



Featuring
Westgate's Wildlife
Olympics programme

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Wild about Westgate!

Outdoor learning programme

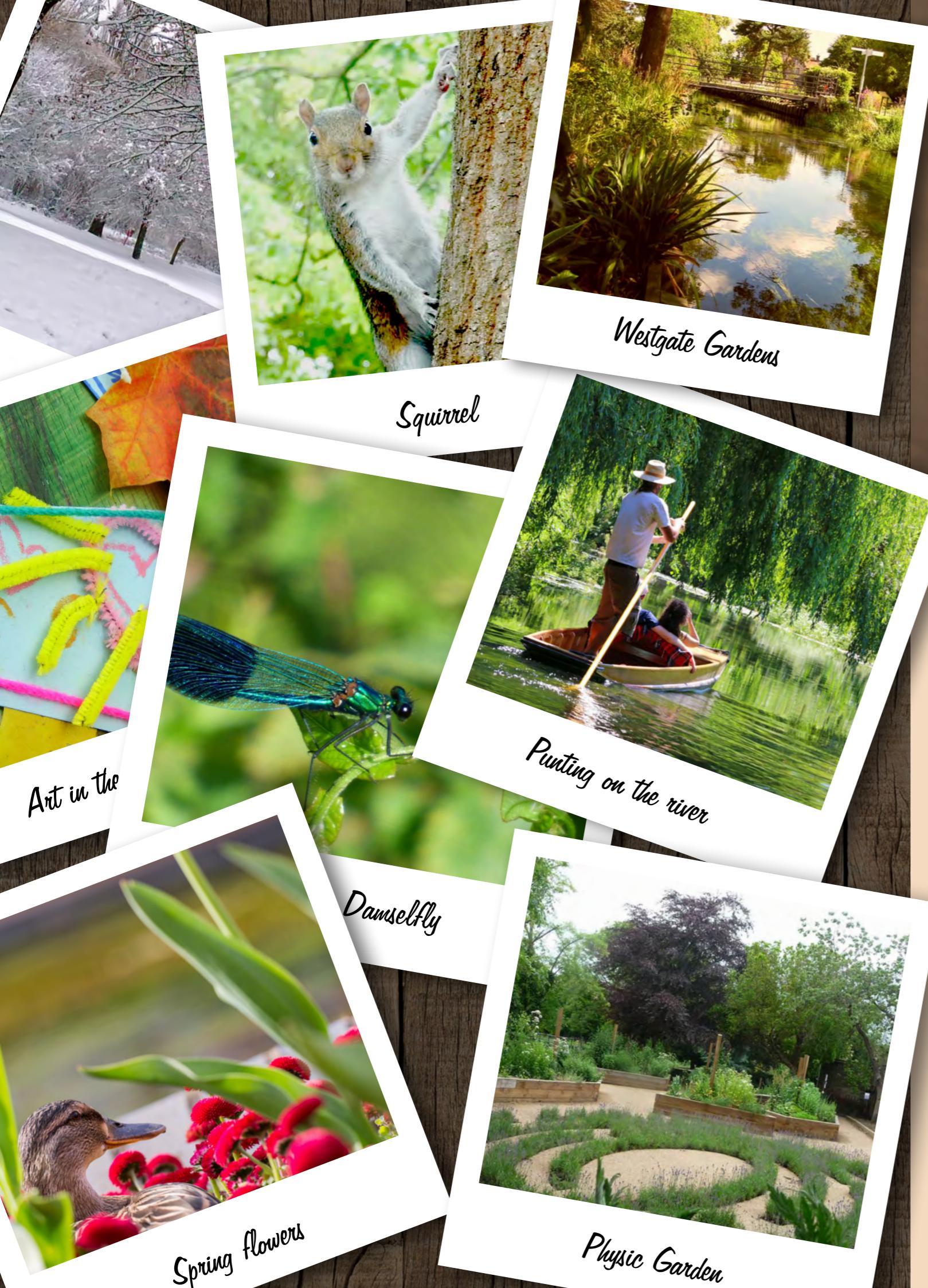
"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I
may remember, involve me and I learn."

