



a special place for learning

The Holly Lodge Centre Annual Education Report April 2023 – March 2024



THE
ROYAL
PARKS

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Introduction to The Holly Lodge Centre

The Holly Lodge Centre is a unique education centre, on the site of an 18th century farm. We have been the learning partner for The Royal Parks in Richmond Park since 1994.

The Centre offers visitors close encounters with the diverse wildlife, flora and distinct heritage of the park. Our aim has always been to increase access for all to Richmond Park and we specialise in working with children and adults with disabilities. The Centre provides interactive opportunities for all primary school children to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in science, geography and history. Additionally, every learning session we offer can be tailored to meet the needs of children from specialist schools for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), both primary and secondary. All our facilities and teaching sessions are adapted for use by visitors with disabilities, and groups of all ages and abilities are welcome. We continue to hold the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge and have also been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

We have a small staff team, which currently consists of the full time equivalent of 2.6 members of staff. The Centre is now staffed by Alex Sharp (Job share - Centre Manager) and Sarah Clark (Job share – Centre Manager, currently on maternity leave and covered by Jaime Walsh) and three Education Centre Co-ordinators, Izzy Hedges (full-time), Nicky d'Offay (part-time) and Lindsey Hamilton (part-time).

Our staff team are ably supported by a team of over 75 volunteers from the local community, who this year provided over 3,600 volunteering hours.

During this financial year, our education provision and bookings were at full capacity once again, having made a complete recovery from the issues faced during the pandemic.



Highlights

- We held a new Nocturnal Animals workshop for Clarendon School, a local school for children with moderate learning difficulties and additional complex needs. Our classroom was transformed into a night-time scene and a magical storyteller brought nocturnal animals to life through sounds and senses.
- Our SEND Christmas workshops were another resounding success this year. We delivered 26 workshops as part of our Christmas Programme. These were attended by 152 children and young people and 140 adults and carers.
- This year we launched our new Richmond Park in World War 2 workshop aimed at Key Stage 2 children, trialling it successfully with a local school and launching it as a new workshop offer.
- We increased the amount of Reminiscence workshops, offering one off sessions to care home and community groups. We have developed a new relationship with a local community group – Richmond Good Neighbours - who are eager to return for more sessions.
- This year we developed relationships with two new schools – Blossom House School, a specialist secondary school for pupils with complex speech, language and communication needs and Malden Oaks, a Pupil Referral Unit in Kingston and Richmond, delivering a total of 24 workshops to pupils, many of which were fully funded and free to the schools through our Bursary Scheme funded by Royal Parks USA
- Many of our workshops are delivered by our wonderful local volunteers. This year we held a new recruitment round and a new batch of education volunteers were taken through their paces at a training day. We couldn't do our work without the support of our 75 volunteers.

This year we delivered a total of 312 workshops to 6,990 learners. This included 5,000 children and 1,990 adults (including adults with learning disabilities, older people, carers, parents and teachers). This equated to 13,980 total learner hours.

We take feedback from every workshop that we deliver and our satisfaction rating for this year was 100% (this was from learners who reported their experience as having met or exceeded their expectations).



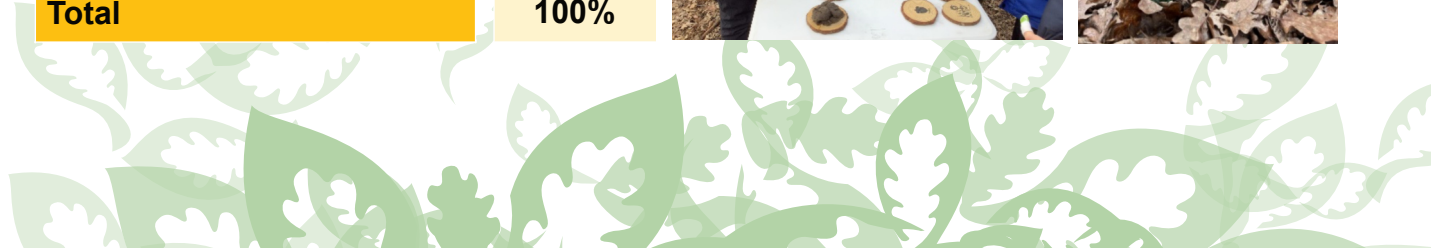
Schools Programme



At The Holly Lodge Centre our school programme is delivered to both mainstream and schools for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In total we delivered 224 workshops to school groups in this financial year, to 5,144 learners and 68 different schools. Classes travelled to the Centre from 15 different boroughs in London and the surrounding counties. Our school programme delivery is split into two parts, mainstream schools and specialist schools for children with disabilities. The tables below details the variety of workshops delivered across the year.

