



SCIENCE TRIPS FOR THE FAMILY

All links, prices and information correct at the time of writing (November 2022). Do get in touch if you have any feedback or additional centres to add to the list.

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FREE-TO-VISIT CENTRES

- **Alexander Fleming Laboratory Museum, St Mary's Hospital, Praed St, W2**

St Mary's Hospital is home to the Museum. Fleming discovered the antibiotic penicillin at St Mary's in 1928, a breakthrough that revolutionised medicine and earned him a Nobel Prize. Visitors can see Fleming's laboratory, restored to its 1928 condition and explore the story of Fleming and the discovery and development of penicillin through displays and videos. Only open Monday-Thursday from 10am-1pm by appointment so one for the school holidays!

<https://www.imperial.nhs.uk/about-us/who-we-are/fleming-museum>

- **Crick Institute, Midland Road, NW1**

An independent charity for discovery research in biomedicine. Runs public engagement events for families. Website also has a 'Family zone' full of online activities targeted at different ages.

<https://www.crick.ac.uk/whats-on>

<https://www.crick.ac.uk/whats-on/public-events/family-zone>

- **HGCA (Hammersmith Community Gardens Association)**

The HGCA manage two community gardens in the Hammersmith area, Godolphin and Loris, the glasshouses in Ravenscourt Park, and Phoenix Farm in White City. They run play activities for local families in the school holidays in their gardens. Sign up to their e-newsletter to find out more.

www.hcga.org.uk/holiday-play

- **Holland Park Ecology Centre, Ilchester Place, W8**

A space to learn about the natural environment right next to the Park's huge playground! They run an annual programme of free and paid-for events to enable children to explore and learn about the wildlife and biodiversity in the area plus school holiday nature themed activities for children and families, from night safaris, nature detectives to family forest school days. Join their mailing list for regular updates: ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk.

Downloadable activity sheets to use at home - <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/environment/holland-park-ecology-centre/nature-home>

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/environment/holland-park-ecology-centre/about-holland-park-ecology-centre>

- **Horniman Museum, Forest Hill, SE23 3PQ**

Huge museum and gardens with natural history gallery, nature base, world gallery, music gallery and animal walk. Free to enter with a small charge for the aquarium, butterfly house and some exhibitions. Workshops available during school holidays.

<https://www.horniman.ac.uk>

- **Hyde Park Look Out Centre**

The Look Out is an eco-friendly building in an acre of enclosed grounds in the heart of the park enabling people to learn about the natural world and take part in family and wellbeing activities. Free Discovery Days for children during holidays. Sign up to their newsletter to keep informed.

<https://www.royalparks.org.uk/parks/hyde-park/things-to-see-and-do/the-lookout-hyde-park>

- **Imperial College, South Kensington campus, SW7 and White City campus, W12**

A unique space in White City, where local community and Imperial come together to collaborate, innovate and make. With cutting-edge facilities, they hope to inspire generations of inventors, entrepreneurs and makers from the local area and beyond. Runs free activities throughout the year and in school holidays at the Invention Rooms but get booked up QUICKLY!

[Our local community](#) | [About](#) | [Imperial College London](#)

Newsletter - [Sign up to the Outreach Newsletter](#) | [Be inspired](#) | [Imperial College London](#)

- **Great Exhibition Road Festival, South Kensington**

Imperial is also part of the brilliant **Great Exhibition Road Festival** (weekend in mid June) in South Kensington: an annual traffic-free celebration of science and the arts with free events for all ages and involving all the neighbouring science centres and museums.

<https://www.greatexhibitionroadfestival.co.uk/explore/families/>

- **Natural History Museum, South Kensington, SW3 and Tring, Hertfordshire**

Needs no introduction! Free entry with a mix of free and paid-for children's activities during school holidays.

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit.html>

[What's on](#) | [Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](#)

Online activities to try at home - [Try this at home](#) | [Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](#)

More ways of participating in nature - [Take part](#) | [Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](#)

Nature Live online – various free talks by NHM experts

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6w4ihPqk5_LCRt5zst8q7HrKlxiGP0gA

- **Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, SW1Y 5AG**

The independent scientific academy of the UK. The Royal Society's building is open in a limited capacity for specific events. Due to the pandemic many events are still online. Sign up to their newsletter to find out more - [Email updates](#) | [Royal Society](#)

Summer Science Exhibition – The Royal Society's flagship public engagement event taking place in July every year in central London.