–Benjamin Franklin



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Quotes from local schools

It was a fantastic experience had by both pupils and staff. I would definitely recommend the activities learning about habitats.

– **St. Stephen's Junior School**

The detailed and thoughtful organisation of our visit was wonderful. Anna and her team of volunteers were great leaders and facilitators. The children were focussed and engaged throughout the day and demonstrated in their subsequent work at school that they had clearly learnt a great deal about the wide variety of mini beasts living in the different environments we explored. The children (and adults) all enjoyed themselves immensely and several children were heard agreeing that this was the best school day ever!

– **St. Nicholas at Wade Primary School**

An excellent resource – have recommended to colleagues and will return next term.

– **Wincheap Primary School**

Thank you for such a lovely morning!

– **St. Christopher's School**

Amazing – we loved it! Anna is fantastic with the children. Thank you to her and the team. We would love to take part in future project with you!

– **St. John's Nursery**

Dear Anna, a few thank you notes to say thanks so much for the great trip! We look forward to working together again in the future.

– **Barham Primary School**

Working with the project has been thoroughly inspiring for both students and staff. This is what real education looks like – making a genuine difference to the community. The project has been superbly managed and organised throughout – the city can be justly proud of the work being done here. We hope our students remain involved for many years to come as part of a lasting legacy for the city.

– **Simon Langton Girls School**

The importance of outdoor learning

The first-hand experience of learning outside the classroom can help to make subjects more vivid and interesting for pupils and enhance their understanding. It can also contribute significantly to pupil's personal, social and emotional development.¹

Just five minutes 'green exercise' can produce rapid improvement in mental wellbeing and self-esteem, with the greatest benefits experienced by the young according to a study this year at the University of Essex.²

Experience of the outdoors and wilderness has the potential to confer a multitude of benefits on young people's physical development, emotional and mental health and wellbeing and societal development. Mental health and wellbeing benefits from play in natural settings appear to be long-term, realised in the form of emotional stability in young adulthood.³

Substantial evidence exists to indicate that fieldwork, properly conceived, adequately planned, well taught and effectively followed up, offers learners opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday experiences in the classroom. The Rickinson et al. review identified four areas of impact on students: cognitive, affective; social/inter-personal; and physical behavioural.⁴



Many UK wildlife charities and organisations have reported on the benefits of contact with nature and outdoor experiences. Website links to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Wildlife Trust reports are provided below.

RSPB, 2010 – "Every Child Outdoors". Children need nature. Nature needs children.⁵

Wildlife Trusts, 2015 – "Every Wild Child" Making nature part of growing up.⁶

1. Ofsted 2008 Report: Learning outside the classroom, 'How far should You Go?'
2. The Guardian, health and wellbeing: Why our children need to get outside and engage with nature, Jon Henley 16.08.10
3. Wild Adventure Space (UK) 2006. P. Travlou, OPENspace Research Centre. englishoutdoorcouncil.org/research.in.outdoor.learning
4. Rickinson, M. et al. (2004), A review of research on outdoor learning
5. rspb.org.uk/Images/everychildoutdoors_tcm9-259689.pdf
6. wildlifetrusts.orgnews/2015/11/03/every-child-wild-making-nature-part-growing-all-children

Where are the Westgate Parks?

The Westgate Parks are located to the north-west of Canterbury, with the landmark Westgate Towers forming the main entrance to the parks. The Westgate Parks are made up of four distinct areas: Westgate Gardens, Tannery Field, Toddler's Cove and Bingley Island Local Nature Reserve.

The river runs through the centre of the parks linking the urban and rural landscape. The landscape is both rich in heritage and wildlife and provides the perfect setting for outdoor learning for all ages.

