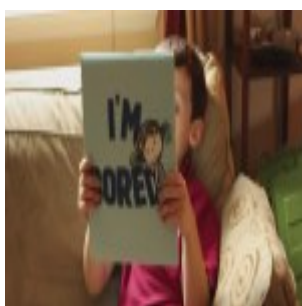


Summer Holidays: A Survival Strategy




School summer holidays; some parents apparently look forward to them....some of them (well, me anyway) feel slightly

differently. Although it *may* be good to have a break from the daily routine, there's no doubt that school holidays can be expensive, especially for parents who have to fund full-time childcare – even those who are able to be at home with their children find themselves constantly forking out for extras and, especially if the weather's bad, struggling to find something to entertain their beloved offspring. Sadly even **The Edinburgh Reporter** can't offer you free nursery facilities – but we have managed to find some things to make stay-at-home holidays (I'm afraid I can't bring myself to type *staycation*...but if you have a luxury yurt and a hummus tree in your back garden, feel free..) more fun and less wearing for all parties. What's more, many of these activities are free or very low cost – leaving more money for the essentials, like ice cream. And gin.



Dutchman **MC Escher** was a one-man art movement: his graphic art images are instantly recognisable, but his name means little to most people in the UK. He loved the repeat patterns of Islamic art and the way that they could create visual puzzles. At the **Wonder Worlds!** drop in workshops you can take part in a range of activities inspired by MC Escher's amazing world and decorate a special creation to take home using your own unique stamp design. Create peculiar portraits and make the

impossible possible by designing your own fantastical world-in-a-box to add to the NGS's weird and wonderful 'wall of worlds'. For families with children aged 4-12 years. 2-4pm, **Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th July 2015**, [Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art TW0](#), Belford Road. Entry to the exhibition normally costs £9/£7 (NGS members free), but will be **free** for families participating in these workshops. No booking required, just come along.

I once had a schoolfriend whose very smart garden was  bordered by a stream. There's something about water that fascinates even the laziest child (me), and we spent many a happy hour paddling about in those rather murky waters (and lived). The **Water of Leith Visitor Centre** has arranged lots of activity sessions this summer, from **Minibeast Magic** to **River Dipping**, **Scrapheap Art**, **Wilderness Survival Techniques** and **Wood Crafts**. Dates vary – full details can be found [here](#). Each event costs £4 (accompanying adult free) and takes place 2-3.30pm at [Water Of Leith Visitor Centre](#), 24 Lanark Road. Booking is essential and may be made by calling the Centre on 0131 455 7367 or emailing admin@waterofleith.org.uk.



If your child would prefer a spot of film-making, **Zoo Arts Extra Animation Workshops** offer up to four days of stop motion animation techniques, including outdoor filming and sound recording. Come with family or friends – or by yourself! Book for all or just part of the project, which starts on **Saturday 4th July** and continues on **Monday 6th**, **Wednesday 8th** and **Friday 10th July 2015**. For children aged 9 years or over and adults. 10am-4pm each day, [North Edinburgh Arts](#), Pennywell Court, Muirhouse. £1/50p per session for Good Neighbour Card Holders and £5/£3 for everyone else, snacks/lunch provided. For more information and to book please call 0131 315 2151 or pick up a flyer at NEA. The final production will be screened at the **Filmhouse** in August.



Many famous artists have painted, drawn and sculpted their pets; **Toulouse-Lautrec** painted his horses, **Gwen John** painted her cat and **David Hockney** painted his dachshunds. At artist **Damian Callan's Summer Art School** you will be out on location drawing dogs and other animals, then some pets will visit the studio to sit for their own portraits! Experiment with painting, printmaking, and sculpting from recycled materials. You can join the group for two (£90), three (£135) or five (£225) days, 10am-4pm each day at [WASPS Studios](#), West Park Place, Dalry (and on location). Age range approximately 7-14 years. If you would like to book, download the application form [here](#).





If you're 8-12 years old and would rather look after animals than paint them, why not be a **Farmer's Helper**? **Gorgie City Farm** offers activities every weekday throughout the holidays – you could be **mucking out a pig, picking fruit, walking a goat, grooming a guinea pig** or **planting potatoes** – farm work is nothing if not varied! Each day's session runs from 10am to 12.30pm and costs £10; you can sign up for just one day or lots. If you would like to book please email education@gorgiecityfarm.org.uk or call 0131 337 4202. [Gorgie City Farm](#) is at 51 Gorgie Road; it is a community-owned initiative, aiming to educate inner-city children and adults about farming and food production and to promote social inclusion by offering volunteering opportunities for all.