<https://royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/public-events/>

<https://royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/2021/summer-science-exhibition/>

- **Science Centres around the UK**

Free centres around the UK if on your travels or fancy venturing outside of London including the National Space Centre in Leicester.

<https://www.sciencecentres.org.uk/centres/>

- **The Science Gallery, Great Maze Pond, London Bridge, SE1 9GU**

The Science Gallery is part of a mission by King's College London to connect art, science and health to drive innovation and creative thinking. The free-to-visit space includes exhibitions, events and festivals with science engagement at their core drawing on and reflecting a broad range of expertise in health and wellbeing.

<https://london.sciencegallery.com>

- **Science Museum, Exhibition Rd, SW7**

Covering every area from communication and technology, human anatomy and materials to flight, exploration and energy. The free-to-visit museum plays host to live shows, huge exhibitions, special events and an IMAX cinema with separate charge which shows a wide selection of science and geography related features.

Free to visit except for the children's interactive zone, the Wonderlab (£9 or £14 annual pass) with hands on activities, explainers and shows.

<https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk>

- **University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT**

Offers public engagement with the wider community offering special events such as 'Dark Matter Days'. Free **Your Universe** annual festival each June for families and schools with lectures and demonstrations. Meet scientists and talk about their research with time to try out telescopes and observe the Sun, the Moon and planets (weather permitting).

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/physics-astronomy/outreach-and-public-engagement>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/your-universe/>

- **UCL Observatory, 553 Watford Way, Mill Hill Park, NW7 2QS**

The Observatory holds free public open evenings, roughly fortnightly, on Fridays during UCL's autumn and winter terms, 18:00–19:30 and 20:00–21:30. The earlier tour may be preferable for families with children, but note that the content and nature of the tours (including negotiating some steep, open-tread stairs) mean they may not be suitable for children younger than 7 years old.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-observatory/public-outreach/public-visits>

There is also a short educational video game to explore the Observatory - <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-observatory/public-outreach/uclo-explore>

- **Wellcome Collection, 183 Euston Road, Euston, NW1**

Free-to-visit museum and library that aims to challenge how we feel and think about health. Geared towards 14 years + but interesting exhibitions and galleries.

<https://wellcomecollection.org/get-involved>

PAY-TO-VISIT SCIENCE CENTRES

- **Battersea Zoo, Via Chelsea Bridge, SW11 4NJ**

Zoo, adventure playground with events and feeding time observations.

£10.95 adults, £8.95 children with U2s free. Annual membership deals available.

<https://www.batterseaparkzoo.co.uk>

- **Centre of the Cell, E1**

A science educational centre dedicated to inspiring curiosity and learning by connecting science to everyday life whilst learning about the amazing world of cells, the human body and the latest medical research. Family sessions during school holidays.

£24.50 family ticket

<https://www.centreofthecell.org/events/>

At home activities - <https://www.centreofthecell.org/learn-play/at-home/>

- **Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Rd, Chelsea, SW3 4HS**

The oldest botanic garden in London founded in 1673. Holds interesting children's activities during holidays. Online learning resources and downloadable scavenger hunts available from website

Family ticket £28 (children under 5 years free).

<https://www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk>

- **Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road, SE1**

I LOVE the Garden Museum! Explores and celebrates British gardens and gardening whilst running subsidised cooking and science/art sessions. The Museum also has play trollies for children and a (narrow) 131 staircase up to its medieval tower with views of Parliament and the Thames.

£14 adults, £8 children. Free for children under 6 years. Free entrance to museum if book workshop.
[Children and Families - Garden Museum](#)

- **Hanwell Zoo, Church Rd, W7**

Includes birds such as flamingos, mammals such as porcupines, armadillos, marmosets, meerkats and an aquarium. Reptile and butterfly houses. Daily events such as animal feeding times.

Downloadable exotic Animals, Trees and Wildlife activity tick sheets available.

