TEACHERS’ KIT
Lindisfarne Priory

This kit will help teachers plan a visit to Lindisfarne Priory. Explore the story of early Christianity, find out what life was like as a monk and discover the natural world of Holy Island. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.

GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

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Step into England's story
WELCOME

This Teachers’ Kit for Lindisfarne Priory has been designed for teachers and group leaders to support a free self-led visit to the site. It includes a variety of materials suited to teaching a wide range of subjects and key stages, with practical information, activities for use on-site and ideas to support follow-up learning.

We know that each class and study group is different, so we have collated our resources into one kit allowing you to decide which materials are best suited to your needs. Please use the contents page, which has been colour-coded to help you easily locate what you need, and view individual sections. All of our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Lindisfarne Priory on your Education Visit Permit, and on the Lindisfarne Priory Schools page.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find this Teachers’ Kit useful. If you have any queries please don’t hesitate to get in touch with a member of our team either via bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk or on 0370 333 0606.

English Heritage Learning Team

ICON KEY

The icons below will help you quickly identify the types of activities and information presented.

[Icon Key Image]
## PRE-VISIT
Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

- Site Plan
- Historical Information
- Glossary
- Timeline
- Why Build Here?
- How Significant was St Cuthbert?

## AT THE PRIORY AND MUSEUM
Activities for students to do at Lindisfarne Priory to help them get the most out of their learning.

- Self-Led Sensory Trail
- Top Things to See
- Anglo-Saxon Art Trail
- Viking Raid!

## POST-VISIT
Information and activities to help extend your students’ learning back in the classroom.

- Sources
- Your Name in Stone
- Illuminated Lettering
- Medieval Tour Guide
- Build a Bird Feeder
PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.
EARLY CHRISTIANITY

The first Christian king of Northumbria was Edwin. He came to the throne in 616 by defeating the previous king, Aethelfrith, in battle. Edwin married Aethelburigha, a Christian princess from Kent, and was baptised by her chaplain, Paulinus, in 627. Edwin was killed in battle in 633. Aethelfrith’s eldest son, Eanfrith also died, so in 634 Aethelfrith’s younger son, Oswald came to the throne. The accession of Oswald made Northumbria and Lindisfarne even more crucial in the development of early Christianity. It was Oswald’s father, King Aethelfrith, who had been killed in battle in 616. Oswald and his mother were exiled to the island of Iona, a Christian settlement since 563. They sought refuge with the monks on the island. It was here that Oswald converted to Christianity. When he later became king of Northumbria, he set about promoting Christianity.

ANGLO-SAXON NORTHUMBRIA

When the last Roman soldiers left Britain in AD c.410, the country fractured into a series of small kingdoms led by pagan warlords. Some of these warlords relied on mercenary soldiers to defend their territory. Many of these soldiers were people that we now call the Anglo-Saxons. They came to England from northern Europe and many settled here and even went on to conquer some of the kingdoms.

There were seven main kingdoms: Northumbria, Mercia, Anglia, Wessex, Essex, Sussex and Kent.

Below is a short history of Lindisfarne Priory. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You’ll find the definitions of the key words in the Glossary.
LINDISFARNE MONASTERY

In 635 Oswald invited Aidan, a monk from Iona, to establish a monastery on Lindisfarne, also known as Holy Island. Oswald was based at Bamburgh Castle, just 6 miles down the coast. The monastery was a visible and constant reminder of his Christian faith. This also gave the monks political support, which helped their community to grow in wealth and status. Although the first timber buildings are not visible at Lindisfarne Priory today, many objects from this period are in the museum.

The monks at Lindisfarne helped to spread Christianity across Northumbria and beyond. By the second half of the 7th century, most ruling families across England had converted to Christianity and Lindisfarne had become an important cultural centre. Today it may seem like the island is quite remote, but in the 7th century it was well connected, especially as it was easier to travel by boat than over land. This allowed the monks to communicate and trade across the sea.

CHRISTIAN CONNECTIONS

Christian missionaries came to England from both Rome and Ireland. Although they followed the same faith, they had developed different traditions such as how they calculated the date for Easter. The monks at Lindisfarne Priory followed Irish traditions until the Synod of Whitby in 664. This was a meeting of leading churchmen, including Bishop Colman. He was Bishop of Lindisfarne and came from Iona. He was committed to Irish traditions. However, the synod brought Northumbria into line with Roman practices. Bishop Colman was unhappy with this decision and returned to Iona.
ST CUTHBERT

St Cuthbert became the most important saint in northern England in the Middle Ages. He came to Lindisfarne sometime in the 670s as its prior. He was a great preacher, carried out missionary work and was said to have performed many miracles. Cuthbert also tried to bring Lindisfarne Priory into line with Roman practices. However, not everyone accepted this. So Cuthbert decided to retreat as a hermit.

ST CUTHBERT RETREATS

His first hermitage was on St Cuthbert’s Island, which is visible across the water from the heugh. Later he retreated to the more remote island of Inner Farne. On Inner Farne he lived in a basic hut made of timber and thatch surrounded by a turf-and-stone enclosure. He later added a guesthouse for visitors.

At first he relied on food supplied from the monks at Lindisfarne Priory but he also grew some of his own crops. It was during this period of seclusion that Cuthbert is said to have cared for the birds, especially the eider duck, which is still known as ‘Cuddy’s duck’ (Cuthbert’s duck) today. His concern for nature has a lasting legacy on Holy Island, where a variety of bird species can be spotted today.

ST CUTHBERT’S DEATH AND LEGACY

In 685 Cuthbert was made a bishop and returned to active duties, but not for long. He returned to Inner Farne as a hermit and died in 687. Once his body was returned to Holy Island, it became a place of pilgrimage. He was recognised as a saint and when monks opened his tomb in 698, his body was incorrupt. This reinforced how holy St Cuthbert was. The monks created a shrine and the numbers of pilgrims grew. This made Lindisfarne monastery increasingly wealthy and powerful. It secured its reputation as an important Christian centre and St Cuthbert’s symbolic role uniting Roman and Irish traditions.
LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

The Lindisfarne Gospels were made at the priory in the 8th century. The rich decoration was meant to 
mesmerise and impress the reader. The monks used gold to illuminate the illustrations and a bright blue ink made from a precious Indian stone called lapis lazuli. The images of the four evangelists are in a Mediterranean style and the carpet pages include Irish and possibly even Coptic decorative features. Precious books like the Lindisfarne Gospels were not available for everyone to look at. But you can take a closer look at them online. Search for the ‘Lindisfarne Gospels’ on the British Library website.

VIKING ATTACK

Many monasteries were vulnerable to attack by the Vikings because they were on the coast, lacked fortifications and contained valuable objects. In 793 Lindisfarne Priory was one of the first to be raided. The scholar Alcuin described the priory as ‘a place more sacred than any in Britain’. It was a shock that St Cuthbert’s resting place could be attacked but Alcuin suggested God allowed it to happen because the monks were sinful. The worrying weather conditions and famine before the raid were seen as warnings from God. Alcuin warned of ‘great suffering’ to come. Viking raids increased in the 9th century, and by 870 they had even conquered several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.
**MOVING HOUSE**

Following further Viking attacks along the coast, the monks at Lindisfarne decided to abandon the monastery and retreat inland, eventually moving permanently off the island. They spent seven years wandering with Cuthbert’s coffin, relics and the Lindisfarne Gospels. They initially settled at Chester-le-Street where they built a church in the middle of what was formerly a Roman fort. However, in 995 Cuthbert’s relics were moved to Durham. Today you can visit his shrine in Durham Cathedral, see his coffin and many of the precious objects he was buried with.

**REFOUNDDATION OF THE PRIORY**

In 1069–70 monks from Durham returned to Holy Island to escape the Harrying of the North. This was when William the Conqueror used soldiers to stop people rebelling against his rule. We think they didn’t stay for long. The priory might not have been occupied again until 1122, when the records show that a monk called Edward from Durham Cathedral lived on-site.

By 1172, a community of monks had settled once again on Holy Island. The church you can see today was completed by 1150. Unusually, the church and St Cuthbert’s cenotaph were built before any of the domestic buildings. The monks’ stone living quarters were not completed until much later, so they probably lived in timber buildings to begin with.
LIFE IN THE MEDIEVAL PRIORY

By the 13th century it is thought that as many as ten monks were based at Lindisfarne Priory at any one time. They would not have spent their whole career there because it was a cell of Durham Cathedral. This meant they were based at Durham but they were sent to Lindisfarne Priory for short periods of time. This maintained the connection between Lindisfarne and Durham.