Workshops 2023 - 2024

Nature workshops	%	Historical workshops	%
Birds	7%	Christmas SEND session	23%
Forest School	5%	Then & Now	1%
Frogs Toads & Newts	3%	Pills & Extracts	13%
Gardening	14%	Soap Workshop	1%
General Nature Trail	3%	Victorian School	46%
Invertebrates/Life Cycles	9%	Victorian Servants	12%
Living Things and Their Habitats	31%	WW1 in Richmond Park	2%
Living Things in Winter	3%	WW2 in Richmond Park	2%
MADD	1%	Total	100%
Mammals workshop	6%		
Nocturnal Animals	2%		
Plants	16%		
Pond Dipping	1%		
Total	100%		



Specialist SEND Schools

Over the course of the year, 12 different SEND schools made 63 visits to the Centre from boroughs around London. In total 754 learners from specialist SEND schools and colleges had bespoke workshops delivered by our team. We delivered to a range of different schools, with huge variance in the needs of their pupils. Our visitors included schools for children with profound and multiple disabilities (PMLD), severe learning disabilities (SLD), moderate learning disabilities (MLD), schools for children with autism spectrum disorders, schools for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and pupil referral units. Many of these specialist classes attending the Centre have very small class sizes with as few as 3 pupils in the group. Teachers at specialist SEND schools repeatedly tell us how difficult it is to find venues for learning trips for their pupils, where their needs are catered for, and where they are safe. The Holly Lodge Centre is unique in its delivery of this specialised and bespoke work.

We delivered 20 free outdoor sessions to school children with SEND for The Royal Parks Help Nature Thrive project, funded by the People's Postcode Lottery. These sessions were based around the amphibians living in the park, bringing the lifecycles of frogs, toads and newts to life for these pupils.

On Friday mornings during the growing season, sixth form pupils from a local school for pupils with SLD, join us for gardening sessions. The pupils sowed, tended and harvested produce that they took back to school for use in their pupil run café. Over the term we observed the growth not just in the horticultural skills of these pupils, but also their confidence levels. We were lucky enough to visit the café run in school by some of the gardening team – a wonderful day out.

During November and December, we offered sensory Christmas workshops to schools for children with SEND, looking at the role the natural world plays in our festive celebrations. The pupils enjoyed time on the nature trail taking part in sensory activities and then warmed up in our Victorian classroom, decorating the Christmas tree and using natural spices to make gingerbread. In total we delivered 26 workshops, attended by 152 children, 31 adults and 109 Carers. 21 workshops were for children and young people with disabilities from schools across London. In addition, we delivered 3 workshops for community groups and 2 workshops for elderly groups.

Our Centre was a hive of activity in February 2024 when students from Clarendon Primary School visited for a special event day. We have been delivering this event for the past few years, each time choosing a different theme - this year our focus was 'Nocturnal Animals'. Our classroom was transformed into a night-time scene and a magical storyteller brought nocturnal animals to life through sounds and senses. This free session was funded by Help Nature Thrive.

This year we delivered 17 free workshops as part of the Royal Parks USA funded bursary scheme. This scheme enabled us to establish new relationships with a Pupil Referral Unit and a local SEND school, who had previously not accessed The Holly Lodge Centre.



Quotes from some of the workshops:

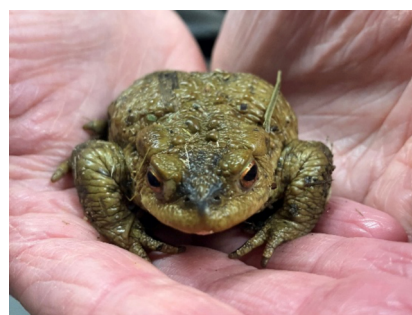
“Holly Lodge is magical with the experiences you provide for our pupils. The range of activities engage all pupils, from the sensory storytelling, to the nature trail with a range of multisensory activities to really bring to life the experiences which pupils can recall and talk about for a long time afterwards”.

Mainstream schools:

We offer a wide variety of workshops for mainstream primary schools, focusing on the science and history areas of the national curriculum. Over the year we delivered 161 mainstream school workshops, to a total of 4,390 learners. That’s a lot of pond dipping!

We developed a new World War 2 workshop this year, working closely with a local underprivileged school who requested the session after a successful World War 1 workshop. The school tested the new workshop for us and provided extensive feedback, which enabled us to develop and refine it further, before rolling it out as part of our standard offer to schools. New bookings were taken as a result and we will continue to promote it during 24/25.

We also hosted the London Borough of Richmond Junior Citizen programme, which works to reduce child deaths and educates Year 6 pupils on CPR, safe road crossing, using public transport and much more. It was attended by 30 different schools and 1337 pupils from the borough of Richmond.



