



**Inspiring children to
discover their potential**

**Wakefield Children's
University**

**Parent & Carer Guide
to the CU**



wakefieldcollege

Introduction

We are delighted that your child has become a member of the Wakefield Children's University. We have provided the following information to help you and your child get the most from their involvement. It is important to remember that participation in Learning Activities must be voluntary, take place outside the normal school day and at a validated Learning Destination.

We have compiled our most frequently asked questions to help you, but if in doubt please contact your school in the first instance, or one of our team. Our contact details are on the back page.

What is the Children's University?

The Children's University is a charitable trust who aims to develop a love of learning in children. We do this by encouraging and celebrating the participation of 5-14 year olds in extra-curricular activities in and outside of school.

Children are given a Passport to Learning in which they collect Learning Hours for each activity they participate in at Learning Destinations. Learning Destinations are the activity providers we work with and can include after school clubs, museums and galleries, sports clubs, community

groups, plus many more.

Children receive a certificate of award upon reaching certain thresholds. The first certificate (Bronze Award) is awarded for 30 hours of learning, the Silver Award for 65 hours of learning and the Gold Award for 100 hours of learning. The certificates follow these increments up to 1000 hours, meaning there are 30 certificates to collect in total. A full breakdown of the thresholds and certificates can be found in the front of the Passport to Learning.

Those who reach one of the various Gold levels throughout the year will be invited to the annual Graduation Ceremony, held at the Theatre Royal Wakefield in June. The ceremony celebrates these achievements and children wear a traditional cap and gown while being presented with their certificates in front of their family and friends.

Who stamps the Passport to Learning?

Your child's school will stamp the Passport for any after school clubs your child attends. They may do this on a half termly basis. For visits to Learning Destinations, the activity provider will stamp the Passport. If this is not possible, please provide evidence and we can include the hours at the next update.

How often do you check the Passport to Learning?

Wakefield CU requests Passports to be brought into school approximately 4 times a year in order for us to update your child's Learning Hours total. Certificates will be issued once Learning Hours have been updated. If your child is an Individual Member, you will be contacted by post when the update is due.

How do I recommend an activity?

We welcome suggestions for new Learning Destinations. We have a simple form to complete which is available from schools or you can request one by email. Please be aware that we receive lots of requests and validations may take a little time to complete.

Who decides how much time to include for each activity?

During the validation process, we discuss how many Learning Hours to allocate to each activity. Our key principle is that the hours included relate to learning within an activity and will not necessarily include the whole session. For example, a youth club meeting lasting 2 hours may only be eligible for 1 hour recorded in the Passport, as some of the session may be given over to socialising. While this is an important part of the session, it is not a formal learning experience.

How do I support my child to include a range of activities?

We want to encourage children to try new activities and experiences. Within each award level we would like to see a mix of activities with no more than 15 hours per term, or 45 hours per year of one single activity counting towards a CU award.

Learning Hours awarded at Scouting/ Guiding groups can be included for badgework and visits only.

Any camps can be included up to a maximum of 6 hours per day.

Residentials/sleepovers can be included provided learning is taking place and up to a maximum of 6 hours per day.

Please do not include time spent sleeping, travelling or lunch breaks as these do not form part of the formal learning we validate. The above follows the guidelines set by the CU Trust.

What other activities are there?

There are many Learning Destinations across Wakefield which do not require membership to attend, in addition to the regular clubs and after school clubs your child may attend. These range from museums and libraries, to pottery painting and forest schools and everything in between! You can find a full list on our website.

In addition, Wakefield CU produces a challenge sheet for every school holiday. The challenges are free/low

cost and can be done at home. These are sent to schools and are also posted on our social media. We require evidence of completion and all details are on the challenge sheets.

Wakefield College also runs regular events for our CU members. Keep an eye on your school's newsletter and our social media for any upcoming events.

Can we use the Passport to Learning outside of Wakefield?

Yes! The Children's University has validated Learning Destinations across the country. You can check before you travel on the CU Trust website.

In addition, there are a number of national Learning Destinations, some of which provide online activities. All of these can be found on the CU Trust website.

Contact Us

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The Children's University aims to:

- Increase the number of 'beyond the classroom' opportunities for children aged 5 and above
- Break down barriers to 'beyond the classroom' opportunities for children facing disadvantage
- Provide participants with increased levels of curiosity, confidence and resilience to help them realise their aspirations
- Recognise and celebrate continuing participation, creating a sense of achievement and success
- Build partnerships that enables us to provide more opportunities to more children