In this period, the monks lived in stone buildings and had adequate food provided for them. Although they probably lived in better conditions than many ordinary people, they did not live in luxury. However, in the 14th century, the buildings were improved to make living conditions more comfortable. Three new rooms with ovens were added in the 1360s, suggesting they had servants to cook for them. A pit lined with lead has also been found, which may have been to keep food cool. An account from the late 14th century describes the great hall where the monks, prior and guests would eat. It says they had four tables, long benches, red cushions, candlesticks, silver plate, basins, ewers, an iron poker, and a tapestry on the wall.

BORDER WARFARE

In the 14th century the priory was fortified. This included the addition of battlements, arrow loops and a defended entrance, all of which can still be seen today. These fortifications were added to protect the monks during a period of warfare between England and Scotland. Edward I (r.1272–1307) invaded Scotland in 1296. The Scottish campaign continued into the 1340s under both Edward II and Edward III. This led to a period of instability, border warfare and poverty for the region. It not only left the priory vulnerable to attack, but also hit its income from tithes, which fell, and never recovered. This perhaps partly explains why there were only four monks living there by 1344.

In 1385 the monks wrote to King Richard II (r.1377–99) to ask if they could dismantle their fortifications. They were expensive to maintain and the monks feared it made them more of a target. However, later inventories show they still had stores containing armour, weapons and gunpowder.
DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

The Reformation during Henry VIII’s (r.1509–1547) reign resulted in England breaking away from Roman Catholicism. Religious houses like Lindisfarne Priory were dissolved. The monks either retired or returned to Durham Cathedral and the servants from the priory lost their jobs too. In 1539, St Cuthbert’s shrine in Durham Cathedral was also attacked. During this attack, they found St Cuthbert’s body was still intact which was taken by people at the time as evidence that he was holy. Maybe this made Henry VIII think again about what to do next. He’d already faced resistance to the Reformation in the north and St Cuthbert was a popular local saint. Perhaps this is why St Cuthbert was reburied and integrated into the new Church in England.

ROMANTIC RUINS

In the 18th century the priory was largely still intact. It was visited by antiquarians and artists. By the 1820s, though, the central tower had collapsed, and the west front fell down in the 1850s. Both were repaired and reconstructed. An investigation in the 1880s exposed the foundations, allowing a site plan to be drawn up. By 1913 the site was under the guardianship of the Office of Works, which later became English Heritage.
Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Lindisfarne Priory. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

accession – the acquisition of the throne, becoming king or queen
antiquarian – a old-fashioned term for someone who studies the past through literature, antiques, objects and buildings
arrow loops – a narrow opening in a wall through which someone can fire arrows
battlements – a protective wall around the top of a building, with regularly spaced holes through which someone can keep watch or fire arrows
Bible – the holy book for Christians
carpet page – a full page of decoration in an illuminated manuscript
cell – a community of monks living together in one monastery
cenotaph – a monument in memory of someone who has died
chaplain – a priest who works in a chapel that is located in a particular place or within a particular institution such as a hospital, palace, school or branch of the military
Christianity – the religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ
convert – the process of changing from one religion to another
Coptic – an Egyptian form of Christianity
dissolve – the act of shutting down religious houses such as Lindisfarne Priory
**evangelist** – a person who tries to convert someone to Christianity. In the Bible there are four evangelists who are said to have written four of the books known as the gospels. They are St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke and St John.

**ewer** – a large jug with a wide mouth

**exile** – the act of sending someone out of their country as a punishment

**fortified** – the adding of defences to an existing building, such as high, blank walls, look-out posts, a surrounding moat or ditch, a strongly made gateway, battlements or arrow loops

**gospel** – the teachings of Christ. The word is especially used to refer to the four books in the Bible that describe the life and death of Jesus that were written by the four evangelists, St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke and St John.

**harrying of the north** – a period of time when William the Conqueror used soldiers in the north of England to stop people rebelling against his rule

**hermit** – a person who lives alone and apart from the rest of society in an attempt to get closer to God

**hermitage** – the place that a hermit lives in

**heugh** – a steep cliff such as the one to the south of Lindisfarne Priory. It is pronounced ‘heuwf’.

**incrupt** – a body that has not decomposed

**lapis lazuli** – a precious stone that was crushed into a powder to make a bright blue ink

**mercenary** – a professional soldier who is hired to fight and doesn’t permanently belong to a particular army

**mesmerise** – capture someone’s attention, so much so that they cannot think about anything else

**miracle** – an event with positive outcomes that seems to be impossible. In the medieval period miracles were believed to be a sign of God’s favour. People could get God’s favour by praying to a saint who lived in heaven with God and could ask for God’s favour on the person’s behalf.

**missionary** – a person that people sent out into the world to convert others to Christianity

**missionary work** – the act of converting people to Christianity or promoting the Christian religion

**monk** – a member of a religious community of men. They live in communities set apart from the rest of society. They follow a daily routine, including regular prayers, and take vows or make promises for living and behaving in certain ways, such as remaining unmarried.
nun – a member of a religious community of women, who follow a way of life that is devoted to religion

pagan – a person who believes in more than one God

pilgrimage – a journey to a holy place or a location where holy objects are. The journey might be long and difficult. It is done as an act of religious devotion by the pilgrim.

pope – the bishop of Rome and head of the Catholic Church

preacher – a person who gives religious speeches

prior – a person in charge of a religious community such as a group of monks or nuns

Reformation – a period of time during Henry VIII’s (r.1509–1547) when England broke away from the Roman Catholic Church

refuge – a place of safety for someone escaping danger

relics – the remains of someone holy or an object that was linked to someone holy in the past. St Cuthbert’s remains are an example of relics that have been the focus of pilgrimage since the 8th century. People focus on the relics when they are praying. By venerating or showing respect to the relics, people believe their prayers are more likely to be heard by the saint. The saint may then talk to God on their behalf.

replicate – the act of copying something exactly

reeve – a person whose job it is to manage an estate or property on behalf of its owners

saint – a person who is recognised as being particularly holy. The head of the Catholic Church, the pope, must formally approve saints in a process called canonisation.

scholar – a highly educated person, someone who has studied a subject to a high level

shrine – a place that is set aside for prayers because it is thought to be a particularly holy or special place. It might be dedicated to a particular saint or even contain their relics.

sinful – a person or their actions that are morally wrong or go against religious teachings

synod – a meeting of the clergy (the people who worked for the church such as priests, bishops, monks and nuns)

tithes – a tenth of someone’s earnings or produce that is paid once a year to the church as a tax

tomb – a large grave where a person is buried. It is often built of stone and can be above or below the ground.

tonsure – the way that monks shave their heads

Vikings – the name given to Scandinavians who came to Britain at first to trade, then to raid, and finally to settle between the 8th and 11th centuries
AD 410
The Romans leave Britain. Britain fragments into smaller kingdoms, many of which are ruled by Anglo-Saxon warlords.

AD 563
A monastery is founded by St Columba on the island of Iona off the Irish coast.

AD 634
Oswald (r.634–42) comes to the throne of Northumbria.

AD 664
The Synod of Whitby brings Northumbrian Christianity in line with Rome rather than Ireland.

AD 400
AD 600

AD 635
Oswald invites Aidan, a monk from the island of Iona, to establish a monastery on Lindisfarne.

AD 670s
A monk called Cuthbert joins the monastery on Lindisfarne.

AD 685
Cuthbert becomes a bishop.

AD 687
Cuthbert dies and is buried in the church.

AD 698
Cuthbert’s tomb is opened. The monks find his body has not decayed. Cuthbert is declared a saint.

5TH–6TH CENTURIES
7TH CENTURY
By this date all ruling families are Christian.

AD 789
Three ships of Vikings land on the coast of Wessex. The West Saxon king’s reeve is killed.

AD 793
Lindisfarne is raided by Vikings on 8 June.

AD 780
The Lindisfarne Gospels are made.

AD 793
Lindisfarne monks retreat inland to Norham. They wander for seven years before settling at Chester-le-Street.

AD 875
The monks decide to permanently leave Lindisfarne.

AD 995
Cuthbert’s relics are moved to Durham.

AD 800
The northern, midland and eastern Anglo-Saxon kingdoms are beginning to be conquered by Vikings from Denmark.
1066
William the Conqueror is victorious at the Battle of Hastings. The Norman Conquest of England begins.

1069–70
William the Conqueror’s armies attempt to suppress northern resistance to the Norman Conquest. This is known as the ‘Harrying of the North’.

1086
Domesday Book is completed.

1087
William dies. His son, William Rufus, is crowned King William II.

1100

1154
Henry II is crowned king of England.

1174
Scottish King William ‘the Lion’ is defeated and captured by the English at the Battle of Alnwick.

1122
A monk from Durham called Edward is at Lindisfarne.

1193
The cathedral at Durham is completed and becomes the permanent home for St Cuthbert’s relics.

c.1150–1200
Living quarters for monks are built in stone.