For directions to the parks refer to:
westgateparks.co.uk



Travel sustainably

Canterbury East and West train stations are under a mile from the Westgate Parks

to City Centre and Canterbury East Railway Station

Wild about Westgate

Our Programmes

There are specific programmes for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and bespoke programmes can be designed on request. We also welcome groups carrying out fieldwork for GCSE, A Level and undergraduate/postgraduate project work. Work plans and national curriculum links for each programme can be provided on request.

The programmes listed are based on a half-day session (1.5–2 hours) and can be combined with another programme to make a full day. Why not combine one of our history programmes with a visit to the Canterbury Roman Museum? Your class can find out all about Roman Canterbury, see the Roman Silver Hoard and pictures of the Iron Age Settlement and then visit the spot where they were discovered!

River Great Stour study

KS2 and KS3

Follow the river on a riverside walk from Kingsmead to the Westgate Gardens. Make links to local history, investigate the geographical and historical river environment and carry out experiments to measure speed of flow. This exciting programme investigates the causes and impacts of localised flooding and pollution and discusses why an Iron Age/Roman settlement was located within the Westgate Parks.

Minibeast safari

KS1 and KS2

Take part in a minibeast hunt, explore the Local Nature Reserve, Bingley Island, or the Tannery Field wildflower meadow and play bugs bingo to identify what has been found. KS2 groups can also perform a minibeast mime and discover how some of the clever creepy crawlies have adapted to their life on land.

Food chains can be created to explore feeding relationships and energy flows in wetland and grassland habitats. The Westgate Parks Wildlife Restaurant activity provides a fun way of exploring food chains whilst also linking to literacy.

Iron Age homes and Roman hotels

KS2

This session brings the history of the parks to life! Evidence for what Canterbury was like 2000 years ago is buried beneath the Westgate Gardens and by using local archaeological finds, reconstruction images and their bodies, children can gain an insight into the lives of the Iron Age Cantiaci people who occupied the area just before the Roman Conquest. They will find out what it took to build an Iron Age round house and can imagine what it was like to live in one. We will then look at the changes that took place when Canterbury became a Roman town (including reference to 2014 archaeological dig) and compare these two very different settlements. There will be emphasis throughout on how we can use and interpret evidence to find out about our past.

For this visit, a typical class of 30 will be split into two groups with half on this activity for one hour while the other half take part in another programme. Groups will then swap over and the sessions repeated. Our self-led Time Traveller Trail makes the perfect accompaniment to this hands-on session.

A free introductory PowerPoint presentation is available as an introduction to this session in school.

Westgate's wildlife Olympics

KS1 and KS2

Learn about life processes, adaptations and feeding relationships through our wild and wonderful nature themed Olympic Games. Take part in the minibeast marathon and food chain challenge which combine team fun, exercise and learning. This half day session provides an ideal accompaniment to the river dipping or minibeast safari programme to make a full day.

Geo-caching

KS2 and KS3

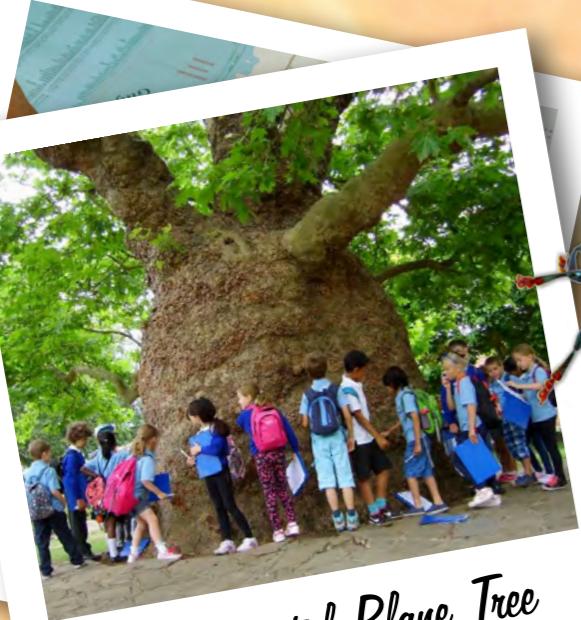
Discover more about the history or wildlife of the Westgate Parks by using Global Positioning System (GPS) handsets to navigate your way to hidden treasures (caches). Solve the clues hidden in the caches and be the first group back to claim your prize. GPS challenges can be adapted to fit themes of study on request.

