



THE BAR CONVENT

Living Heritage Centre

National Curriculum Criteria

A visit to the Bar Convent can help meet National Curriculum criteria for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 for History and Religious Education. As England's oldest living convent it has a history spanning over 300 years and has much to offer.

HISTORY

For **Key Stage 2**, a visit can help pupils:

1. Establish clear narratives within and across the periods they study:
 - The Bar Convent provides a narrative of Catholicism from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, but also the narratives of individual women.
2. Note connections, contrasts and trends over time:
 - Pupils can see the connections between the ways Catholics were treated at different points in English history and how these form a trend over time.
3. Understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of different sources:
 - The Bar Convent uses a variety of sources to tell the story of the convent and Mary Ward, including letters, paintings and objects which pupils can learn about and engage with.

The Bar Convent can also form a local history study of Catholics in York. Mary Ward, Frances Bedingfield and Margaret Clitherow are highly significant women in York's history, and an understanding of the challenges faced by Catholics in the city will help pupils understand the diversity of societies and the complexities of different groups.

A visit can help **Key Stage 3** pupils:

1. Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world:
 - The history of the Bar Convent forms a narrative from the reign of Henry VIII. It shows how people's lives have shaped this nation, reflecting the vision of Mary Ward for a community which has persevered against all odds. Mary Ward was influenced by the Counter-Reformation spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola and the Jesuit order, showing the influence of European ideas in England.
2. Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, similarity, difference and significance:

- The Reformation offers an example of change, but the continued existence of Catholicism also provides evidence for continuity. Pupils will expand their knowledge of the similarities and differences between faiths.
3. Gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history, between political, religious and social history, and between short- and long-term timescales:
 - The Bar Convent can help students understand the connection between the local history of Catholicism in York and wider regional and national issues in the post-Reformation period. It can help pupils make connections between political, religious and social history. The Bar Convent story stretches over centuries, enabling pupils to make connections between short- and long-term timescales.

A visit to us also meets specific criteria of the History Key Stage 3 National Curriculum:

1. The development of Church, state and society in Britain 1509 – 1745, including Renaissance and Reformation in Europe, the English Reformation and Counter Reformation, the Elizabethan religious settlement and conflict with Catholics:
 - The stories of Thomas More, Margaret Clitherow, Francis Ingleby and other York martyrs are told in the exhibition, illustrating the conflict with Catholics and the issues of the Reformation in England
 - Mary Ward travelled around Europe, illustrating the force of the Counter-Reformation in Europe and its links with Britain
 - The founding of the Bar Convent in 1686 came at a time when Catholicism was still subject to penal laws.
2. Ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain 1745 – 1901:
 - The convent remained a controversial site in the eighteenth century, resulting in its new chapel requiring eight separate exits and a priest hole so that congregations could escape if necessary.
 - Students were accepted from all walks of life, demonstrating the increasing democratisation of society after the Industrial Revolution.
3. Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world from 1901 to the present day:
 - During WW1 the sisters took in Belgian refugee children and turned the school hall into a ward for injured soldiers.
 - The Bar Convent was directly attacked in WW2, resulting in the death of 5 sisters. This shows the impact of the war stretched across all aspects of the community.
4. Local history study
 - The Bar Convent can form a local history study of Catholicism from persecution to toleration, and illustrates wider national themes such as persecution, the Toleration Act and the eventual lifting of all penal laws relating to Catholics.

PTO for Religious Education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Bar Convent has a lot to offer in meeting teaching aims in Religious Education. For **Key Stage 2**, it can help pupils:

1. Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning:
 - The Bar Convent presents the beliefs, symbols and actions of Catholics, especially during periods of suppression, showing worship can be carried out in the home as well as in churches. Pupils can learn about the sisters' way of life.
2. Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable:
 - The sisters demonstrate the challenges of commitment, as they had to hide their true profession and faced an angry mob. The exhibition presents a video of the present nuns talking about the challenges they face. However, the sisters also show that belonging to a community can be valuable, especially in the present day.
3. Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all:
 - The recent history of the Bar Convent can provide an example of the ways in which communities accept those of differing faiths for the well-being of all. The work of the nuns today provides a local example of how communities can work and live together.
4. Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair:
 - The work of the sisters in the twentieth century and the present day across the world provides an example for thinking about the work of development charities and religious missions across the world.

For **Key Stage 3** pupils, the Bar Convent can help:

1. Explain and interpret ways that the history and culture of religions and worldviews influence individuals and communities:
 - Mary Ward influenced the beliefs and worldviews of the women who followed her. Mary was also influenced by Ignatius of Loyola, showing that the history of a religion can influence individuals.
2. Explain and interpret a range of beliefs, teachings and sources of authority:
 - The Bar Convent provides an excellent opportunity to study women's religious beliefs and practices, especially through Mary Ward who was revolutionary in pioneering girls' education, but also in the work of the nuns today around the world.
 - Mary Ward can be used to show that individuals can encourage commitment from whole communities.
3. Explore and express insights into significant moral and ethical questions:
 - The work of the sisters across the world today can be explored to make connections between what religions teach about love and charity and what they do in the world.