1172
A community of monks is re-established at Lindisfarne.

1093
The cathedral at Durham is completed and becomes the permanent home for St Cuthbert’s relics.

c.1125–50
The priory church is built containing a cenotaph to mark where Cuthbert had originally been buried.

1122
A monk from Durham called Edward is at Lindisfarne.

1000
Medieval Britain
1500–1485

Plantagenets
1154–1485

1215
King John signs Magna Carta at Runnymede. Soon afterwards the barons revolt against the king, aligning with Alexander, King of Scotland, and Prince Louis of France, to try to remove King John.

1216
King John dies. His son, Henry III, is crowned at nine years old.

1219
The Treaty of York means that the Scots abandon their rule of northern England. The Anglo-Scottish border line is drawn.

1296
Edward I (r.1272–1307) invades Scotland, plunging Lindisfarne into the war zone on the border between England and Scotland.

1307
Edward I dies and his son, Edward II, becomes king.

1308
The English are defeated by the Scots at the Battle of Bannockburn.

1327
Edward II is forced to give up his crown. His son, Edward III, becomes king.

1348
The Black Death.

1377
Richard II is crowned king.

1385
The monks on Lindisfarne petition Richard II to dismantle their fortifications.

1200

1300

C.1320–40
Battlements and arrow loops are added to the priory.

The dissolution of the monasteries. Henry VIII closes England’s religious houses. This includes monasteries, priories, abbeys, nunneries and friaries.

Lindisfarne Priory is one of the first religious houses suppressed as part of the dissolution of the monasteries.

Earth and timber defences are added to the harbour, east of the priory.

The Lindisfarne Gospels become part of the core collection in the newly opened British Museum.

The church is now a ruin. It is a tourist attraction for antiquarians and artists.
LINDISFARNE PRIORY TIMELINE

1800

- **c.1820** The central tower and south aisle collapse.
- **c.1850** The west front collapses and is rebuilt by the Crown.
- **1887–89** Local landowner Sir William Crossman excavates the monastic buildings.

1900

- **1830–37** Reign of William IV.
- **1837–1901** Reign of Queen Victoria.
- **1910–36** Reign of George V.
- **1936–52** Reign of George VI.
- **1952–2022** Reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

19TH CENTURY

- **1913** The priory passes to the guardianship of the Office of Works.

20TH-21ST CENTURIES

- **1984** Properties under the guardianship of the Office of Works, including Lindisfarne Priory, are transferred to the guardianship of the newly established English Heritage.
- **1978** Cuthbert’s original oak coffin is conserved, revealing it was carved from one tree.
SELF-LED ACTIVITY
WHY BUILD HERE?

Recommended for
KS2 and KS3 (History, Geography)

Learning objectives
• Understand the reasons for building a religious house on Holy Island.
• Understand the significance of Lindisfarne as a strategic location and its relationship to ‘the desert’ in the Bible.
• Assess the strengths and weaknesses of building a religious house on Holy Island.

Time to complete
Approx. 60 minutes

SUMMARY
Travelling to Holy Island today may give us the impression that it is cut off and remote. In this activity, students explore the ways in which Holy Island was perhaps not so remote. They think through the reasons why it was chosen as a location for a religious house and weigh up both the strengths and weaknesses of this location.

Teachers of KS3 may wish to set this as a more independent task, without the sorting activity on pages 26–27. Teachers of KS2 students may need to introduce some of the geographical terms first.

SUGGESTED APPROACH
To help students understand the geography of Holy Island we suggest you start by examining a map as a class. You could:
1. get Google Maps up on a class projector screen
2. use ‘map view’ to locate Holy Island
3. switch to ‘satellite’ view
4. use the accompanying Teachers’ Notes on pages 23–24 to identify the key features and prompt discussion.

Follow up this activity by dividing your class into groups or pairs to discuss the pros and cons of building a religious house on Holy Island. Get students to sort the cards on page 27 into the correct boxes in the table on page 26. You could provide students with a laptop or tablet so that they can refer to the map while completing the task.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Create a model of the island to demonstrate its geographical features. Students could use modelling materials such as papier-mâché or take their learning outdoors to use natural resources such as sticks and stones.

A refuge box next to the causeway leading out from the mainland to Lindisfarne. © Historic England
## WHY BUILD HERE?

### TEACHERS’ NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>DID YOU KNOW?</th>
<th>CHALLENGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE CAUSEWAY</td>
<td>Zoom in to make out the refuge boxes that are part of the Pilgrim’s Way. They are there for anyone who gets stranded when the tide comes in.</td>
<td>Find out the tide times for Lindisfarne over the next week. Work out the journey time from your school to Holy Island. Write down when you would need to leave school to be able to cross the causeway at low tide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAND DUNES</td>
<td>You can see these along the northern shore of the island and particularly along The Snook. They were probably not there until at least the 15th century and first appear on a map in 1610. Frequent and intense storms led to dune systems developing in a number of locations along the North Sea coast. Today some of them are 24 metres high. There are also 11 species of orchids in the dune system including Lindisfarne Helleborine, which is only found on Holy Island.</td>
<td>Search for an image of the Lindisfarne Helleborine and have a go at sketching it. Find out the names of the other species of orchid found on Lindisfarne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREES</td>
<td>There aren’t many on the island today. Archaeologists can carry out pollen analysis to work out what plants existed at particular times. Data suggests that deforestation started in the Anglo-Saxon period – when the first timber monastery was built; and intensified between 1270 and 1395 – when the priory was at its height. Before this, alder, hazel, birch and willow could be found on the island.</td>
<td>Search the A–Z tree guide on the Woodland Trust website to find out an interesting fact about each of these species of tree: alder, hazel, birch and willow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUDFLATS</td>
<td>These are particularly important for a number of bird species as they are rich in plant and animal life. Large flocks of birds come here for the winter. Some start arriving as early as September: for example, light-bellied brent geese. The Nature Trail on page 34 of this kit shows some of the species you can find on the island.</td>
<td>Search the RSPB website for the ‘brent goose’ to see images and hear its call. Write a sentence to describe its call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARBOUR</td>
<td>Get students to think about the location of the harbour, which direction it is facing and where you could travel to from this location by boat. Zoom out to get a better sense of Lindisfarne’s relationship with the rest of the British Isles and mainland Europe.</td>
<td>Locate Scandinavia. The raiders that attacked Lindisfarne in 793 were from somewhere in Scandinavia. Work out the approximate distance they had to travel to reach Holy Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINDISFARNE PRIORY</td>
<td>Look at how much is left of the building and consider its location in relation to the other features already discussed. Ask students about how sheltered or exposed the priory is, how close it is to the settlement on the island, and the harbour, and what this might mean for the monks in terms of supplies and communications.</td>
<td>Look up the weather on Holy Island today using the Met Office website. Find out what the temperature is, which direction the wind is coming from and its speed. Think about the location of the priory and what the conditions might be like today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE HEUGH</td>
<td>This piece of raised land to the south of the priory forms a natural barrier from the sea. From the top you can see St Cuthbert’s Island, Inner Farne and Bamburgh Castle. As travel by sea was much more common, and much easier than travel over land, these other locations would seem much closer than they might today. This emphasises how well connected Lindisfarne was.</td>
<td>This is also where defences were added in the 16th and 17th centuries. Discuss why this spot might have been chosen for the defences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST CUTHBERT’S HERMITAGES</td>
<td>St Cuthbert’s Island and Inner Farne. St Cuthbert’s Island was where St Cuthbert first retreated. Zoom in to get a sense of the size of it. His second hermitage was on Inner Farne. This was where he was said to have cared for the birds. The eider duck can still be seen around Holy Island today and it is still known as Cuddy’s duck (St Cuthbert’s duck).</td>
<td>Search for ‘eider duck’ on the RSPB website to look at images and hear its call. Describe its call in one sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAMBURGH CASTLE</td>
<td>You will need to zoom out to see this as it is on the coast of the mainland, 6 miles south. This was where the kings of Northumbria lived. The castle can be seen from Lindisfarne. From the castle you can see Lindisfarne, St Cuthbert’s Island and Inner Farne.</td>
<td>King Oswald (who lived at Bamburgh) invited St Aidan to establish the first monastery on Lindisfarne in 635. Think about why Oswald might want the monastery so close to his castle, and why it might be advantageous for the monks to be so close to the king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IONA</td>
<td>Do a new search to find Iona. This was the island that Oswald was exiled to, after his father was killed in battle, and before he was old enough to claim the throne for himself. He and his mother lived in the monastery and it was during this time that Oswald converted to Christianity. It was where he met Aidan, who he later invited to establish the monastery on Lindisfarne.</td>
<td>Use Google Maps to find out how long it would take to walk from the island of Iona to Lindisfarne. Add in some stops for food and sleep to calculate how long the journey might take.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PROS AND CONS OF BUILDING ON HOLY ISLAND

LINDISFARNE PRIORY IS NEAR A HARBOUR WITH INTERNATIONAL TRADING LINKS
• Pro: the priory is well connected to other Christians – they can communicate, exchange ideas and books – and this helps the priory to become an important cultural centre.
• Con: harbours and coastal towns later become vulnerable to Viking raids.

