the development of a natural history GCSE. Educators want to ensure that they are connecting young people to nature, teaching them about the natural world and about zero carbon futures. Should museums be doing more in this area given the breadth of their collections?

A: There is room for growth working with natural science collections to support the teaching of a knowledge rich curriculum.

Q: Di Lees asked what is the relationship between the Department for Education and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in developing future strategy?

A: Nick Gibb confirmed that they work closely with DCMS and are working closely with them on the development of the arts premium and on other similar issues.



Q: Kate Fellows shared that many museums have reached out to the Oak Academy but found it difficult to engage. It would be great to have engagement and museum learning teams have knowledge to share.

A: Nick Gibb will speak to Matt Hood as it could have been the case that they did not have capacity to engage previously but as pressure eases perhaps they will be able to now and museums can be part of the network.

Chris Skidmore closed the meeting by thanking the Minister for the opportunity to discuss these issues and the many links that have been made. He thanked Kate Fellows and Susan Raikes again for their excellent presentations and reminded members that the presentations and briefing note with case studies will be shared and uploaded to the APPG for Museums website.