

DAY TRIPS FROM KENCH HILL



Kench Hill is located in rural Kent, the bountiful garden of England. There are many visitor attractions and educational sites within an hour's travel time. Inspirational gardens, historical monuments, picturesque villages, farms, orchards, beaches and a variety of natural habitats all provide exciting, stimulating and memorable trips. Some places charge an entrance fee, but many are free of charge. Kench Hill has National Trust group membership for free entry to their sites.

Our most popular trips are marked * and are highly recommended for value for money and suitability. Some full day trips require coach hire or additional minibus at a cost of £150-300 to transport a group of up to 45 pupils. Kench Hill's minibus is an economical option for groups of up to 30 pupils and is available for local half-day trips (up to 15 miles). It seats 16 + driver. The cost varies according to distance, priced at £1 per mile. You can save money on transport by visiting an attraction on the first or last day of your residential trip. Please contact us to discuss the best transport options and for advice on suitable locations to support your curricular requirements.

NB Visitor attractions and coach hire get booked up early, especially in Summer Term. Contact us as soon as possible if you would like to arrange a day trip – at least 3 months in advance.

Prices quoted are for 2015 season

Historical Places: Castles

Battle Abbey (English Heritage) FREE entry + coach hire costs

Site of the 1066 Battle of Hastings, monastic buildings, exhibition, gardens, WC's, shop. April-October only. Optional Discovery Tours – Monks and Marvels or Conquest Tales £100 per class (up to 30) www.english-heritage.org.uk/education/discovery-visits/battle-abbey/ 40 minute drive.



* Bodiam Castle (National Trust)



FREE entry + coach hire

C14th castle built both for defence and a luxury home. 30 minute drive. Optional taught activities (tours, armour room) **£2.50-4.50pp**. Can combine with a walk or go via Rye/Camber Sands for a full day, or split into 2 half-day trips. Gift shop, WC's. No indoor lunch facility except function room (£25 booked in advance) Limited wheelchair access, steep steps. In summer term it is possible to travel by steam train from Tenterden at £7.25 return per child (single trips also available) <http://www.kesr.org.uk/educational-visits>

Camber Castle (English Heritage) FREE + coach hire OR minibus

Tudor structure, military use. Guided tour with education officer, worksheets included. Use our binoculars to see water birds on adjacent gravel pits. Can combine with Rye Harbour Nature Reserve (shingle beach, river estuary) or Rye town for a whole day. Up to 15 children half-day trip by minibus, or coach required for a full day. 30 mins to Rye, plus 30 minute walk across Marsh. No WC's at site, public WC's at car park. Small gift shop on Nature Reserve. Limited wheelchair access. **NB Since 2012 many areas of the castle have become hazardous with limited scope for exploration – ring for latest news on safety and access.**



Dover Castle (English Heritage)

FREE entry + coach hire



2000 years of history – A Norman keep with NEW exhibits on mediaeval life, Anglo-Saxon church, Roman lighthouse, medieval tunnels. Views to France, interactive education rooms. Discovery Visit workshops (Mediaeval or WW2) available for £100 (group of 30, April-October only). Can combine with brief stop at Dover beach, Samphire Hoe or WW2 memorial. Early booking advisable (Thursdays only Nov-Feb). **NB free Secret Tunnel tours no longer available for school groups.** Gift shops, WC's. Limited wheelchair access, steep paths. 50 minute drive.

Hastings Castle – See under General Attractions: Hastings

Hever Castle from £7.00 per pupil, 1 adult free per 10 + coach hire Additional adults £12.65



C14th home of Anne Boleyn, display on Tudors, exciting mazes including a water maze (Easter-October only), adventure playground, moat, model houses. Timed entry to house with limited interactive exhibits for children. Open March-November only. 1 hour drive (near M25). Gift shops, WC's. Limited wheelchair access. Long walk from car park.

www.hevercastle.co.uk

Why not save money on coach hire - visit Friday on the way back to London.