River dipping

KS1 and KS2

Become a nature detective for the day! Discover the hidden life of the river by dipping for creatures and identifying them through a game of bingo. KS2 groups will learn how some of the clever creatures are adapted to live in their watery world by becoming water boatman, mosquito larvae and mayfly nymphs! The use of field study keys will also be explained as a means of identification.





The Oriental Plane Tree

Art in the park

KS1 and KS2

Bespoke art days can be designed by request to include: making natural pencils, jewellery, picture frames, making 3D artwork including willow weaving and clay tree faces. Also looking at the work of environmental artists, Andy Goldsworthy or the renowned work of local artist Thomas Sidney Cooper. A half-day session in the park can be combined with a visit to the Thomas Sidney Cooper exhibition at the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge.

Way-finding

KS2

Master the eight points of a compass, simple symbols and grid references on ordnance survey maps by taking part in the Westgate Parks way-finding challenge. This session provides a practical introduction to why we need maps and symbols, basic bearings and the importance of scale.



A sense of place

EYFS and KS1

Explore the sights, sounds, smells and textures of the Westgate Parks by taking part in hands-on sensory activities. Make smelly potions using herbs from our beautiful physic garden, listen to tree tales, sing songs and play texture games using a range of natural materials. This activity provides a good accompaniment to the teddy bear explorer programme.

Toddler's Cove teddy bear explorers

EYFS and KS1

If you visit the Westgate Parks today you're sure of a big surprise; bring your teddies, listen to a story and learn what they need to survive. In this delightful session the children will follow a teddy bear trail and undertake

a series of practical tasks including shelter building to learn what their teddy bears require to survive. Where do the bears get their food and water from? How do they keep warm and dry?

The visiting class will receive an invitation from William, the Westgate Parks bear.

Natural play

EYFS and KS1

Natural play supports the development of communication skills, fine and gross motor skills and learning through exploration. Children are encouraged to build relationships and increase environmental understanding. A structured activity is followed by time for self-initiated learning. Activities can be designed to meet national curriculum objectives and may include storytelling, green games and songs, sensory activities and bushcraft, they are all essentially play-based activities. Activities can take place over a number of sessions and incorporate planning, designing, making and testing.

Canterbury tree tales

KS1 and KS2

Be taken back in time by listening to the tales of the 200 year old magnificent oriental plane tree. The children will be encouraged to generate their own questions about the tree and use these questions to form the basis of a short story. For example: when was it planted? Who has climbed its branches? Did the tree really swallow a bench?

Groups will use natural materials as the stimuli for storytelling. There will also be opportunities for KS2 to create poetry by using numbers in nature and prepositions.

Forest school activities

Suitable for all ages

Our forest school programmes are designed to meet the needs of groups and individuals and enrich the national curriculum through outdoor exploration and hands on learning. Our Level 3 Forest School Practitioner

Practitioner can work with you to design a bespoke programme of achievable tasks. The programmes can be designed to develop social, emotional, linguistic, mathematical and physical skills. Our Forest School Practitioner can work with up to 15 children at any one time. Self-led trails can be provided to enable a class of 30 to participate. The six-week programme should be seen as the introduction to a longer term Forest School programme.

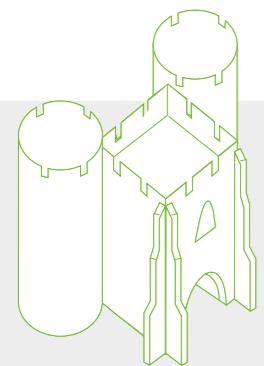
Forest School is a longer term sustainable approach to outdoor learning. For more information on the benefits of Forest School and how it can work for you, please contact the Westgate Parks Officer.



