

# Great Western Society

## Education Policy

### 1. Mission Statement of Didcot Railway Centre

#### Vision

Our vision is for Didcot Railway Centre to be recognised for the international importance of its collection and the value of bringing to life the golden age of steam as a dynamic Living Museum.

#### Mission

Our mission is to fulfil our potential as a heritage venue at the centre of its community. Accessible to all, striving to engage and inspire the widest possible audiences in the history and heritage of the Great Western Railway – the pioneering transport infrastructure that laid the foundations for contemporary transport innovation.

#### Values

Authentic | Welcoming | Engaging | Innovative | Great Quality | Sustainable.

### 2. Education Mission Statement

To promote widely and encourage life-long interest, understanding and enjoyment of the heritage and environment of railways, in particular the former Great Western Railway and British Railways (Western Region) and its successors, through the educational and vocational use of the collections and associated information held by the Great Western Society and Great Western Trust.

### 3. Education Policy

- to ensure that access to education is provided to as many people as possible in an environment where safety is paramount
- to set out the exhibits in the most appropriate ways with clear interpretation to encourage the interest of as many people as possible
- to create a centre of excellence for education in an industrial museum setting and to support co-operation with other museums
- to work in partnership with Education Authorities and other educational institutions to encourage interest and learning and promote work experience
- to be aware of developments in the world of education and to respond to them in an appropriate manner
- to encourage young people to develop their skills in a young volunteers programme
- to ensure that the educational function is considered in all decisions affecting the Society and that the Education Policy is reviewed every three years
- to ensure that the Society's action plans include for the provision of an effective structure and adequate resources to meet its educational targets
- to ensure that all staff are aware of and sympathetic to the educational role of the Society and that full provision is made for the development and training of those staff and volunteers working in an educational role for the Society
- to set specific and measurable educational objectives to be evaluated annually

#### **4. Programme of services**

A comprehensive educational programme for people of all ages and with a wide range of railway knowledge is to be offered both at the Didcot Railway Centre and at external venues. This may include:

- National Curriculum targeted programmes for schools
- encouragement and practical help in the learning of science and engineering
- structured visits and activities for children and family groups
- programme of railway related activities for young people in schools and further education, including the Society's young volunteers
- paid internships in partnership with universities
- adult education and public lecture programmes and workshops
- guided tours on both formal and informal bases
- opportunities for work experience and work shadowing
- support to other museums and local societies
- assistance to specialist researchers

#### **5. Key groups**

The Policy requires the educational programmes to be as inclusive as possible and to set targets to evaluate the success of this objective.

Children aged 5 to 16  
Students opting to study science and engineering  
Students in tertiary education  
Students considering training and employment in engineering  
Adult learners  
People with disabilities  
Researchers  
School parties  
Under 5s

#### **6. In collaboration with . . .**

Local Education Authorities  
Partner Primary and Secondary schools in Oxfordshire  
Oxfordshire Business Education Alliance  
South East Museum Development  
Arts Council England  
Experience Oxfordshire  
Tourism South East  
National Railway Museum  
Heritage Railway Association  
The STEM Hub (<https://thestemhub.org.uk/>) – Ambassadors programme  
University of Reading

The Education Policy was discussed by the Senior Management Team on 16 December 2022 and approved by the GWS Board on 27 March 2023. The policy will be monitored and reviewed every three years.

March 2023