Leeds Castle From £6.25* per pupil + coach hire.

*Now offering subsidised rates for London schools.

Norman castle, residence of kings and queens, lovely gardens, aviaries, maze, grotto, dog collar museum, moats. 1930's interior – pre-booked time and guided tour essential, but guides do not always pitch answers to age group. Educational trail and teachers' notes on website. Gift shop, WC's. 35 minute drive. Wheelchair access, but long walk from car park. www.leeds-castle.com

Save money on coach hire - visit Friday on the way home (or for smaller groups it is possible to access the grounds and view the Castle via free public footpaths, using minibus transport.)



Sissinghurst Castle Gardens (National Trust) FREE + minibus



Tudor manor house with access to tower, library only. Home of Vita Sackville-West. Stunning gardens, woodlands and lakes, oast house exhibition and farm buildings. Quizzes, excellent stimulus for art. Minibus option for up to 15 pupils, half-day. 30 mins drive. Open Mar-Oct only. Gift shop, WC's, wheelchair access to most areas.

Other Historical Sites: Museums

* Brenzett Aeronautical Museum £1 each donation + minibus

Low key, volunteer-run museum dedicated to the heroes and victims of WW2. Exhibitions on the Girls Land Army, real planes, examples of engineering including radar etc. Exhibits brought to life with guided tours by WW2 veterans, chance to sit in a cockpit. Gift shop, WC's, wheelchair access. Full or half-day trip. 20 minutes drive.



Dover Museum **£2.25 entry + coach hire**

4 galleries focusing on Romans, Anglo-Saxons, World War 2, Bronze Age Boat. Education packs available. Special workshop and festival days with craft/drama sessions run through the year eg Romans (mosaic-making); Tudors (block-printing or drama); Victorians; WW2. Enquire asap for availability. Gift shop. 1hr drive. *NB A last-minute option if your Dover Castle visit is cancelled because of poor weather, but otherwise not suitable for a day trip on its own.*

Hastings Fishing Museum **FREE + coach hire to Hastings**

Small local museum with a real fishing boat, artefacts, video clips. Located amongst the old fish 'shops', bizarre tall huts where nets hang to dry. The area still supports a lively fishing industry. Close to Underwater World. No need to book, but opening times not guaranteed as staffed by volunteers. Useful indoor venue to spend 30 mins. if wet weather at Hastings.

Rye **FREE + coach hire OR minibus costs**

Picturesque cobbled streets, mediaeval houses and a walled citadel make Rye unique, an old Cinque Port now marooned away from the sea. Follow a fun trail to focus observation and provoke curiosity. A convenient half-day stop in combination with Camber Sands, Camber/ Bodiam Castles. 20 mins drive

- **Castle Museum** Small local museum in C13th Ypres Castle, former town prison, telling history of wool trade, armour and the sea. Suitable for half a class at a time. Small entry fee – please ring to check prices. Not suitable for wheelchairs.
- **Rye Town model** £1 per pupil. At Rye Heritage Centre, a sound and light show telling the history of Rye, based on a small-scale hand-built model. (*Audio-tape can be hard for children to understand.*) Also free exhibitions - currently old penny slot machines. Wheelchair access.

Smallhythe Place (National Trust) **FREE + minibus costs**

(Can also travel by foot from Kench Hill cross country).

Home of Ellen Terry, Edwardian actress (1899-1928). Display of old theatrical costumes. Early Tudor house, former Port House for local shipyard. Gardens, Thatched Barn theatre. Quiz, trail. WC's. Open March-October only. Limited wheelchair access (ground floor and gardens only).

*** Woodchurch village** **FREE + minibus costs**

Ideal for a half-day comparative locality study, worksheets and discovery trail available.