Unique Indoor Spaces

Worried about the weather or wanting a safe place for lunch or to store coats, bags and other personal belongings, then why not book one of our unique indoor spaces?

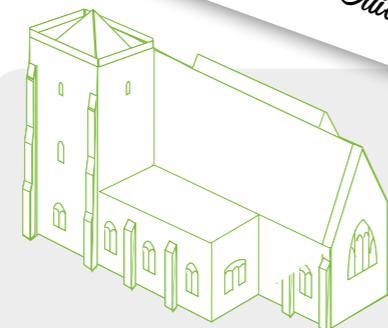
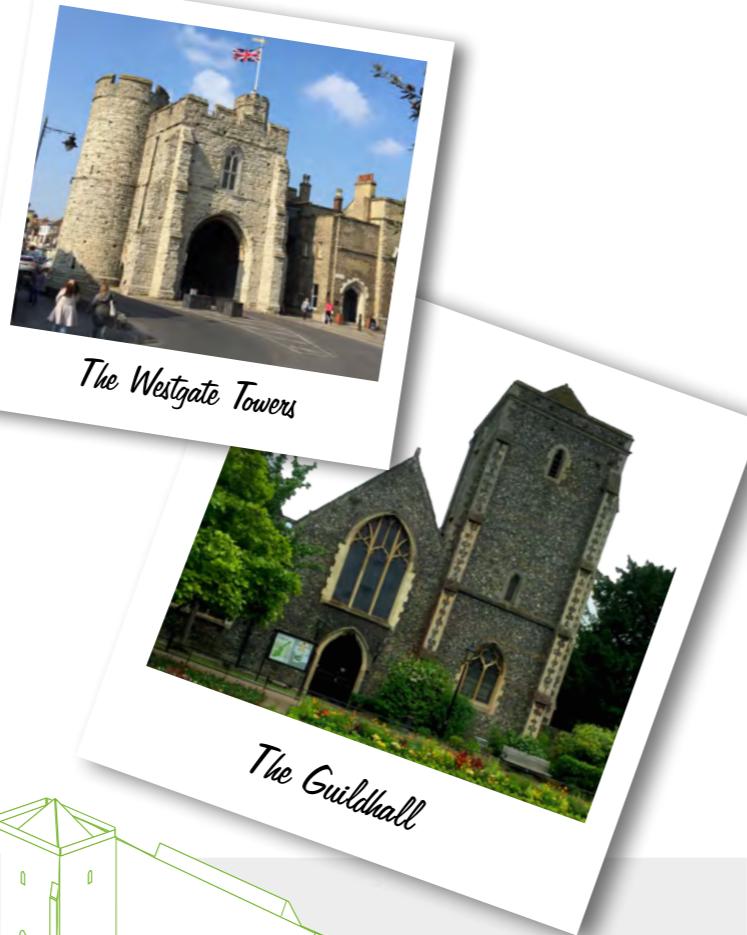
You can hire a room in a tower or part of a converted church, all within a stone's throw of the beautiful Westgate Parks.



The Westgate Towers

Built in 1380, the Westgate Towers is England's largest surviving Medieval Gateway. You can book a tower for a day and take in some of Canterbury's most iconic views, including stunning views of the Westgate Gardens.

Booking includes access to the Westgate Towers museum and viewpoint.



The Guildhall

The Guildhall building is a converted church by the River Stour in Westgate Gardens. It is owned by Canterbury City Council and used for council meetings and functions. It is conveniently situated within the Westgate Parks and provides a unique setting for lunch breaks and wet weather activities.

Please refer to the attached Price List for up to date costs of booking indoor venues.