Frogs, toads and Newts



Nocturnal Animals Day



Children enjoying Victorian School and our outdoor space



Community Programme

Community engagement is at the core of the work that we do at The Holly Lodge Centre, reaching out to ensure access to Richmond Park for all. This year we delivered 78 workshops as part of our community programme, to a total of 654 learners (including 246 children)

Children and families: In the school holidays we worked with local organisations to bring children, who otherwise would not have the chance to visit Richmond Park, into the Centre for activity days. This year during the Easter and Summer holidays we were joined by:

- Children with disabilities and their siblings and parents, supported by local charity, Skylarks
- Young people with autism and social/communication difficulties working with Knots Arts
- Children with disabilities supported by Richmond and Kingston Children's services (Achieving for Children)
- Young Carers Groups from Richmond, Hounslow and Kingston

"The children although very varied in age, ability (physically and cognitively) were ALL fully engaged and absorbed in the activities which were led really well and gently and in an encouraging way"

"I loved pond dipping and I found a tadpole and some sea snails and beetles and I loved making the nests because we get to get messy and getting messy is the best! Holly Lodge is the best!"

Adults: We run a weekly art group for adults with learning disabilities throughout the year. Using nature as a creative starting point, the group use a variety of media to create 2D and 3D artworks.

We continued our relationship with FiSH – a elderly community group – by delivering our six-month Art Reminiscence programme. The sessions were designed for older people with early-stage dementia who are living in our local community. The group visited once a month for 6 months and took part in seasonally focused nature-based art tasks. The final visit included a star turn from a musician with a ukulele and became a knees up! In 23/24 these sessions were funded by Help Nature Thrive.

As well as this offer, we expanded our Reminiscence sessions by broadening our audience to Richmond Good Neighbours and Tennyson Grange Care Home. We have been delivering one-off Reminiscence workshops, focussing on art, nature and the history of the park and area. These have been successful, and the participants express their positivity for these workshops and a desire to return.





Tennyson Grange continued to visit our Centre throughout the year and we expanded our offers to them. We tailored specific workshops for their interests. One of these being the WW2 workshop that was originally designed for school-age children. We altered this workshop to focus on reminiscence and delivered this to two separate groups from Tennyson Grange. The participants interacted with artefacts that triggered positive memories that they shared with the group. Tennyson Grange have booked six more workshops with us for the near future.



“It is the atmosphere of welcoming, gentle support, interesting activities and a calm environment the captures our residents. The engagement your volunteers offer is incredible, they really take the time to sit and chat and bring our residents out of themselves.”



During the two recent WW2 workshops we had residents in each group who were not sure about being there or whether they could successfully engage themselves. Lily age 101 years, who has extremely poor eyesight was reserved at the beginning of the session thinking she wouldn't benefit because she couldn't see, but happily spoke about her memories of rationing, tried on the helmet and headscarf tie, laughing all the while, and chatted about memories of wearing her uniform when in the Women's Royal Air Force, where she met her husband at the age of 18 years old”



“I think your choice of artwork was perfect and I think the concept of creating a card and bookmark was also spot on. You were kind and caring with all the clients and along with the weather I thought it was a perfect session. It did make me laugh about the nature walk. Definitely no uptake for that and 100% straight in for tea and cake.”

Public Programme

During the year we participated in 8 public drop in events aimed at families, at different venues within Richmond Park – helping to reach in total 1,192 learners (624 children and 568 adults). We joined forces with The Royal Parks Help Nature Thrive team and the Friends of Richmond Park for each event. We were also involved in Richmond Park Open Day in September 2023 – a celebration of the park, joined by many park partners and where we provided activities for children and families who attended the day.