LINDISFARNE PRIORY BECOMES AN IMPORTANT CENTRE FOR CHRISTIANITY
• Pro: it strengthens Christianity, which was still a fairly new religion.
• Con: it becomes famous and so ends up being a target as the Vikings know it is wealthy and undefended.

LINDISFARNE IS EXPOSED TO THE SEA, WIND AND RAIN
• Pro: it results in harsh living conditions for the monks, which allows them to replicate some of the hardships Jesus suffered while he was in the desert for forty days and nights.
• Con: it suffers from wind erosion.

LINDISFARNE IS VISIBLE FROM THE MAINLAND
• Pro: this cements the connection between Lindisfarne and the king at Bamburgh Castle, resulting in political support and wealth.
• Con: this means it is also visible from the sea, and so later becomes vulnerable to Viking attacks.
Sort the eight cards on page 27 into this pros and cons table. Put one card in each box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lindisfarne Priory…</th>
<th>This is good because…</th>
<th>This is bad because…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... is near a harbour with international trading links.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... becomes an important centre for Christianity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... is exposed to the sea, wind and rain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... is visible from the mainland.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Why Build Here?

Cut out these cards to use in the sorting activity on page 26.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The priory is well connected to other Christians – they can communicate, exchange ideas and books – and this helps the priory to become an important cultural centre.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harbour towns are vulnerable to Viking raids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It helps to strengthen Christianity, which is still a fairly new religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It results in harsh living conditions. This allows the monks to replicate the hardships Jesus suffered during his forty days and nights in the desert. Some monks don’t enjoy this and ask to return to Durham Cathedral.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It becomes famous and so ends up being a target as the Vikings know it is wealthy and undefended.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This cements the connection between Lindisfarne and the king at Bamburgh Castle. This results in political support and wealth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind erosion can be seen on what is left of the building today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This means it is also visible from the sea, and so later becomes vulnerable to Viking attacks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SELF-LED ACTIVITY**

**HOW SIGNIFICANT WAS ST CUTHBERT?**

**Recommended for**
KS2, KS3 and KS4+  
(History, RE)

**Learning objectives**
• Know who St Cuthbert was.  
• Assess how significant St Cuthbert was.  
• Know what pilgrimages are and why people might go on a pilgrimage, particularly to Lindisfarne and along the St Cuthbert's Way.

**Time to complete**
Approx. 60 minutes

**SUMMARY**

There is a memorial dedicated to St Cuthbert at Lindisfarne Priory and people continue to make religious pilgrimages to the site. He was one of the most important saints in the early English church, inspiring others to care for nature and to live a holy life.

In this activity students carry out their own enquiry about St Cuthbert and assess how significant they think he was. They are challenged to come up with their own definition of significance and to design their own questions to help structure their investigation. You know your groups best, and you may need to adapt the level of support you provide for your students.

**MAIN ACTIVITY**

It is suggested you start the activity by considering the definition of significance. You could focus on a familiar person first, such as a historical figure your class have already studied, the head teacher of your school, or a famous person. Students could use Christine Counsell’s 5Rs to help them understand and weigh up significance (see the Teachers’ Notes on page 29).

Once students are confident with the definition of significance, use Source 1 on page 56 to start evaluating St Cuthbert. Encourage students to pay close attention to the provenance of the source. Then students can design their own questions about the life of St Cuthbert to help them evaluate his significance. Students can use the historical information on pages 6–12 and the sources on pages 56–60 to investigate answers to their questions. This will allow them to reach a final judgement on his significance.

**MORE LEARNING IDEAS**

Students could write a structured answer to the title question, using the 5Rs to divide it into paragraphs and reach an overall judgement.

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An image from the ‘Life of St Cuthbert’ made in Durham in around 1180. It shows the opening of St Cuthbert’s tomb and the discovery that his body was still intact. By permission of the British Library.
HOW SIGNIFICANT WAS ST CUTHBERT?

TEACHERS’ NOTES

CHRISTINE COUNSELL’S 5RS

- Remarkable – at the time or today – have they done something very different from other people?
- Remembered – at any time by a group or groups – has this person been talked about in the news? Or commemorated somehow? It could be interesting to think about how they have been remembered too, and whether this differs depending on who is doing the remembering.
- Resonant – people make analogies with their story, or it connects with people’s experiences, beliefs or situations across time and place – has this person done something that we can connect with today?
- Resulting in change – has this person caused things to be done differently? Or changed people’s minds about something?
- Revealing – of some other aspect of the past – has this person’s life or actions highlighted something about the time they lived in? Are they typical of something?

You know your group best and you may wish to adapt these definitions and prompt questions, to suit your class. Younger students may need more support to understand them, whereas older students may be able to define significance more independently.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS USING THE 5RS

- What did St Cuthbert do that could be considered remarkable? How unusual was St Cuthbert and does this make him remarkable?
- How is St Cuthbert remembered today? How has St Cuthbert been viewed over time?
- How does the story of St Cuthbert relate to us today? What are the similarities and differences between St Cuthbert’s life and ours today?
- What changed as a result of St Cuthbert? How did Christian religious practices change as a result of St Cuthbert?
- What does the story of St Cuthbert tell us about the development of early Christianity in Northumbria? How far does St Cuthbert reflect people’s beliefs or religious practices at the time?
Students may wish to use additional sources for their enquiry, especially KS3–4+ students. Here is a selection of some useful resources freely accessible online.

The English Heritage podcast episode 105 ‘Saints, gospels and vicious Viking raids: the story of Lindisfarne’ is also useful.

The BBC’s ‘In Our Time’ podcast has a couple of relevant episodes that KS4+ students might find useful. Both can be found by searching the BBC website or BBC Sounds for:

- ‘Saint Cuthbert’
- ‘Lindisfarne Gospels’

Find the ‘Medieval Manuscripts’ section of the British Library’s blog site. Here there are a number of useful posts that might be most appropriate for KS3–4+ students. Search for:

- ‘A Menagerie of Miracles: The Illustrated Life of St Cuthbert’
ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

AT THE PRIORY AND MUSEUM

Activities for students to do at Lindisfarne Priory to help them get the most out of their learning.
SELF-LED ACTIVITY
SENSORY TRAIL

Recommended for
KSI–2 and SEND (History)

Learning objectives
• Connect with nature at Lindisfarne Priory through touch, smell, sight and sound.
• Develop well-being through sensory experiences.
• Apply sensory observation skills across the island of Lindisfarne.

Time to complete
45–60 minutes

SUMMARY
This trail has been inspired by St Cuthbert’s love of nature and the time he spent as a hermit. During his time as a hermit, St Cuthbert also spent a lot of time in contemplation. So this sensory trail encourages students to engage with the natural environment and the sensory experience of being at Lindisfarne Priory. It is intended to create a sense of well-being, a connection with nature and a chance to reflect on feelings.

USING THE TRAIL
Please print the trail (on page 33) to help students connect with nature at Lindisfarne Priory through sensory activities.

Lindisfarne Priory is a small site and has an overriding sense of calm to it, but if any member of your group feels overwhelmed or overstimulated by the sensory input, the outer court has benches in an open grassy space that you can use to reduce student anxiety.

Although this is a sensory trail, please remind the group not to touch anything unless invited to. You can go at the pace and in the order that best suits your group’s needs.

A second nature trail around Holy Island is also provided on page 34. It may not be suitable for all students because of rough ground and exposure to the weather. Start the trail at the Window on the Wild Lindisfarne building. Follow the path to the harbour and the castle. The ground is flat but may be rough in places. It is exposed to the weather. A longer circular walk may be suitable for some groups. A leaflet made by Natural England gives more information and a map for a 3-mile walk. Search online for ‘National Nature Reserve Holy Island’.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
You could extend your students’ learning further using the Nature Trail sheet on page 34. It provides some ideas of the species you can find across Holy Island. You can also download the poem in the museum using a QR code if you want to listen to it away from the priory site.
LINDISFARNE PRIORY

SENsory Trail

MOSS

This plant can be found in damp corners and crevices. Look closely to see its tiny leaves. Touch it to discover whether it is wet or dry, hard or soft.

OUTER COURT

Go to the outer court. The weather conditions will affect how you experience this grassy area. Reflect on how it feels today, and how it would feel in different weather conditions.