Optional extras include:

- **Village Life Museum (£1 per pupil donation)** Wheelchair access. Newly refurbished museum History of village with artefacts from Bronze Age to present day, big section on WW2. Audio records. Transport collection. Run by volunteers. Guided talk available, quiz. Limited gift shop. See www.woodchurchmuseum.com Highly recommended – excellent value.
- **Windmill (£1 per pupil donation)** A recently refurbished C 18th Kentish smock mill. Guided visits inside the mill are possible by prior arrangement with volunteers. www.woodchurchwindmill.co.uk



The village also has a C13th church, a large green and wonderful examples of historical homes from different centuries. WC in car park, children's playground. Suitable for a half-day visit – take half the class morning/afternoon, combined with a choice of on-site activities for the rest of the group. Also suitable for a longer visit with a packed lunch. 15 mins drive

General Interest: Natural habitats

* **Bedgebury Pinetum (Forestry Commission)** **FREE (Self-led); £4-6 (Taught - Half/Full day) + coach hire*** **OR minibus mileage**

10 000 conifer trees from around the world in beautiful natural parkland, part of 2000 acre Bedgebury Forest. Education centre, woodland trails, adventurous play structures, orienteering. Visits can be self-led with our tutors, or opt for a programme taught by Pinetum staff eg KS2: Seed to Soil; Green Machines; Animal Antics; Team Tactics. Goody bags, WC's. Wheelchair access. 40 min drive. www.bedgeburypinetum.org.uk



Mountain biking (extra cost inc. bikes for disabled users). Junior Go Ape (£18 per child) or for older pupils (10+, min height 4'7") with a budget, experience the high wire course at 'Go Ape' - £25 per child, £30 per adult. Adult: pupil ratio 1:2

* Travel bursary worth £200 for coach – most Hackney schools eligible (based on free school meals).

* **Camber Sands** **Coach hire OR minibus (£60) + car park fees in summer**



The longest sandy beach in England! Collect shells, see the dramatic rise and fall of the tide, explore ecology and plant adaptations amongst the fragile sand-dunes, play a game on the beach, make sand-castles, collect shells and paddle in the sea. Safe beach. Can be very windy! Whole or half-day. Public WC's, souvenir shop in summer season. We recommend taking half the group am/pm, returning to Kench Hill for lunch. 30 minute drive.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve **Minibus mileage (£40/class)**

Rare habitats and plants, (Shingle ridge, salt marsh), bird-watching, channelled river estuary. A flat, wheelchair accessible walk to a shingle beach. WC's, information hut. 30 minutes drive. Suitable for 2 half-day trips.

Hastings

Hastings is a typical seaside resort, a shingle beach with an Old Town, fishing industry, lifeboat station and beach amusements, plus the new Jerwood Art Gallery. The Victorian pier was burnt down but now houses a roost of starlings and is being rebuilt. 40 minute drive

Fairlight Glen **FREE plus coach hire**

Arrive for an invigorating morning's walk through the fairytale setting of Fairlight Glen in Hastings Country Park with its picturesque sandstone landscape and views over Hastings and English Channel. Visit an indoor attraction in the afternoon at Hastings before going home by coach. 50 mins drive. Please note that access through Ecclesbourne Glen is now closed due to land slips.

Hastings Attractions **£4.75 each, 1 adult free per 10 + extra minibus hire**

Combined tickets possible, but we recommend you choose one option only.

- **Smugglers Adventure** Explore St Clements Caves labyrinth, history of C18th smuggling with fun interactive exhibits, sound and light shows (Limited disabled access)
- **Blue Reef Aquarium** Marine nursery, shark tank, ray pool, good interpretation. (Wheelchair access) www.blureefaquarium.co.uk
- **Hastings Castle & the 1066 story** Audio-visual show within a siege tent. (Limited wheelchair access) Gift shops, WC's.

