

Christmas - The Story

Your school is invited to a re-telling
of an ancient story.

2nd December for three weeks.



FreeSchoolTrip

The Hayes, Cardiff

BOOK NOW > christmas-story@hotmail.co.uk

What is 'Christmas - The Story'?



It is a creative live theatre event on the Hayes, during which the children will:

- See a mesmerising performance
- Learn to play belleplates
- Meet real, live donkeys

'Christmas - The Story' brings to life the 2,000 year-old story, using adult actors, professional costumes and staging, plus some unique and exquisite puppets.

This twenty-minute production is packed with breath-taking moments. On their journey Mary and Joseph encounter angels and shepherds, soldiers and stables, childbirth, Magi and stars - not to mention the arch-villain, Herod, before finally returning safely home to Nazareth.

**All this is
entirely
FREE!**

In addition, the children will learn to play a simple carol on belleplates. Both elements are accessible for all primary school ages.

They will also have the opportunity to meet our two delightful donkeys.



Why should your school visit?

Christmas is full of traditions. Bringing children into the glitter of a city centre dressed in its seasonal finery, making music and then sharing with them a story told the world over at this special time of year is in itself a tradition worth starting. Everyone will leave with a richer understanding of our celebrations and cultural heritage. What's more, it will be great fun!

Although 'Christmas - The Story' is the gift of our churches to the children of Cardiff, **there is no evangelising or preaching involved.** It is simply the re-telling of an ancient story. The event is appropriate for children of all faith backgrounds and none, and supports the National Curriculum for key stages 1 and 2.

"The children and all the staff thoroughly enjoyed the performance which was out of this world! We were so impressed that we brought our families to see it the following weekend."

Sarah Lewis
St Bernadette's
Primary School

With a set-down point for coaches close by, leading straight on to the pedestrianised area of the Hayes, Tabernacl provides an ideal location for school trips. Children with special educational needs can be driven right to the site, please just let us know when you make your booking.

See the
back cover
for booking
details!



Belleplate ringing lessons

Encountering the traditional tunes of Christmas through the medium of belleplates is certain to bring Christmas vividly alive for everyone. The techniques involved are so simple and the instructions are very easy to follow, which means that by the end of your 20-minute session, the children will be able to play a simple carol – brilliantly. Success is guaranteed.

Belleplates are a marvellous invention, ideal for children. They recreate the authentic sound of handbells, but the belleplates themselves are lightweight and sturdy, unlike classic bells which are heavy, fragile and expensive.



Each child will have a belleplate of their own to ring, and under the direction of our teachers they will quickly and easily find themselves making music. Working together as a team, the children acquire a strong sense of the way individual notes meld together to create a tune.

The sessions take place under the same roof as 'Christmas - The Story'. The children will be taken into the main part of the building - a fine example of a traditional Welsh non-conformist chapel. The acoustics of this large chapel ensure that this will be a remarkable musical experience for the children.

When you book your place to see 'Christmas – The Story', if you don't have time for the lesson, please just let us know.

"A huge thank-you from all of us at Roath Park. Every member of staff and child who came yesterday had something positive to say, and have agreed to book earlier next year in order for us all to attend..."

**Claire Williams,
Roath Park Primary**



Meet our Donkeys

All school groups who make a booking to visit 'Christmas – The Story' will get an extra special surprise. When you arrive, 2 gorgeous donkeys will be outside the Tabernacl Chapel awaiting you!

Not only will you see them as you arrive, but you will get an opportunity to see them again when you go between the performance and the belleplate ringing lesson. If you have any extra time to spare, you're welcome to spend it with them – they're social creatures and enjoy human company.



Our donkeys are very friendly and you are welcome to photograph and stroke them, but please don't be tempted to bring any food for them as we give them plenty of food and wouldn't want them to get over excited. We have anti-bacterial gel which you are welcome to use.

We should warn you that bad weather isn't very donkey-friendly, so if there's stormy weather on the day you come, then unfortunately they'll have to stay in the local stables where they live each December.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is it suitable for children of all faiths?

Absolutely. This is a classic retelling of a 2,000 year-old story, long familiar to people of all faiths and none. Since 2010, schools have brought children of all backgrounds. Many adults of other faiths have also come to see 'Christmas - The Story', including immigrants studying English as a second language. There is no attempt to evangelise, convert or preach - just to tell the story, as it has always been. You can have complete confidence that children can access the full programme.

What about children with special needs?