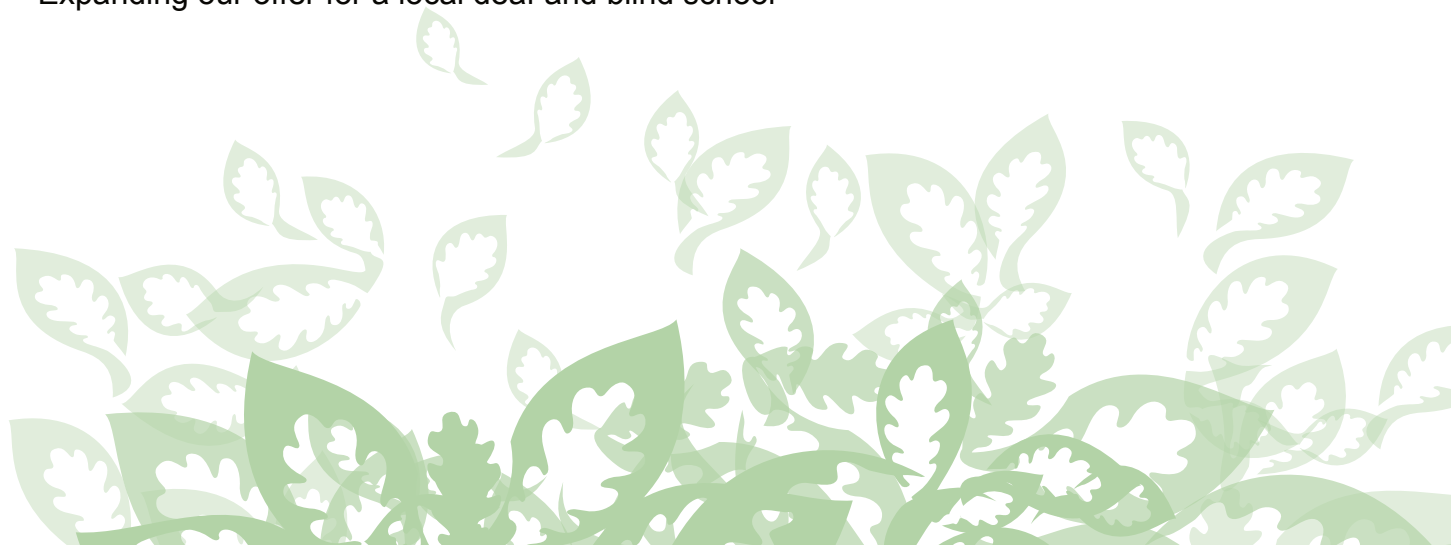
Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities

- During 2023/24 we have experienced a reducing number of volunteer hour contributions. We will need to address this challenge in order to continue to deliver our extensive range of workshops.
- During 2024/25 we hope to achieve confirmation of plans to build a new toilet block. Once built the additional facilities could enable us to increase our capacity of workshops, in particular developing further secondary KS3 sessions.
- During 2024/25 we also hope to finalise plans for treatment of the subsidence issues facing our main teaching building and classroom.

Plans for 2024-2025

We are looking forward to another busy year in 2024 - 2025. The Holly Lodge Centre team will be:

- Reaching out to schools in deprived areas to provide free or reduced-price workshops as part of The Royal Parks School Bursary scheme, Year 2.
- Delivering a further 6-month reminiscence project for older people affected by dementia and expanding our offer for Care Homes
- Expanding our offer to include more secondary school pupils attending pupil referral units and working with The Royal Parks Green Futures team to roll out the Green Futures project in Richmond Park
- Developing some new KS2 workshops
- Engaging more with the Alton Estate, Roehampton - an area of particularly high levels of deprivation.
- Hosting our first work experience placement for a young person with Autism.
- Expanding our offer for a local deaf and blind school



Appendix

EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT - TABLE OF LEARNERS		
YEAR:	APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024	
Ref	KPIs	APR 23 - MAR 24
		TOTAL
	SUMMARY:	
A	N of Learner visits	6990
B	N of Learner hours	13980
C	Percentage of Learner satisfaction	100%
D	Learners visits benefitting from free or discounted activities and bursaries	609
REF	ANNUAL DELIVERY STATS	TOTAL
1	N of Learner visits (across all programmes):	6990
	N of children	5000
	N of adults	1990
2	N of sessions / activities delivered	312
3	N of free or discounted sessions/activities delivered	32
	Schools programme	
	Mainstream:	
4	N of Learner visits:	4390
	N of children	3661
	N of adults	729
5	N of school sessions delivered:	161
	N of Primary school sessions	147
	N of Secondary school sessions	14
6	N of state schools and N of private schools (if available)	116 (state) / 31 (private)
7	N of free bursary / discounted sessions delivered	16
	School projects / SEND specialism (if relevant)	
8	N of Learner visits:	754
	N of children	469
	N of adults	285
9	N of school sessions delivered:	63
	N of Primary school sessions	31
	N of Secondary school sessions	32
10	N of free bursary / discounted sessions delivered	16

Appendix

Community & Public Programme		
	Family programme:	
11	N of Learner visits:	1192
	N of children	624
	N of adults	568
12	N of activities / events delivered	8
13	N of free bursary / discounted activities delivered	0
	Adult programme:	
14	N of Learner visits:	309
	N of children	3
	N of adults	306
15	N of activities / events delivered	51
16	N of free / discounted activities	0
	Community Programme / Other:	
17	N of Learner visits:	345
	N of children	243
	N of adults	102
18	N of activities / events delivered	27
19	N of free / discounted activities	0



