

Press Release:

Manchester Museum takes Shabtis on a School Trip

This '[Kids in Museums Takeover Day](#)' (23rd November), Manchester Museum are doing things a little differently. The museum is unleashing ancient Egyptian *shabtis* across schools, so they can host their own museum object takeover!

Shabtis are funerary figurines found among grave goods in ancient Egypt and acted as servants to the deceased.

The "*Shabtis in Schools*" programme is part of Manchester Museum's tour of its much-loved ancient Egyptian collection over the next three years, whilst the museum undergoes an exciting £13.5 million transformation, [hello future](#).

During this time the museum is partially open, with its Ancient Worlds galleries closed until 2021 to keep displayed collections safe while extensive building work takes place. Around 20,000 pupils usually visit the museum to learn about ancient Egypt each year and "*Shabtis in Schools*" is part of the museum's commitment to maintaining access to these collections.

Esme Ward, Director of Manchester Museum says, "*This is a fantastic opportunity to share our collection in a different way with schools, encouraging a whole new generation to love the museum.*"

The 3,000 year-old figurines are being sent into schools with only one small label so pupils and teachers can curate their own displays and lead their own learning. Parrs Wood High School has got really creative and built an entire 'tomb' for the *shabti* of King Seti I. '*It's really powerful for breaking down curriculum walls; it's a part of ancient history, but it's allowed staff and students alike right across the school to engage with it in some way*' said Dave Midgley, Head of History Department at Parrs Wood High School.

"*Shabtis in Schools*" has involved six new cases being created to safely install these invaluable artefacts in the schools, and tailored learning and training opportunities for teachers including a 'behind the scenes at the museum' experience in the mummy store.

Pupils are fascinated by the remarkable artefacts: '*It's like 3,000 years old and not something you see everyday...It's outlived us; and it's still blue!*' are among some of the comments from pupils at Parrs Wood High School.

Dr Campbell Price, Curator of Egypt and Sudan said, '*We recognise our partial closure is disappointing for the many schools that come to Manchester Museum to see its significant ancient Egyptian collection. "Shabtis in Schools" is an exciting opportunity for the museum to take its objects*

into new spaces and places, building new partnerships with schools and enhancing pupils school experiences.'

Participating schools include Heald Place Primary School in Rusholme, Abraham Moss Community Academy in Cheetham Hill, Newall Green High School in Wythenshawe, Parrs Wood High School in East Didsbury, and St Margaret's Primary School in Whalley Range.

Notes to Editor

About Manchester Museum

Manchester Museum, part of The University of Manchester, first opened in 1890. It is the UK's largest university museum with a collection of about 4.5 million items from every continent. Its combination of the academic and the popular is what makes the museum so distinctive and lies at the heart of its widespread appeal. The Museum's vision is to promote understanding between cultures and work towards developing a sustainable world. In 2015, visitor numbers exceeded half a million visitors for the first time in its history, reflecting an institution that has become a leading visitor attraction.

www.manchester.ac.uk/museum @mcrmuseum

Further information

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