

Preparing for your family visit to MK Gallery

Visiting an art gallery can sometimes feel overwhelming for parents with children. Hopefully these tips will help you to prepare for your visit and to ensure a positive and rewarding experience.

1. Have a look on our website for information about the current exhibition before you visit so your children become familiar with what they might see. Hopefully they will be excited about seeing in the flesh what they've only seen on screen. Talking about what you have learnt about the show can feel extremely satisfying.
2. Our team have put together exhibition specific activities for you to do together. Pick up an activity sheet or family guide from our front desk when you arrive, to accompany your visit, or to take with you to continue the fun at home.
3. Most objects in our exhibitions can't be touched. Explaining why to children in advance allows them to be prepared before their visit. This can be done in a way that encourages them to be respectful and to take care of the art.
Here are some reasons why we can't touch artworks:
 - Most objects in a gallery are the only one in the whole world which means they can't be replaced if they get broken.
 - Our hands contain oils (even after we've washed them) which can damage the surfaces of artworks. Even our art technicians (who hang the paintings) have to wear gloves when preparing a show.
4. Encourage children to ask questions and talk about what they see. Ask them questions: 'Do you have a favourite?' and "Why is this your favourite?" There are no wrong answers.
5. Many people think that you have to be quiet in galleries. This isn't true. So, don't worry, if your children want to make noise - that is fine!
6. As there are many fragile objects in the galleries, we do ask that children (and adults) never run inside the galleries. Some pieces might be close together, so stay aware of space. If your child does need to burn off some steam, why not take a break by visiting our free outdoor play area, the Playscape?
7. Let your children lead and follow their interests. There are a lot of artworks in the exhibition with some pieces that might interest you more than others. Pick and choose what you spend time observing.



8. Why not take some photos of your favourite pieces? You can take photos in the galleries, just please do not use flash. We love to see your pictures too so make sure if you upload them to social media you tag us @mk_gallery.

Occasionally there are restrictions on photography in which case there will be a symbol next to the artwork, or you can ask one of our invigilators if you are unsure.

9. We ask that no food or drink is consumed inside the galleries. Our galleries do however exit into our café where we have some fantastic children's meals available.
10. Have fun! We encourage learning at MK Gallery, but we also want you and your family to enjoy your visit and have fun.

To book your tickets please visit www.mkgallery.org