

Google take St Mary's pupils on an expedition



We went to visit St Mary's RC Primary School this week to find out what they were doing with Google Expeditions.

Thanks to the new app teachers in Scotland will be able to take students on immersive, virtual reality field trips, based on the UK curriculum. With Google Cardboard (a virtual reality viewer) students can explore everywhere from Mars and the Great Barrier Reef to the inside of Buckingham Palace or Edinburgh Castle, right from the classroom.

The St Mary's pupils were certainly having a lot of fun!

Just had a lovely visit with St Mary's RC Primary pupils learning with [#GoogleExpeditions](#) [@Edinburgh_CC](#) pic.twitter.com/NulmxkxbYL

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [February 22, 2017](#)

While nothing replaces going on a school trip, teachers can use this technology to bring students on virtual trips to places they could never otherwise get to. Expeditions provides a unique opportunity for supplemental learning by giving students new ways of exploring the concepts and places they are studying – from museums and natural wonders, to underwater and outer space, to exploring inside the human body or experiencing careers at Aston Martin or in the operating theatre.

An Expeditions coordinator and a box arrives with everything schools need to travel: a tablet for the teacher, and Cardboard viewers and phones for every student. Next, the

teacher selects a destination, and the entire classroom jumps there automatically. In order for teachers to seamlessly include these Expeditions in their lessons, Google partnered with [Twig](#) and [TES](#) to tailor this content to the UK curriculum with easy-to-use lesson plans

Google Expeditions asks for teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Scotland [to sign-up](#) for this free programme which will aim to transport over 200,000 students to places they would never otherwise be able to go through virtual reality school trips.

Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE, Space and Accessibility Scientist, said: “To try to inspire the next generation of space scientists and STEM practitioners I like to take kids on “Tours of the Universe”. With this technology it really feels one step closer to actually being out there. With the range of Expeditions available I think that kids will not just be inspired to consider a vast range of careers but will also be able to reach for the stars themselves. I wish this was around when I was young.”

Expeditions in Scotland is part of a broader commitment announced by Google CEO Sundar Pichai, to reach one million students in the UK through the programme while also supporting teachers by providing training in how best to make the most of technology in the classroom.

Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google, said: “Virtual reality can spark students’ imagination and help them learn about topics like how blood flows through the human body or the impact climate change is having on the Great Barrier Reef, in an engaging and immersive way.

“We can also take a class through one of our new career Expeditions, which inspires students to think about their future professions by taking a virtual trip to work environments like a hospital operating theatre or behind the

scenes at Aston Martin.

“We’ve already received feedback from thousands of teachers in the UK and they believe that Expeditions can improve literacy and writing skills, and help create excitement to complement traditional teaching methods.”