Edinburgh Libraries have masses of activities organised for the holidays – and every single one of them is free! **Crafts, stories, Lego, Minecraft, spies, detectives, wizardry, myths & legends, retro games, quizzes, puppets, creative writing, origami...**and much more. At some libraries activities take place once a week, others have something programmed every single day – so pop into your local library (or try another one for a change) or check the libraries' Facebook pages for more information (the posters above are just a few examples – almost every library has something going on). And don't forget the **Summer Reading Challenge Record Breakers** – read books and win rewards (many of the libraries' activities are also connected to the Challenge). If you would like a list of

Edinburgh libraries, their locations and opening hours, click [here](#).



Many churches organise clubs during the holidays and all are welcome. [St Andrew's & St George's West Church](#) (13 George Street) is running free summer fun activities 'for children of all ages' in its courtyard every Wednesday, 11.30am-1pm, and all participants will receive a voucher to use in the church's **Undercroft Cafe**. On **Wednesday 8th July Frances Cooper** will lead a singing workshop, and on **Wednesday 15th Mrs Mash the Storytelling Cook** returns to enthral all; details of each week's activities are on the church's website [here](#).

Meanwhile the **Missionaries of Charity** invite children aged 5-12 years to join in their summer programme, which will take place 3-5pm every weekday afternoon from **6th July** at [St Mary's Star of the Sea Parish Hall](#), 106 Constitution Street. There will be plenty of activities, culminating in a family outing on the last day of the club, Saturday 1st August. More

information and booking forms are available from the **Sisters' Convent**, 18 Hopetoun Crescent.

A poster for 'The Tent' event. The text on the poster includes 'THIS SUMMER', '13-19 July 2017', 'THE TENT', and 'FULL PROGRAMME'. The poster lists various activities and their times for different age groups.

Activity	Time	Age Group
Arts & Crafts	10:00 - 11:30	5-11
Bible Stories	11:30 - 12:30	5-11
Drama	12:30 - 14:00	5-11
Dancing	14:00 - 15:30	5-11
Games	15:30 - 17:00	5-11
Singing	17:00 - 18:30	5-11
Sports	10:00 - 11:30	12-17
Drama	11:30 - 12:30	12-17
Music	12:30 - 14:00	12-17
Art	14:00 - 15:30	12-17
Family & Community Events	17:00 - 18:30	12-17



Lots of local churches and other organisations in South-West Edinburgh are joining together to host **The Tent**, a week of events in [Saughton Park](#) (Balgreen Road) for local people. For **primary children** there will be a **holiday club** each morning from Monday to Friday, with **singing, dancing, drawing, crafts, games, drama** and **Bible stories**; in the afternoons there will be **sports, drama, music** and **art** for **primary and secondary age children**, and from 6pm there'll be a programme of **family and community events**. On Saturday everyone is invited to a **Family Fun Day**, and the final event will be **Community Church** on

Sunday morning. **The Tent** will take place **13th-19th July 2015**; children's events will cost 50p per child, with evening and weekend events all free. You will need to **sign up** for the children's events – the rest will operate on a drop-in basis. For more information see *The Tent's* website [here](#) or its Facebook page [here](#).

✘ Out in **Corstorphine** and **Fairmilehead**, they're certainly not banking on summer weather – **Fairmilehead Church** and **St Ninian's Parish Church** are inviting children aged 5-11 years to become **Polar Explorers** – they'll even be making an **igloo** from plastic milk bottles! **Crafts, challenges, games, drama, jokes** and **lots more**. Each club will run in the mornings, **10th-14th August 2015** at [St Ninian's](#), 144 St John's Road and [Fairmilehead Church](#), 1a Frogston Road West ; the booking form for Fairmilehead's club can be downloaded from the church's website [here](#), and if you would like more information about St Ninian's club, please call their Church Office on 0131 539 6204.

✘

The beach is the place to be in **Portobello** – especially from **Monday 3rd to Friday 7th August 2015**, when qualified coaches and youth workers will be running **sports and beach games** for all children aged 5 or over. The **On The Beach** programme will run from 2 to 4pm each afternoon and it's completely free – they're even providing free drinks and fruit. You can sign up on the day – meet the organisers on the sands in front of the Swimming Pool.