STONework

The priory church is made of pink sandstone. It is different to the grey stone of the domestic buildings. Touch the stonework to find out how each one feels.

THE SEA

Find a location in the priory where you can see the sea. Take in a deep breath to explore whether you can smell the sea, or taste the salt on the air. Now close your eyes and listen. On some days you can hear the waves.

POETIC INSPIRATION

Find the listening post in the museum. Listen to the poem. It was inspired by the journey across the causeway and nature around the island. Think about how the poem makes you feel.

SPARROW

Lindisfarne Priory is visited by garden birds, especially in quiet moments. Find somewhere comfortable to stand or sit quietly. Listen for the cheep, cheep, cheep of a sparrow.

You can **look** and **sniff**, but don’t lick or pick! This keeps you safe and protects the site.

When St Cuthbert left Lindisfarne Priory to live as a hermit, he spent a lot of time thinking and praying. He also loved to look after nature. Use your senses to explore Lindisfarne Priory, connect with nature and reflect on how this makes you feel.
As many as 1,000 grey seals have been spotted on the sandbanks around Lindisfarne. The best time of year to see them is in spring or summer.

When St Cuthbert left Lindisfarne Priory to live as a hermit, he spent a lot of time thinking and praying. He also loved to look after nature. Use your senses to explore Holy Island, connect with nature and reflect on how this makes you feel.
SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TOP THINGS TO SEE

Recommended for
KS1–2, KS3 (History)

Learning objectives
• Be able to spot key architectural features at Lindisfarne Priory.
• Understand how the buildings have changed over time.

Time to complete
Approx. 40 minutes

SUMMARY
The Priory church at Lindisfarne dates from the early 12th century. To start with, monks lived in wooden buildings, but over time these were replaced with buildings made from stone. In this trail students spot key architectural features and track how the buildings changed over time. It helps them understand what the priory looked like in the past and to make sense of the ruins that still stand today.

SUGGESTED APPROACH
The activity trail is on pages 36–42. Teachers of KS1 students may wish to print off and photocopy the ticksheet on page 41. Guide your students around the site while they tick off each thing they spot.

For KS2–3, print off and photocopy the activity trail on pages 36–40 and the plan on page 42. KS2–3 students may prefer to direct their own learning in small groups, supervised by an adult, using the full trail activity on pages 36–40 and the site plan on page 42 to help them find their way.

SMALL SPACES
A few of the places to find on this trail include narrow spaces such as the pilgrim’s passageway and night stairs. Although, this is unlikely to cause a problem, please ensure pathways remain accessible to other visitors that might be on site at the same time.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Students could explore religious architecture further by visiting a local church and sketching its key features. How does it compare to the architecture at Lindisfarne Priory?
**DID YOU**

**KNOW?**

Arrow loops were added to the west front during the 14th century, when England was at war with Scotland. These are unusual for a religious building and are more commonly found on castles.

**CHALLENGE**

**TIME!**

Walk through the doorway then look back up at the interior of the west front. Find the five small arches. This is where there was once a passageway.

**1 WIND EROSION**

Just before you enter the priory, look carefully at the stonework on the exterior of the west front. Find the effects of wind erosion on the soft sandstone by spotting a column that looks much thinner than the others. Identify which way the wind has been blowing to cause this damage.

**WHERE IS IT?** Exterior of the west front

**TOP THINGS TO SEE**

EXPLORE THE AMAZING ARCHITECTURE OF LINDISFARNE PRIORY

See if you can find all of these things and complete each challenge.

Can’t find your way? Use the plan on page 42 to help.
2 COLUMN BASE

Turn round to face into the nave of the priory church. Find the remains of stone square bases where columns once stood.

WHERE IS IT?
On the grass in the nave of the church

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
These columns are small-scale replicas of the columns in Durham Cathedral. This was a visual reminder of the connection to Durham.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Find the column with a herringbone pattern (zig zags) carved into it. Each column was decorated with a repeating pattern.

3 RAINBOW ARCH

From the column with the herringbone pattern, turn right and look up. The high arch you can see was once part of a vaulted ceiling. This arch would have had another rib crossing over it to form an X shape on the ceiling.

WHERE IS IT? Towards the east end of the nave of the church

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
The rainbow arch is the only surviving part of a tower that collapsed in the late 18th century.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Find the doorways on either side of the rainbow arch. They appear to lead to nowhere but actually there would have been walkways known as galleries up there.
4  PILGRIM’S PASSAGEWAY

Find the narrow walkway in the north transept that leads round to the presbytery. This was where a cenotaph to St Cuthbert stood. It was probably the location of his burial in the original wooden Anglo-Saxon church.

WHERE IS IT?
Connecting the north transept to the presbytery

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
It is a bit of a mystery why this was added into the priory church in the late 12th century, but one explanation is to ease congestion for pilgrims visiting St Cuthbert’s cenotaph.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Close your eyes and take a moment to stand still and listen. Focus on the sounds you can hear and reflect on how you feel in the surroundings of the priory church.

5  NIGHT STAIRS

As you go back into the nave of the church, you will see some stairs on your left-hand side. These stairs were altered in the 13th century to allow monks to come down from their dormitory at night into the church to pray. Benedictine monks prayed eight times a day. They spent mealtimes in silence and were expected to live humbly and simply.

WHERE IS IT?
On the south side of the nave

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
The church was built between 1125 and 1150. Unusually, the monastic buildings were added afterwards. This suggests that at first the monks lived in wooden buildings.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Spot the difference between the stonework inside the church and the stonework in the monastic buildings. Hint: They are made of different stone.
6 PRIOR’S LODGINGS

As you go further into the monastic buildings, look across to the east range to find a tall chimney stack and fireplace.

WHERE IS IT?
In the east range

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
This was a later addition in the 14th century and was the only room on-site where a fire was allowed to be lit (apart from for cooking). The prior stayed in rooms above this.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Imagine living here in all weathers. List five adjectives to describe the conditions. What impact might a new fireplace have?

7 REFECTORY/GREAT HALL

Find the low walls next to the prior’s lodgings. This was the refectory where monks ate in silence while listening to readings from the Bible.

WHERE IS IT?
Between the kitchen and the prior’s lodgings

DID YOU FIND IT?

DID YOU KNOW?
By the 14th century the refectory was more like the great hall of a castle. The prior, monks and guests were served food while seated on long benches with red cushions.

CHALLENGE TIME!
Can you stay silent like the monks did during mealtimes in the refectory? Compete with a partner to see who can stay silent the longest.
**8 DOMESTIC BUILDINGS**

The domestic buildings running along the west range included cellars, a bakehouse and a larder. **Explore** these domestic buildings and find the large oven.

**WHERE IS IT?** The west range

**DID YOU FIND IT?**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

You can see some of the objects they used in the domestic buildings in the museum. Look out for the Scarborough ware jug that might have been used to serve the monks drinks.

**CHALLENGE TIME!**

Imagine the sights, smells and sounds you would experience in the late 14th century in the:

- kitchen
- larder
- bakehouse
- cellar
- brewhouse

---

**9 DEFENDED ENTRANCE**

Follow the path that leads to the outer court. Find evidence of a portcullis. This was a strong metal gate with points at the bottom designed to block an entrance. It could be lowered into place through grooves on either side of the doorway. This was part of a series of defences that were added to the priory site in the early to mid 14th century.

**WHERE IS IT?** Between the outer court and the refectory

**DID YOU FIND IT?**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

King Edward I invaded Scotland in 1296, making Lindisfarne vulnerable to attack as it is so close to the Scottish border. Defences like the portcullis were added to protect the monks.

**CHALLENGE TIME!**

Spot more defensive architecture by looking out for battlements and arrow loops. These were all added in the 14th century.
TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE THE AMAZING ARCHITECTURE OF LINDISFARNE PRIORY

1. WIND EROSION
   Small arches on the interior

2. COLUMN BASE
   Herringbone patterns on the columns

3. RAINBOW ARCH
   Galleries

4. PILGRIM'S PASSAGEWAY
   St Cuthbert's cenotaph

5. NIGHT STAIRS
   Pink sandstone
   Grey stonework

6. PRIOR'S LODGINGS
   Fireplace

7. REFECTORY/GREAT HALL

8. DOMESTIC BUILDINGS
   Large oven

9. DEFENDED ENTRANCE
   Battlements
   Arrow loops

See if you can find all these things. Tick each one off as you find it.
**SELF-LED ACTIVITY**

**ANGLO-SAXON ART TRAIL**

**Recommended for**
KS2 and KS3 (History, Art)

**Learning objectives**
- Know what decorative features and motifs were used in Anglo-Saxon art.
- Understand how nature inspired art in the Anglo-Saxon period.
- Develop close looking and drawing skills.