For prices and to check whether one of these amazing venues is available to hire, please email westgate.parks@kent.gov.uk. We will send you a venue hire booking form to complete in addition to your 'Wild About Westgate' activity booking form.

Health and safety

Visiting staff safety procedures

Please give the Westgate Parks Officer a pupil register and list of accompanying adults upon your arrival, highlighting any pupils with behavioural or medical issues.

As the leading staff member, you are responsible for the safety and behaviour of your group at all times. We advise that you visit the Westgate Parks before your visit and complete a risk assessment for the day. You can arrange a pre-meet with the Westgate Parks Officer.

Classes must be accompanied by a sufficient number of adults to children. Taking into consideration the location of water bodies the following ratios of staff to children/young people are recommended: 1:3 Nursery, 1:3 Reception, Years 1–6, 1:6 Secondary, including GCSE/A-Level 1:15. Children/young people must be supervised at all times by their accompanying adults. Each class should be accompanied by an adult with a good working knowledge of first aid and a well-stocked first aid kit.

The Westgate Parks Officer will provide policies and procedures relating to outdoor learning on request. The Westgate Parks Officer reserves the right to cancel a session if they consider the group are not dressed appropriately or the weather conditions are unsuitable.

All activities led by the Westgate Parks Officer and staff employed by the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership are covered by Kent County Council's insurance and policies and procedures.

Westgate Parks Staff

Our staff have many years' experience in delivering and designing environmental education programmes and continuous professional development training for teachers and outdoor learning practitioners. They have been successfully delivering Forest School programmes and training for many years and relish the opportunity to adapt existing programmes, or can design bespoke sessions based on current themes of study.



How to book...

Please contact the Westgate Parks Officer to discuss your requirements and any special access needs. We will send you a booking form to complete and will work with you to produce an itinerary for your visit. Standard risk assessments will be provided, however we do advise a pre-visit to complete your own risk assessment and to ensure familiarity with the site. Please refer to health and safety information.

An evaluation form will be sent to you at the time of booking. The feedback is used to support us in developing and enhancing our programmes.

If you book a visit to the Westgate Parks you will be sent our introductory PowerPoint presentation so your class group can learn about the parks prior to the visit.

To keep coach prices at a minimum, many school groups bring one class to the parks, whilst another class visits a local tourist attraction.

You may also enjoy canterbury.co.uk/museums

Water

Keep a safe distance (at least one metre) from the edge of all water bodies at all times. If someone falls into the water use the Westgate Parks Officer's throw rope to help them out of the water. Do not get into the water yourself.

Contact

The Westgate Parks Officer, Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership,
Ashford Highways Office, 4 Javelin Way, Henwood, Ashford, TN24 8DH

07850 715596

westgate.parks@kent.gov.uk
westgateparks.co.uk

On-site facilities

- ❖ Parking for minibuses is available at Toddler's Cove car park – please inform the Westgate Parks Officer so they can ensure a space is reserved.
- ❖ If coming by coach please arrange a drop off/pick-up point with the Westgate Parks Officer.
- ❖ Canterbury's East and West Stations are both under a mile from the parks – why not travel sustainably?
- ❖ Outdoor seating area for a class of 30 and a fantastic playground, toilets and easy access paths.
- ❖ Space can be provided to store personal belongings for groups who have booked a session.
- ❖ Within close proximity to Canterbury City Centre and Canterbury Museums.
- ❖ 35 hi-visibility jackets can be provided for pupils 12 and under.
- ❖ Indoor facilities available to hire. Additional costs apply.



Accidents

The Westgate Parks Officer is a trained first aider and is equipped with the knowledge and materials needed to deal with minor injuries. If further action is needed please contact a local hospital.



Emergency Care Department

Kent and Canterbury Hospital,
Ethelbert Road, Canterbury CT1 3NG

01227 766 877



Full Accident & Emergency Care

William Harvey Hospital, Kennington Road, Willesborough, Ashford TN24 0LZ

01233 633 331