£4.50 adults, £2.50 children with U3s free.

<https://hanwellzoo.co.uk>

- **Kew Gardens, Richmond, TW9 3AE (Also have Wakehurst Branch in Sussex)**

A diverse collection of plants and home to over 14,000 trees and bookable playground for children (The Children's Garden). Activities during school holidays.

Family tickets available and annual membership from £85, U4's free.

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/families>

- **London Aquarium, South Bank, Westminster Bridge Rd, SE1**

Home to over 1500 aquatic creatures whose origins span the globe with different zones to explore.

£30 adults, £27 children with U3s free.

<https://www.visitsealife.com/london>

- **London Zoo, Outer Circle, NW1 4RY**

One of the world's leading zoo's with over 600 breeds and various shows.

Tickets from £30 adults, £19.50 for children. U3s free. (Hint - you can use Tesco Clubcard vouchers to access tickets!).

<https://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo>

- **The Look Out Discovery Centre, Bracknell (about 23 miles away)**

Hands on science centre with insect enclosure, build in zone, water zone, light and colour zone and family shows. Next to huge park and playground (plus swimming pool Coral Reef) so makes a great day out.

£22.25 family ticket (U4's free).

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/leisure-services/look-out-discovery-centre

- **Old Operating Theatre, SE1 9RY**

Housed in the attic of the early eighteenth-century church of the old St Thomas' Hospital, this atmospheric museum offers a unique insight into the history of medicine and surgery. The original timber framed Herb Garret was once used to dry and store herbs for patients' medicines and in 1822 an operating theatre was included. Predating anaesthetics and antiseptics, it is the oldest surviving surgical theatre in Europe. Access to the attic is through a narrow 52-step spiral staircase.

£7.50 adults, children £4.50 with U5's free

www.oldoperatingtheatre.com

- **Royal Institution, 21 Albermale St, W1**

Independent charity dedicated to connecting as many people as possible with the world of science. Paid-for theatre talks, workshops, online talks and hands on science to try at home. Family fun days for 6-12 yrs. Prices vary depending on type of event.

[Science shows and activities for children | Royal Institution \(rigb.org\)](http://www.rigb.org)

Also hold annual, renowned **Ri Christmas Lectures** for young people free to watch online, on BBC Four or attend in person for people aged 11+ - <https://www.rigb.org/christmas-lectures>

- **Royal Observatory, Greenwich, SE10**

The site's astronomical background makes it a hot spot for discovery relating to the universe. Home to a fantastic planetarium to immerse viewers with cosmic exploration and unravel the mysteries of our universe and the galaxy in which Earth sits.

Planetarium shows £5 children and £10 adults

Family activities, demonstrations, astronomy workshops included with weekend tickets. Holiday sessions approx. £5.

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/royal-observatory>

- **Steam Museum, Green Dragon Lane, Brentford, TW8**

Discover the story of London's water supply, the site of the former Kew Bridge Waterworks and the amazing pumping engines that helped to make London the great city it is today. Includes splash zone, water works and free diesel/steam train rides. Family activities throughout year.

Children free. Adults £18 for annual pass so GREAT value.

<https://waterandsteam.org.uk>

Newsletter sign up - [Families Newsletter - London Museum of Water & Steam \(waterandsteam.org.uk\)](#)

- **Thames Barrier and Exhibition, Eastmoor Street, SE7 8LX**

Built in 1984, this colossal piece of engineering protects London from potential floods. There is an interesting exhibition exploring the history of the Thames and Thames Barrier at the Information Centre. This venue hosts an exhibition, a working scale model and a video with information about the barrier's history, future and present-day functions.

Children under 5 years free. Family ticket £11 or free to visit playground.

<https://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/place/26941-thames-barrier-information-centre>

- **Wetland Trust, Queen Elizabeth Walk, Barnes, SW13 9WT**

100-acre wetland nature reserve full of wild birds such as kingfishers and hides to observe wildlife, lakes, pools and gardens. There are daily activities, such as otter talks, to get involved in and an adventure playground.

Children under 4 years free. Family ticket £37.72.

[London Wetland Centre | WWT](#)