



The eight principles of family learning in the National Trust

Identified by property staff based on their experience over 3 years. They emerged from the experience of the projects, but are more widely relevant.

1. Invitation and welcome

Inviting participants personally and consistently, and paying attention to details which make them feel welcome, create the right conditions for the activities to work well.

2. Using creative ways in

Using the arts, and imaginative responses, as well as broadening the stories told about the property, can reveal a greater variety of contact points and a sense of discovery for all ages.

3. Involving the whole family

Activities need to be designed so that all the family members can participate fully, allowing adults and children to be playful and creative in their learning. This can be supported by building in a variety of ways of participating that allow for different learning styles.

4. Multi-skilled approach

A variety of skills are beneficial, including good communication, strong creative skills, team work, knowledge of the property, and a real interest in people. These won't all come from one person, and the presence of all the partners, (School, property, artist or facilitator), is important.

'Looking at these really helps me to see what has worked and not worked in other projects we've done. They've become to backbone of our work'

Lisa Green, Learning & Community Manager, Morden Hall Park

5. Building relationships and learning from them

Working with a small group, who will bring with them diverse experiences, skills and knowledge, over an extended period of time, provides a rich source of learning for the property. This learning can then be extended to the general visitor.

6. Valuing volunteers

New initiatives can bring in new volunteers and diversify the opportunities for existing ones. As well as bringing considerable skills, volunteers can benefit from well-targeted training, which allows them to learn, to question, and to exchange skills and ideas.

7. Building and maintaining partnerships

Partnerships with Schools and other local organisations need to be mutually beneficial, and to include opportunities for dialogue and learning from one another, in order to be alive and meaningful. Sharing visits between the School and the property allows both partners to be host and guest, and strengthens the role of the property in the local community.

8. Interpretation and resources

Interpretation activities and resources that have been created and tested with families will extend a property's ability to be family-friendly to all visitors.