**Time to complete**
30 minutes

**SUMMARY**
This trail is completed in the museum. Print the trail (on page 44–45) as an A4 or A3, double-sided, resource and fold along the dotted lines to make it more practical for students to work from. Photocopy enough trails for your class.

To get the most out of this resource students will need a pencil, paper and a clipboard.

**ACTIVITY** | **WHERE?**
--- | ---
1. ZOOMORPHIC DESIGN | CROSS SHAFTS ON DISPLAY IN THE MUSEUM
2. CARPET PAGE FROM LINDISFARNE GOSPELS | ON THE TRAIL HANDOUT ON PAGE 44
3. NAME STONES | NAME STONES ON DISPLAY IN THE MUSEUM
4. MODERN INSPIRATION | OLIVIA LOMENECH GILL’S ARTWORK ON DISPLAY IN THE MUSEUM
5. OVER TO YOU | OUTER COURT OF LINDISFARNE PRIORY

To adapt this trail for KS4, you could spend some time before your visit exploring Anglo-Saxon art by looking at other manuscripts and metalwork. You could find out more about the meaning behind the art.

**MORE LEARNING IDEAS**
Students could develop their sketches into a more detailed piece of artwork, choosing a medium other than pencil to work with. You could use the British Library’s digital copy of the Lindisfarne Gospels that is freely available online as inspiration. Share your artwork with us on Twitter @EHEducation.

A stone found at Lindisfarne Priory that was once part of an Anglo-Saxon high cross shaft that might have originally several metres tall. You can see it on display in the museum at Lindisfarne Priory.
**ANGLO-SAXON ART TRAIL**

DISCOVER THE DECORATIVE FEATURES USED IN ANGLO-SAXON ART.

**1 ZOOMORPHIC DESIGN**

**GET INSPIRED**

Zoomorphic designs include real and imagined animals: for example, ribbon animals which have elongated bodies that twist around and create complicated ribbon-like patterns. **Find** examples on the cross shafts.

**HAVE A GO**

**Pick** one ribbon animal, **examine** it closely and **draw** it.

**2 LINDISFARNE GOSPELS**

**GET INSPIRED**

Examine the carpet page on the back of this page. It was made here at the priory in c.700 in honour of St Cuthbert.

| animals | grid layout |
| a cross | repetition of pattern |
| interlacing designs | a flower |

**HAVE A GO**

**Spot** each of the features above in the carpet page. **Identify** which features are similar to the cross shafts and which ones are different.

**3 NAME STONES**

**GET INSPIRED**

**Find** the name stones on display in the museum. These memorial stones were made in the 7th and 8th centuries to ensure the souls of the dead would get to heaven.

**HAVE A GO**

**Examine** the name stones and the accompanying labels carefully. **Explain** what the decoration and writing on the stones might tell us about the people who had them made, and the people they memorialise.

**4 MODERN INSPIRATION**

**GET INSPIRED**

Examine Olivia Lomenech Gill's artwork in the museum. It is inspired by Anglo-Saxon artwork, the story of Lindisfarne Priory and the atmosphere of the island.

**HAVE A GO**

Can you **spot** these features of Anglo-Saxon art in Olivia Lomenech Gill’s artwork?

- a cross
- a circle
- repetition of pattern
- an animal

**5 OVER TO YOU**

**GET INSPIRED**

Go outside to the priory. **Choose** a plant, animal or insect that you can see on-site. **Examine** your chosen plant, animal or insect carefully, thinking about its colour, shape, texture and movement.

**HAVE A GO**

**Design** a carpet page. Include a decorative feature similar to those listed in box 2, and inspired by your chosen plant, animal or insect.
A carpet page from the Lindisfarne Gospels.
SELF-LED ACTIVITY

VIKING RAID!

Recommended for
KS3-4 (History)

Learning objectives
• Know what impact the Viking raid had.
• Make inferences from primary sources and artefacts.

Time to complete
45–60 minutes

SUMMARY
In 793 the Vikings raided Holy Island. The monastery was a target because of its location and wealth. After the raid, the monks decided to leave the island and take St Cuthbert’s remains with them. The ruins you can see today are from the later priory building. In this activity students go round the museum examining objects. They use source analysis skills to understand the raid and assess its impact.

It is recommended that you split your class into smaller groups as the museum is limited on space. The other group of students could complete the Top Things to See activity on pages 35–39, or use our Handling Kit, which must be booked in advance.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL
Print off and photocopy enough copies of the activity on pages 53–54 for your group. You may wish to do this on A3 paper and then fold along the dotted lines to make it more manageable when on site.

Some students may wish to guide their own learning around the museum. Other students may need more support. The Teachers’ Notes on pages 47–52 provide possible answers students might give to the questions on the trail. The notes also provide additional information about the objects and suggestions of how to encourage discussions.

To get the most out of this resource, each student will need: a pen or pencil and a notebook or lined paper. We also recommend you use the historical information, glossary and pre-visit activities before visiting Lindisfarne Priory.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Search the English Heritage website for the Kids Rule! quiz ‘Could you survive a Viking raid?’ to test your class’s survival skills.
### 1. Anglo-Saxon Name Stones

Start at the name stones in the museum. Get students to use the labels and interpretation panels to find out what they are, why they were made, what makes them special. This will help them to understand more about Anglo-Saxon Lindisfarne at the time of the raid.

**Possible Answers**

Answers may include:

- They were memorial stones
- They were made to help the souls of the dead get into heaven
- They are special because it is rare to see ordinary Anglo-Saxon women in the historical record
- They demonstrate that local people were literate (and in more than one language)
- They show sophisticated decoration such as interlacing designs similar to the cross shafts and the Lindisfarne Gospels

**Have a Go**

Ask students what this tells us about Lindisfarne in this period. Answers may include:

- Christianity was embedded in the local population – people followed the faith and wanted to ensure their loved ones went to heaven, so they made the stones for them
- That there were artistic skills on the island or nearby to decorate the stones
- It was an important site of learning and culture, open to artistic influences shown in the designs on the stones but also developing a style that is quite distinctive to Lindisfarne.
2. ALCUIN’S LETTER

Get students to read Alcuin’s account of the Viking raid. Students should:

- highlight / underline key words in the text
- focus on language and tone of voice to make inferences about the impact of the raid

This will help them to understand more about Anglo-Saxon Lindisfarne at the time of the raid.

![A page taken from one of Alcuin’s letters that are now held for safekeeping at the British Library.](image)

3. ST CUTHBERT

Next students should examine the image on their trails and read the caption underneath it.

**ANALYSING ART**

They should think about how the artist conveys emotions with their piece. You could get students to consider the following:

- The facial expressions
- The position and stance of the monks’ bodies
- The choice of materials. Make students aware that this example is cast in bronze but the original piece was made of wood and discuss how the two materials might have a different effect
- The choice of subject matter. You may need to provide additional context, depending on how much your students have already learnt. You may need to explain that it represents the seven years that the monks spent wandering around northern England. They took St Cuthbert’s remains and relics with them. They had fled Lindisfarne Priory as they no longer felt safe there. This may raise questions about migration today.

![An image from the ‘Life of St Cuthbert’ made in Durham in around 1180. It shows the opening of St Cuthbert’s tomb and the discovery that his body was still intact. By permission of the British Library.](image)
4. RAIDER STONE

Tell students to examine the Raider Stone carefully, picking out any key features they can see and discussing what the features might mean.

THINGS TO SPOT

On one side they will see:

- a sun
- a crescent moon
- a cross
- people praying
- hands pointing to the cross on either side.

Explain to students that one side is thought to show the Day of Judgement (Doomsday):

The Book of Revelation in the Bible says that on the Day of Judgement the sun and moon will be dimmed and the stars will fall from the sky. Seven angels will sound trumpets, and then Christ will come to admit good people into heaven, whereas the bad will stay on earth and be consumed by fire.

On the other side they will see seven men from left to right:

- an unarmed man touching the head of the man in front (we don’t know what this means)
- three men with raised swords
- two men with axes
- an unarmed leader at the front.

They are all dressed in tunics that fall just above the knee. It is thought this depicts Viking raiders and that it was made in the first quarter of the 9th century to commemorate the raid in 793. Some people think it was meant as a reminder that Christ will judge whether you get into heaven. Others think it was a warning not to view every battle as a sign of the last judgement.

Get students to infer from this how the person who made this stone might have felt about the raid on Lindisfarne and its impact.

HAVE A GO

Get your students to discuss how far the Raider Stone and Alcuin’s letter differ in their response to the Viking raid on Lindisfarne. Ask them to support their points with evidence from the letter and the stone.
### 5. SPEARHEAD

Students should next examine the Viking spearhead carefully.

**INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS**

Get them to spend a few minutes noting down words to describe it. Ask them to provide feedback and discuss their choices of words.

