

KS3 GO WILD IN BRISTOL

KS3 had an excellent trip to Bristol last week. They visited M Shed museum, the planetarium, We Are The Curious Science centre, the SS Great Britain, navigated the Banksy walk and visited a falconry and archery centre.



As well as famous people who have hailed from Bristol, including Derren Brown and Banksy, there are also equally less well known fascinating people. Pupils had a chance to discover a bit more about them at the M Shed museum and learn about their contribution to the city's rich history. M Shed can be found on the Prince's Wharf dock-front site and is guarded by four massive cranes. Inside lurks a charming 3,000-strong treasure trove of forgotten artefacts, arcane memorabilia and local oddities, each with its own unique significance to Bristol. The pupils quickly realised this is no shed; rather a community attic over two floors, like Bristol's very own Smithsonian.

The permanent display areas are divided into three sections, named People, Place and Life. Everyone was free to amble about the small, cluttered galleries unearthing intriguing exhibits – anything from photography to historical documents to building brackets.

For example, in the Life gallery, a white padded Inuit outfit is used as the basis for the story of Calichough, Ignorth and Nutiok, a family captured and brought to Bristol by merchant traders in 1577, offering a sideways glance at Bristol's role in the transatlantic slave trade.



The People room hosts a pink spray-painted Technics record deck used by trip-hop pioneers Massive Attack in their formative years.

Best of all, in the Place gallery the demise and grisly aftermath of John Harwood, hanged for murder in 1821, is explored via a book of trial notes bound in his own skin. Those eager for a double dose of macabre thrill can look out upon the very jail where Harwood was hanged from M Shed's third floor.

At 'We The Curious' pupils were let loose to enjoy hands on experiments on two floors of exhibits.

They could build bridges and test their strength, create animated films, make enormous bubbles, see the veins and blood in their hands using a special machine, run in a huge wheel and watch the gears working to help move water along an exhibit.





But one of the highlights has to have been their visit to the 3D Planetarium. Entering the dome and settling back in comfortable seats, they began to explore the solar system. Everyone within the dome was in awe as it looked as if the roof of the dome was opening and we could see out into the night sky. Even the staff were captivated and learned something from the show that lasted approximately 30 minutes. The students all agreed that it was absolutely fantastic. They could take away a factsheet about the night sky and some hoped for a clear night so they could see for themselves.

In school the pupils have been learning about urban art and in particular about the world-famous artist from Bristol, Banksy, in preparation for their trip. Although his work now sells for hundreds of thousands of pounds, once he was just another kid on the streets of Bristol with a can of spray paint in his hands. As a result, some of his earliest work is hidden around the city, and spotting it is an absolute must for fans of his work. Close to the M Shed museum, almost hidden away, the pupils tracked down one of his more familiar pieces of art – The Girl with the Pierced Eardrum – as part of their Banksy Walking Tour. There are plans to create their own Banksy-inspired graffiti artwork when they return to the classroom and hopefully some of it will soon be seen covering buildings on the school's senior school site.



In addition to all this culture and scientific discovery, the pupils were also given the chance to test their weaponry skills of yester-year at the falconry and archery centre where they all had the opportunity to shoot arrows. They also got to experience some of the most majestic birds of the natural world and learn about the historic art of falconry, for thousands of years the sport of kings.



All thoroughly enjoyed and staff commented on the excellent behaviour and morale of Castle School pupils. Another successful Castle School trip!