***Park Wood**

FREE + minibus shuttle (£10+)

A local ancient woodland with mixed deciduous trees (oak, hazel) and a conifer plantation. Suitable for a half-day visit to explore woods using a variety of Earth Education and sensory activities. Ideal to take half a class, whilst others work on-site. Or take a whole class for a full day, with a picnic lunch at Appledore Recreation ground and visit to the village. 12 mins drive, nearest WC's 5 min drive in Appledore. Wheelchair accessible to most areas in dry weather, flat paths. For groups with very limited mobility we recommend Hamstreet Woods, which has a wheelchair path loop.

***Rare Breeds Centre**

£5.50 each + minibus shuttle



HIGHLY RECOMMENDED! A firm favourite with all ages throughout the year, even in wet weather. A great day out combining close-up encounters with farm animals and birds of prey, woodland walks, and challenging physical adventures at Mysterious Marsh and the Zip wire. Plenty of stimulus for Life cycles and Adaptations, with piglets and chicks all year. Excellent value for money. Run by Canterbury Oast Trust, a charity supporting adults with learning disabilities.

Good wheelchair access in most areas. 15 mins drive. Gift shop, WC's, café. See www.rarebreeds.org.uk

Homewood School Farm £1.50 per pupil

A low cost option for groups on a very limited budget. 1-hour tours with plenty of hands-on contact with the farm animals and pets, including ferrets, llamas, snakes. Led by experienced tutors and Homewood School's own young farmers. Just 5 minute drive.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Miniature Railway from £2 each (1 stop)

Take the class on a one-way trip on the world's smallest public steam train from Dungeness to the beach at Romney Sands. 40 minute drive. Dungeness Nuclear Power station and Lighthouse near the station. WC's, café, shop. Weekday travel end March-October only. Educational materials available www.rhdr.org.uk/pages/education.html



Tenterden

FREE

A little town with a big history based on the wool trade! Ideal for a comparative settlement studies, the famous High St has a wealth of historic buildings, including a local museum, churches, interesting shops, services and even a steam railway. Just 10 minutes away by minibus, it is also the site of our Leisure Centre with its popular swimming pool. Take the whole class for a saunter along the High St (wheelchair access), or a circular walk in the surrounding countryside beginning and ending at the old railway, ideal for mapping (but not suitable for wheelchairs).

Royal Military Canal, Appledore Village

FREE + minibus shuttle

An easy walk, no steep hills, with views across Romney Marshes, a World War II pill-box to explore, and the story of the Canal, built as a defence against Napoleon's army 200 years ago. The church has interesting tapestry telling the history of the village. An alternative Monday afternoon walk for the whole class, especially for any with mobility problems, or combine with Park Wood for a full day with a picnic at the Recreation ground.

We are also close to Port Lympne Zoo with its famous collection of elephants.

The following attractions are also recommended, and are particularly suitable as options on the way back to London to extend your final day.

Museum of Kent Life (Maidstone) £4.50 per pupil + coach hire

28 acres of fun, celebrating 150 years of Kent history, with farm buildings through the ages, the story of hop-picking, farm animals, workshops on Victorians, WW2, play areas etc. Good value venue. Shop, WC's, café, education packs.

40 mins drive www.kentlife.org.uk

Wildwood Discovery Park (Herne Bay) £2-£4.75 per pupil + coach hire

A unique collection of native British animals in their own woodland habitat, including species now extinct in UK – beavers, wolves, lynx etc. A wonderful chance to learn about our own wildlife and the threats to its survival. Curriculum-linked activities with experienced tutors. 1 hour drive

www.wildwoodtrust.org.uk

Historic Dockyard (Chatham) £5 + coach hire

80 acre site with exciting displays about Victorians and WWs, museum galleries, old warships, submarines, railway, Victorian ropery and the history of sail. Teacher packs, tours etc

www.chdt.org.uk

We can also facilitate adventurous outdoor activities at other sites on request. Eg Water-skiing, land-yachting, high ropes/abseiling/climbing walls etc. See our Activities download for details.