Answers may include:

- It was a violent attack, or an attack where the raiders were willing to use violence / the threat of violence to get what they wanted
- This would have been shocking as it was being directed at an unarmed religious house and community.

**HAVE A GO**

Ask students to assess the impact of the raid. Encourage them to support their answers with evidence from the objects and sources when explaining their answers.

---

### 6. GAMING PIECE

Spend a few minutes examining the gaming piece carefully.

**ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION**

Ask students to describe the shape, colour and texture. Ask them to imagine how it might feel to hold in their hand.

You could prompt them by asking whether it would be heavy or light, cold or warm to touch, smooth, rough or bumpy.

Explain that it was a gaming piece from a Scandinavian game called ‘Tafl’. Ask students how it might have got here. Discuss some of the options:

- The raiders brought it with them
- It got here before the raid, through trade
- It was made here.

Discuss what this might tell us about Viking culture and how connected Lindisfarne was. Answers may include:

- The Vikings were skilled craftspeople
- They valued beautiful objects enough to bring them with them when they travelled
- They had developed games and enjoyed playing them, which might suggest they enjoyed competition between friends
- They expected to be here long enough (or perhaps the journey to be long enough) to have spare time
### 6. Gaming Piece (cont)

- They expected their trip to be boring enough to need entertainment in the form of games.
- If it was traded, it might suggest that there was peaceful contact with the Vikings. It could suggest that they produced goods that were valued by people in England at the time.
- It could demonstrate integration of Scandinavian people and culture in the local area or the adoption of Scandinavian culture by local people.

You could develop this further back in the classroom using the ‘Create your own Viking board game!’ activity on the English Heritage website.

**Have a go**

Get students to think about how this one small object might challenge or modify their impression of the Vikings.

---

### 7. Spot the Sea

Now take your students out to the priory site. Get students to find a position where they can see the harbour. They will need to look across the east range. Discuss how the Vikings could use their senses to navigate across the sea. Encourage students to use their senses to discuss the weather conditions, sights, sounds and smells on site today.

**Importance of location**

Point out how close they are to the sea. Get students to think about the reality of an attack on this location by discussing:

- how well defended the location is
- how good their visibility is
- how much warning they would have of an attack.

---

### 8. Draw Your View

To get the view in the image the artist probably had to be standing on the heugh, just outside the Priory site.

**Have a go**

Encourage students to spread out across the site when they are drawing a view.

---

### 9. Tracking the Vikings

When discussing the map, students may notice:

- the geographical spread of the raids
- the locations of raids were all accessible by boat
- Lindisfarne was one of many raids (remind them it was the first).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. ST CUTHBERT’S MONUMENT</th>
<th>TIME TO REFLECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explain that the church they are standing in is built on what we believe to be the same spot as the original building. This monument is where we think the shrine to St Cuthbert was. This was all removed after the raid. Link back to previous learning about St Cuthbert and get students to spend a moment quietly contemplating how the space feels today. You could ask them to think about the parts of St Cuthbert’s story that they feel resonates most for them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. OVER TO YOU</th>
<th>HAVE A GO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ask students to consider the ways in which the story of the Viking Raid is still relevant to us today. This could bring up some emotional responses and difficult discussion points about war, the need to provide people with refuge and migration. You know your students best and how to talk about these issues with your group. You may wish to prepare your students for this before their visit and set ground rules about the language and tone of voice to use when discussing these kinds of issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When I was with you, the closeness of your love would give me great joy. In contrast, now that I am away from you, the distress of your suffering fills me daily with deep grief, when heathens desecrated God's sanctuaries, and poured the blood of saints within the compass of the altar, destroyed the house of our hope, trampled the bodies of saints in God's temple like animal dung in the street.

What security is there for the churches of Britain if St Cuthbert with so great a throng of saints will not defend his own? Either this is the beginning of greater grief or the sins of those who live there have brought it upon themselves.

Letters between Henrietta Howard and her friend John Gay.
6 **GAMING PIECE**

**GET INSPIRED**

This gaming piece was probably used during a game of Tafl. This involved one player capturing a piece called the king and the other helping the king to escape. **Examine** the gaming piece carefully. **Describe** its:

- shape
- texture
- colour
- weight.

**HAVE A GO**

**Explain** how the gaming piece might challenge or modify our view of the Vikings simply as raiders.

---

7 **SPOT THE SEA**

**GET INSPIRED**

**Stand** in a position on the priory site where you can see the sea. The Vikings navigated their way across the sea using the sun and stars as well as their senses to assess the colour of the sea, the strength and direction of the wind, the smell of land and the sound of birds.

**HAVE A GO**

**Use** your senses to spot the sights, sounds and smells on-site today.

---

8 **DRAW YOUR VIEW**

**GET INSPIRED**

**Examine** the engraving of Lindisfarne Priory and the castle. Can you identify where the artist might have been positioned to get this view?

**HAVE A GO**

**Find** a spot with a view to draw and sketch it.

---

9 **TRACKING THE VIKINGS**

[Map image]

**GET INSPIRED**

**Examine** the map carefully. A larger version of this map can be seen in the museum.

**HAVE A GO**

**Discuss** what we can learn from the map about the raid on Holy Island.

---

10 **ST CUTHBERT’S MONUMENT**

[Image of St Cuthbert’s monument]

**GET INSPIRED**

Before you go to St Cuthbert’s monument, remember that this is a place of commemoration and pilgrimage, so make sure you **go** quietly and respectfully.

**HAVE A GO**

**Stand** quietly next to St Cuthbert’s monument. **Describe** how the space feels today.

---

11 **OVER TO YOU**

**GET INSPIRED**

**Find** a spot on the priory site where you can comfortably spend a few minutes reflecting on your visit.

**HAVE A GO**

**Explain** how the story of the Viking raid continues to be relevant today. **Use** the sources, artefacts and your experience of visiting the site today to support your answer.
POST-VISIT

Information and activities to help you extend your students’ learning back in the classroom.
A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Our experts have chosen these sources to help you learn about Lindisfarne Priory’s history.

SOURCE 1

An image from the ‘Life of St Cuthbert’ made in Durham in around 1180. It shows the opening of St Cuthbert’s tomb and the discovery that his body was still intact. St Cuthbert is shown dressed in the kinds of clothes a bishop in the 12th century might have worn, rather than the clothes we might expect in the Anglo-Saxon period.
‘When I was with you, the closeness of your love would give me great joy. In contrast, now that I am away from you, the distress of your suffering fills me daily with deep grief, when heathens desecrated God’s sanctuaries, and poured the blood of saints within the compass of the altar, destroyed the house of our hope, trampled the bodies of saints in God’s temple like animal dung in the street.’

‘What security is there for the churches of Britain if St Cuthbert with so great a throng of saints will not defend his own? Either this is the beginning of greater grief or the sins of those who live there have brought it upon themselves.’

Extracts from Alcuin’s letter to Higbald, Bishop of Lindisfarne. Alcuin had been a monk in York, and was a well-known scholar and teacher. He was an adviser to the Frankish King Charlemagne and teacher to the royal children.

‘This year came dreadful fore-warnings over the land of the Northumbrians, terrifying the people most woefully: these were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons flying across the firmament. These tremendous tokens were soon followed by a great famine: and not long after, on the sixth day before the ides of January in the same year, the harrowing inroads of heathen men made lamentable havoc in the church of God in Holy-Island, by rapine and slaughter.’

An extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 793. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a national record of events that was originally put together in around 890. It lists major events in chronological order. It was later added to by scribes in the 1100s.

The nave of the priory church at Lindisfarne drawn in ink in 1778 by S.H. Grimm. This shows the southern wall of the nave (no longer standing) and the interior of the west front. Notice the decoration carved into the columns and the arrow loops later added to the building during the period of border warfare in the early 14th century.
SOURCE 6

**BONE FLUTE**

This replica bone flute is similar to one found at Lindisfarne Priory. Pilgrims are known to have played music while travelling and perhaps at holy places such as St Cuthbert’s shrine. They travelled great distances to visit St Cuthbert’s shrine and usually did so on foot. You can handle a replica flute in our bookable handling collection.
NAME STONES

A selection of name stones that are on display in the museum at Lindisfarne Priory. Each one was made for an individual who had died sometime from the mid-7th to mid-8th centuries. The name stone at the top left of this image has the name of a man, or possibly two men, and it was originally painted. The stone in the bottom right-hand corner commemorates a woman called Osgyth. Her name is written in capital letters and also in runes. It may have been decorated with a jewel in the centre. Many of these designs appear to have been inspired by the Lindisfarne Gospels, an example of which you can see in Source 8.