If **arts and crafts** are your favourite things, look no further than **Blackbird Studios**. This new local business offers handmade products from independent artists and makers – and now it's offering children aged 8-12 years the chance to spend a week working with a qualified art teacher, in a workshop that will run 10am-12 noon from **Monday 13th to Friday 17th July 2015**. Each session costs £10, which includes all materials. If you would like to book, contact sheilaangus2@gmail.com or call in to [Blackbird Studios](#), 40 Comiston Road.





Hockey was very much *not* my favourite thing at school, but guess what? Some people like it! So many, in fact, that **Erskine Stewart Melville's Hockey Club Easter Camp** was booked up in no time – so are they doing a summer one? NO! They're doing FOUR! **6-10th July** for S1-6, **13th-17th July** for P5-P7, and **27th-31st July** for those aged 10-14 years; each of these camps will run 9am-1pm. The fourth camp will be a special week of **Under-18s Skill Sessions**, and will run 2-4pm, **13th-17th July**. All camps cost £100 for the week. The **Under-18s Skill Sessions** are for those who want to take their hockey to the top level, but the other three camps are just as much for first-time hockey players as the more experienced, and sticks will be available to borrow for those trying the game for the first time. Coaches will include the current **Scottish Under 16s Coach** and **Scottish Internationals**. Full information is on the ESM Hockey Club website [here](#), and if you would like a booking form, you should email HockeyCamps@esmhc.com. All camps will take place at ESMHC's home ground on [East Fettes Avenue](#).





The National Museum of Scotland is always a good place to take children – with the added advantage that it's interesting for adults too. This summer NMS offers a huge range of activities throughout the holidays; themes include the **International Year of Light** (make your own periscope, find out about animals' night vision), **Victorian Photography** (create your own steampunk 'Victorian face' photo, create a Victorian 'selfie' kit, dress up for a portrait, build a simple camera), **Waterloo** (make your own medal, or a mini-version of the Bronze Imperial Eagle captured at the battle, see **Falkirk District Wargames Club** in action) and **Meet the Expert** (meet and talk to real scientists). Full details of dates, times and locations are all on NMS's website [here](#); everything is free, but you do need to sign up for a few of the workshops – for the rest, just drop in. The [National Museum of Scotland](#) is in Chambers Street and it's open 10am-5pm every day this summer.

✘ There's more **drama** – and **arts and crafts** too – at the **St Bride's Centre** in Dalry. From **6th to 10th July** children

aged 7-10 years can join the **Mini Fusion Holiday Drama Project**, which will run each afternoon 1-4pm. Attendance at the project costs £21 for the week, whilst children aged 5-9 years who'd prefer to try a mixture of art and crafts can come along to the **Holiday Activity Week** on the same dates but in the mornings (10am-12 noon), at a cost of £10. If you would like to book for either activity, please contact **Tynecastle Community Wing** (McLeod Street) by calling Claudia Eslinger on 0131 337 3275 or emailing claudia.eslinger@ea.edin.sch.uk. Both groups will meet at [St Bride's Community Centre](#), 10 Orwell Terrace.

If you're aged 5-15 years and would like to learn to play **tennis** – or improve your game – this summer, while making new friends and having fun, **The Falcon Club** is offering 3-day courses from **22nd to 24th July 2015**. Children in **P1-3** are coached 9-10am, **P4-7** 10am-11am and **S1-4** 11am-12 noon (they know who stays in bed longest...). Coaching may also be organised for 16-18 year olds if there is enough demand. Each course costs £24 (£21 for club members). For an application form please visit the club's website [here](#) or email the **Club Secretary** at falconclub@hotmail.co.uk. All coaching will take place at [The Falcon Bowling and Tennis Club](#), 84 Newbattle Terrace.

North Edinburgh Arts runs amazing groups and classes throughout the year – and it doesn't stop in summer! They've come up with a massive programme of **arts and crafts, dance, films and messy play sessions**, and all are free or very inexpensive. Booking is required for some activities with limited space; others are drop-in. To see full details click [here](#) or call into [NEA](#) at 15a Pennywell Court for more information. The **Zoo Arts Extra Animation Workshops** (above) are also part of this programme.

So there you have it – a small sample of the numerous activities on over the summer. And if your children don't like any of those, threaten them with a Good Healthy Walk; that'll

have them running to the library in no time...

