

Robert Smail's Printing Works for schools

Robert Smail's Printing Works is a working time-capsule comprising a complete printing works which was established and run by the Smail family for over 130 years. It offers an insight into the Victorian period of industrial, educational and technological change. Printing techniques and equipment that were used to print material for the local community can be seen.

In the composing room (Caseroom) visitors can experience the almost-forgotten craft of hand typesetting. The printing machinery that has been used unchanged since Victorian times is demonstrated in the noisy machine room. Other features include the restored waterwheel which powered the machinery prior to the introduction of gas. The office contains stacks of business records. A facsimile of one of the fifty guard books containing a copy of every completed print item, can be looked at in the office during a visit. These books provide a primary source of documentary evidence of the life of the local community over the last century and a half.

● education programme

Robert Smail's Printing Works is an important primary resource that offers cross-curricular learning opportunities for key areas of the 5-14 Curriculum

a site visit offers

- tour of the office, composing room, and machine room (allow at least 1_ hours)
- handling activities led by property staff

classroom resources

- illustrated guidebook (available on request)
- 5-14 Resource pack
- study box of handling materials (available on loan for classroom use for 2 week periods)

● practical information

planning your visit

- pre-booking is essential
- maximum class size: 35 with a ratio of 1 teacher/adult to 10 children
- cost for school parties: children £1 - accompanying adults admitted free of charge
- Educational Membership of the National Trust for Scotland allows free entry to all NTS properties
- preparation: we welcome a free preparatory visit by the teacher

● for more information contact

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