



CASE STUDY

Sandford Award Criteria 2

The education programmes at the site contribute to an understanding of the local and national heritage

At the International Bomber Command Centre pupils engage with WWII objects donated by local people and learning activities based around the Memorial Spire.

International Bomber Command Centre, Lincolnshire



The International Bomber Command Centre (IBCC) opened in January 2018. It is a purpose-built centre with the objective of providing a facility to acknowledge the efforts, sacrifices and commitment of the men and women, from 62 different nations, who came together in Bomber Command during the Second World War. The project also covers the people who suffered as a result of the bombing campaigns and those whose survival was guaranteed by the humanitarian operations of Bomber Command.

At the heart of the IBCC are the Memorial Spire and Walls of Names with 270 individual panels, with every name of those who lost their lives in Bomber Command shown, without service rank. The IBCC also includes two peace gardens set in 10 acres of landscaped grounds and a visitor centre. The Chadwick Centre (named in honour of Roy Chadwick, the designer of the Lancaster Bomber) uses state-of-the-art technology and interactive displays to tell the story of Bomber Command, through the eyes of those who witnessed the events first-hand. The Centre aims to commemorate the bravery of those who served, while recognising the complexity of the issues surrounding the targeting of civilian populations. This careful approach is summed up by three key words: Remembrance, Recognition, Reconciliation.

Session Description: 'Their Story, Our History: Object Handling' – Key Stage 2

In this hands-on session your pupils are able to handle authentic artefacts relating to Bomber Command and the Second World War, as well as do a bit of dressing up! Subjects: History (WW2, Women at War, POWs, Children in Wartime).

How did the session help pupils understand Lincolnshire's WWII heritage and national events?

Local heritage

'The Education programmes at the IBCC make a considerable contribution to an understanding of the local heritage. Part of the landscaped grounds have been configured to show the location of every airbase in Lincolnshire by the positioning of trees and this was skilfully explained by the volunteer guides ... [and] ... the impact that the coming of the airbases must have had on the population of Lincolnshire. The panels of names around the Spire are arranged in two spirals, the first showing the names of casualties who were based in Lincolnshire, and the second for all those from the rest of the UK. The Education Officer highlighted, during the object handling session, the objects that had been owned or donated by Lincolnshire residents and related the stories connected to those objects. Many of the personal accounts used in the exhibition related to those members of Bomber Command based in Lincolnshire or of local civilians who lived during that period.'

National events

'The impact of Bomber Command on national and international heritage are at the forefront of the collection of personal accounts, film and interactive exhibits that form the basis of the exhibition. A large map of Europe covering a whole wall, running through the war years, shows the location, scale and nature of bombing raids from all nations. Many of the activities developed by the Education Officer have as their focus the key concepts of Remembrance, Recognition, Reconciliation. These form the basis of discussions about the issues surrounding the bombing of civilian populations of all nationalities and periods.'

What impressed the Sandford Award judge?

Mystery objects and hands-on experience

'The Education Officer is enthusiastic, approachable, and skilful in engaging the interest of all the students. She carefully ensures that every child feels confident in contributing to the question and answer sessions and that they collaborate fully with their partners in the mystery object activity. In the first section of the object handling, where the objects were described and demonstrated by the Education Officer, the quality and quantity of the information that was presented was very impressive, and all the students were engaged throughout.

The transition to the mystery object session was timed perfectly and allowed the students to have a more "hands-on" experience and an opportunity to experiment, hypothesise, discuss and reach tentative conclusions. The Education Officer's plenary on this section was consistently positive, treating their suggestions with respect, but always ensuring that accurate understanding of each object was achieved. The consistent reference to the people involved ensure'

A volunteer led tour of The Memorial Spire and Exhibition

'The Spire Tour and Exhibition were led by volunteer guides. The personal interest and commitment to the IBCC project of the volunteers was very apparent and contributed to the success of the visit. Some of the guides have experience of the armed forces, particularly the RAF, and this personal insight was used to very good effect to engage the students' interest. A reconstruction of a bombing raid formation using the children themselves, during the Spire Tour was particularly effective. A focused consideration of one of the names on the panels ensured that there was a very human dimension to this activity, and never just a game to find a name on a panel ...

The Exhibition contains a wealth of resources, mediums and experiences, and caters for all learning styles. The opportunity to listen to individual personal accounts, both first hand and by actors, on period telephones ensures a personal experience of a story and allows the student to respond individually.'