SOURCE 8

An example of a carpet page taken from the Lindisfarne Gospels. You can explore this amazing book made at Lindisfarne Priory in more detail on the British Library’s website. © The British Library
SELF-LED ACTIVITY

YOUR NAME IN STONE

Recommended for
KS2 (History, Art)

Learning objectives
• Know what runic writing is.
• Use the runic alphabet to write their name.
• Design a name stone based on artistic styles viewed in the museum.

Time to complete
Approx. 60 minutes

SUMMARY
Name stones were used by early Christians as grave markers. They are often decorated with carved patterns, crosses and some may have been painted or decorated with precious stones. The names carved into them are sometimes written in runes. In this activity students will discover how to write their name in runes and get creative by designing their own name stone.

MAIN ACTIVITY
Print and photocopy enough activity sheets (on pages 61–63) for your class. Start by examining the images on p61. Students can use this as inspiration for their own name stone designs. Support students to discuss the decorative features on the stones, such as crosses, interlacing designs and writing.

The activity sheet on page 63 has a runic alphabet which students can use to work out their names in runes.

Then they can use the template to design their own name stone, add some runic writing and decorative features.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Once students have a name stone design on paper, they could try incising (cutting) their design into clay. As pigments have been found on some of the name stones at Lindisfarne Priory, students could add colour to their designs.
YOUR NAME IN STONE

People during the Anglo-Saxon period made grave markers that we call name stones. **Examine** the image below of five name stones found on Holy Island.

A selection of name stones that are on display in the museum at Lindisfarne Priory. Each one was made for an individual who died sometime between the mid-7th and mid-8th centuries. The name stone at the top left of this image has the name of a man, or possibly two men, and it was originally painted. The stone in the bottom right-hand corner commemorates a woman called Osgyth. Her name is written in capital letters and also in runes. It may have been decorated with a jewel in the centre.

**1 Spot** these features on the name stones:

- crosses
- writing
- borders.
Examine the image of a carpet page taken from the Lindisfarne Gospels made at the priory in around 700 AD. Can you spot any decorations in the carpet page that are similar to the name stones?
Some of the name stones are written in a different alphabet to the one we use today, known as runes. **Write** your name in runes using the alphabet below to help you.

You may notice some of our alphabet is missing. Z uses the same rune as X. V uses the same rune as U. The letter Q is made by using the runes for C and W.

The runic alphabet used on some of the Anglo-Saxon namestones found on Holy Island.

**Design** your own name stone in this template. **Write** your name in runes and add decoration.
SELF-LED ACTIVITY
ANGLO-SAXON ILLUMINATED LETTERING

Recommended for
KS2 and KS3 (History, Art)

Learning objectives
• Know what illuminated lettering is.
• Know what decorative features were used by Anglo-Saxon monks on Lindisfarne to decorate their manuscripts.
• Create an illuminated letter inspired by the Lindisfarne Gospels.

Time to complete
Approx. 60 minutes

SUMMARY
In this activity students will be inspired by the beautiful decoration in the Lindisfarne Gospels made by monks living at Lindisfarne Priory. They will explore some of the digitised pages and then create their own illuminated letter.

SUGGESTED APPROACH
1. Research
Start by showing your students the digital copy of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Go to the British Library website and search for ‘Lindisfarne Gospels’ to find it.

There are 21 pages to look at online and the Teachers’ Notes on page 65 make some suggestions of what to look for.

Next students should sketch some of the features in the Gospels first. They could also mix paints to develop a matching colour palette (red, pink, yellow, pale green and bright blue).

2. Design
When designing their letters, they should plan out their design in pencil first. Doing this on squared paper can improve accuracy.

3. Final letter
When creating their final illuminated letter, they may like to use parchment paper, fine line black pens, gold pens to highlight their letter, and paints.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Students could use their illuminated letter as the start of their own manuscript about the life of St Cuthbert. The Historical Information on pages 6–12 can be used to support this activity. You can also view an illustration from Bede’s ‘Lives of St Cuthbert’ on the British Library website.
THINGS TO SPOT

Here are a few suggestions of what to look for in the Lindisfarne Gospels:

• Page 1 – the colour palette of rich red, pale green, yellow, pink and bright blue, the style of lettering that is used and the gold outline

• Page 8 – an illuminated letter featuring intricate interlacing patterns, ribbon animals with elongated bodies

• Page 14 – an illuminated letter with the patterns arranged in grids

• Page 18 – zoom in to see how pink dots are used and see if students can spot a human face

• Pages 2 and 7 are carpet pages – they have decoration covering the whole page like a carpet

• Pages 6, 13 and 19 – these have illustrations of the evangelists that also might provide inspiration for students on how to draw the human form or animals in an Anglo-Saxon style.
Recommended for
KS2 and KS3 (History)

Learning objectives
• Understand what pilgrimages are and why people go on them.
• Create a tour guide for pilgrims planning to visit Lindisfarne Priory on pilgrimage in the 13th century.

Time to complete
Approx. 90 mins depending on the depth of research carried out by students.

SUMMARY
People going on pilgrimage are willing to travel arduous journeys to reach holy places. Lindisfarne and St Cuthbert have been a focus for pilgrims since the 8th century. In the medieval period, maps were produced for popular pilgrimage routes. They often included recommendations for where to stay or visit en route. In this activity students put together a tour guide for pilgrims planning to visit the priory in the 13th century.

SUGGESTED APPROACH
Search for ‘Matthew Paris’s itinerary map from London to Palestine’ on the British Library’s website to show students. There are six images available to look at online. You can zoom in to look at the details, including:
• geographical features such as rivers and hills (pages 1 and 6)
• buildings (all pages)
• nature such as animals and trees (all pages)
• routes shown as straight lines (all pages)
• holy sites within the walled city of Jerusalem (page 6).

Students could use this as inspiration for their medieval tour guide to Lindisfarne Priory. The tour guide might include basic information about getting on and off the island safely, the story of St Cuthbert, what miracles you can expect, where to stay, what to eat, what to wear, what souvenirs are available to buy, and a map showing the route from their school to the Priory. The Historical Information on pages 6–12 can support this activity.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Students could design their own souvenirs for pilgrims. You could search the British Museum collection for ‘13th century pilgrim badge’ to see some examples for inspiration.
Recommended for
KS2 and KS3 (Science)

Learning objectives
- Understand the importance of looking after nature, following the example of St Cuthbert.
- Use fine motor skills to build a bird feeder.

Time to complete
60 minutes

SUMMARY
St Cuthbert cared for nature, particularly birds, and the island continues to be a safe haven for a variety of species, especially as it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Birds migrate to the island from the Arctic in the winter, making the most of the mudflats that provide a rich feeding ground. In this activity students are also encouraged to care for birds by making their own bird feeder.

SUGGESTED APPROACH
In this activity students make a bird feeder out of a plastic bottle. They will use a pin and scissors to cut the plastic. Cut plastic can be sharp. This can cause injuries not only to people, but also to the birds. Students will need supervision and support when making these bird feeders to ensure the holes they make are as smooth as possible.

The Teachers’ Notes on page 68 provide more detailed instructions on how to make a bird feeder. Afterwards, you could carry out a survey to identify which birds eat the seeds and how often. You might find they eat at particular times of day and notice they are hungrier in the winter when food is less plentiful.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS
Get students involved in nature on your school site by developing a wildlife garden or planter:
- Start by planting native wildflowers from seed. These will provide a new habitat for insects and attract bees and butterflies.
- Students could carry out nature surveys to monitor which species visit your garden or planter, how often and in which season.
- Develop it further by adding a bird feeding station and setting up a club that can maintain and monitor the garden all year round.
BUILD A BIRD FEEDER

TEACHERS’ NOTES

STUDENTS WILL NEED:

- a clean plastic bottle
- a pin
- a pair of scissors
- a stick
- a piece of string.

Be careful, cut plastic can be sharp. It is important to make it as smooth as possible, so they don’t cut themselves or injure the birds.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Birds do not like soggy seeds. Wet seeds can also go mouldy, so get students to make pin pricks in the bottom of their bottle. This allows rainwater to drain through, keeping the seeds dry and delicious.

2. Next they should use a pin to make a hole approximately 5cm from the bottom of their bottle. They should use scissors to make the hole big enough to insert a stick. Then get students to make a matching hole on the other side of the bottle so a stick can go right through both holes. This will create two perches that should be about 5cm long.

3. Get students to make a feeding hole a few centimetres above each perch.

4. Now students should make two final holes on either side of the bottle a little below the lid. Thread the string through both holes and tie the ends together to create a loop for hanging up the feeder.

5. Students can now fill their bottle with bird seed. Small birds like sparrows particularly love sunflower seeds. Wild bird seed mixes cater for a number of different species. You might find some seeds come out through the feeding holes, so do this over newspaper.

6. Hang the finished bird feeder in a sheltered spot that predators like cats cannot reach. Then wait for the birds to find your feeder.