We are always delighted to welcome special schools. Both the play and the belleplate ringing lesson are accessible to and enjoyed by all. Please just let us know if you have particular queries and we will do our best to meet your needs.

We will need to bring our children in the school minibus, where can we park?

If your children have special needs you can park at the rear of Tabernacl, in the church's own car park. When you make your booking, please inform us that you will need access. We will need the details of any vehicles you will be bringing at least a week before your visit so that we can ensure access.

Where is Tabernacl situated?

Tabernacl Chapel is on the Hayes, close to the main entrance to John Lewis and the Central Library. It is opposite the main entrance to the St. David's shopping centre.

"The trip to watch the Nativity is one that both children and staff look forward to each year. The acting and interactive parts of the play ensure the children are kept engaged and enthralled. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in the belleplates session, where they perform a Christmas carol. This is a fun filled and informative trip that is a highlight of the school year."

Miss Saunders
Baden Powell Primary School



Where is the nearest dropping off point for coaches?

There is a pull-in for buses at the side of John Lewis. From there it is a short walk across the pedestrian zone. If they come from the direction of the old bus station (Wood Street) they should be able to set down without the children having any roads to cross.

What about disabled access?

Wheelchairs can access 'Christmas-The Story' with ease. The audience is seated on chairs and small benches, which can be moved to allow several wheelchairs in at one time. If you plan to bring a number of wheelchairs, we can free up as much space as you need. Please let us know how many when you book. The building has an accessible disabled toilet near the main door.

How will we know where to go when we arrive?

Our stewards will be waiting to greet you outside on the street.

How many children can be seated in each performance?

We can accommodate up to 70 children at each performance.



"A massive thank-you for today. The children really enjoyed the Nativity and belleplate sessions. It encouraged the children's interest and a long discussion back at school."
Mrs E Duddbridge, Severn Primary School



Is it suitable for children of all ages?

Yes. Nursery Schools have brought children who really enjoyed it - especially the interlude with the puppets. As the entire play lasts just twenty minutes, young children cope very well, although very small children may need a moment's reassurance during the Herod scene!

"I just want to thank you and your team for a wonderful time at Tabernacl... Even the parents mentioned how excited their child was in re-telling their experiences...Many thanks."

**Rob Bleach, Dosbarth Enfys,
Llanishen Fach Primary School**



www.the-story.org.uk

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What about the hard of hearing or sight impaired?

There is a loop system for the hard of hearing and the sound system provides good audibility. Due to the clear soundtrack used 'Christmas - The Story' is easy for sight-impaired individuals to follow.

This is a bilingual event, how does it work?

The play can be performed in both English and Welsh. Please just let us know which language you would prefer when you book, and we will ensure that you have the language of your choice. However, we cannot offer an absolute guarantee that the belleplate lesson will always be available in the language of your choice - although we will do our best. We are reliant on volunteers, and it may be that no Welsh speaking volunteer will be free to fill your time-slot.

How definite are the timings?

We are committed to running a tight ship and getting everyone in and out on time. We are confident that you can rely on our timings. However, as with anything in life, unforeseen circumstances may arise which may upset our plans. Schools keeping to the time slots agreed help us ensure things run smoothly.

We understand that unforeseen problems can occur, so if you are not running to time, please let us know by calling 07596 225971 (leaving a message if you need to). This will help us keep disruption to a minimum.

“Have you booked yet?”

See the back cover for booking details!



What about toilets?

There is a well appointed toilet near the main entrance - and ample provision in the St David's shopping centre.

What about risk assessments?

Schools, obviously, will need to complete their own risk assessment, but we have a sample on our website for you to view if you feel it would be helpful.

Is there any hidden cost?

It really is free! All the essential costs have been met by the churches of Cardiff, of all denominations. This is their Christmas gift to the people of our city.

BOOK YOUR **FREE SCHOOL TRIP NOW!**

christmas-story@hotmail.co.uk

Tabernacl Baptist Chapel,
The Hayes, Cardiff, CF10 1AJ.

2nd December for three weeks.

Time slots: 10.00 - 10.40 - 11.20 - 12.00 - 1.20 - 2.00

What we need to know:

(Booking checklist)

- ☐ Name of school attending
(please put this information in the subject line)
- ☐ Contact name and mobile number
of teacher in charge on the day
- ☐ A choice of your preferred dates
and times
- ☐ Number of seats required
- ☐ Ages of children
- ☐ Any additional needs/requirements

www.the-story.org.uk