The Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions project ran an outreach project in Oxford primary schools. This was intended to teach Roman life topics through Latin inscriptions. It was an opportunity to pilot resources and raise awareness of the project.

The project delivered six sessions in four different schools. In total, it reached 177 pupils. Four classes were Year 4 (aged 8-9) and one was Year 5 (aged 9-10) and one Year 3 (aged 7-8). Classes were mixed ability (including pupils with special educational needs) and had not done any Latin before.

Sessions were delivered by one representative of the Ashmolean Education Department (Claire Coleman) and one representative of the Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions project (Abigail Baker). Each session included the following activities:

- Picking a Roman name
- Making a clay inscription with Roman name
- Making a metal votive using Roman name and choosing a Roman job and an appropriate deity
- Roman Army commands games
- Decorating polystyrene “sling bullets” with Latin taunts
- Learning about Roman mass production (including handling ancient objects if there was time)

This report summarises the evaluation data collected from participating teachers and pupils and considers the long-term impact of the outreach project. Its main conclusion are:

- Both teachers and pupils gave the outreach workshops very high ratings
- Teachers liked the clay modelling activity best, while pupils enjoyed the sling bullets activity slightly more
- Most schools had never taught Latin inscriptions before, all wanted to do so in the future
- A legacy box has been developed to allow the Ashmolean to continue to offer these activities in the future.
Evaluation data

Overall ratings

Teachers were asked to rate the project overall on three factors: Practicalities, pupil engagement and learning. Nearly all responses were highly positive:

![Bar chart showing ratings]

The one mixed response considered practicalities “great” but thought that more time was needed for the activities.

Respondents noted children were both having fun and learning. Two respondents picked out how pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN/SEND) were also engaged. Several commented on the Latin words and phrases learned by the pupils.

Comments included:

“Excellent. Really well resourced and planned; great job all round.”

“Super, great links to curriculum.”

“V. Good – not time for them to get bored. Fun and accessible activities.”

“Excellent – All engaged throughout. Adaptable for SEN children”

“Full pupil engagement, including SEND – Children with emotional issues often difficult to reach.”

“Children were able to recall new learning (eg Latin commands) in follow up session in the afternoon.”

On practicalities: “Fantastically well resourced. Efficient set up. Easy clear up. A huge amount packed into a short amount of time.”
Children’s overall ratings:

Children were asked to rate the activities out of 5. They coloured in stars to represent their ratings. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. The graph below shows the number of children that gave each star rating:

Many children chose to colour in half stars, so this has been represented in the graph. Some chose to draw in extra stars, to give higher ratings, but these responses have been counted as 5 star ratings.

Some children who gave low star ratings wrote wholly positive comments, possibly indicating that they got distracted while colouring in the stars.

Children were also given free space to comment on what they had liked and disliked about the activities. They tended to emphasise how much fun the activities were, and expressed enthusiasm for the emphasis on crafts. Many children chose to sign their evaluations with their Roman names – indicating a continued engagement with the role playing elements of the session. Others mentioned that the language learning elements of the session had been particularly enjoyable.

Comments included:

“The thing I liked about the activities was that I now know a little bit more about the Romans *****”

“I liked all of it! I loved making our own Roman names! Also looking at old things! 😊 !***** [plus two stars added]”

“I liked how we got to play games and get our hands messy. I’m sad that it’s over ***** 😔”

“I liked it because it was very fun and entertaining I learnt about the Romans and I loved all the activities 😊 *****😊”

“I liked picking our Roman names Mine was Julia Flavia *****”

“I liked learning how to write in latin *****”
“I liked today because we did lots of fun activities and I learnt lots of things that I didn’t know before.”

“I liked telling people to cape, nolite movere, sede and makin the eggs 5 stares [sic]”

“I liked Everything from the start to finish Tiberius Rex.”

“I liked it all and I thought it was very nice of them to give up time to our class and teach us about the Romans. Isabel”

“It was a great experience also very fun. I wish they would come back. From Martha”

“I liked writing my Roman name on the clay and Making the stones with Scary pictures on. It was really fun!”

“I really liked the work they done with me because it made me know more about the Roman and I love painting the clay writing thing.”

“Latin Inscriptions because it was fun to lern new languigs [sic]”

“Metal bullets. I found this fun because I feel like a real Roman soldier! Thank You!!”

“I liked the Latin instructions because it was fun learning Latin words and commands.”

“Clay Inscriptions. I liked them because we got to use clay and we pretended that we were Roman Citecens. I think that next time you do it you should give out more clay.”

Activity preferences:

Teachers were asked which had been the most successful activity. The most popular was the clay inscribing activity (chosen by half of the teachers). Of the remaining three, one chose making votives, one chose slingshot bullets and the last one considered all activities equally good.
Children had similarly diverse responses to the activities. While many listed several or all of the activities as equally enjoyable, 51 responses mentioned a favourite activity. Most popular activity was making **sling bullets** (25 children said it was their favourite), closely followed by Clay inscriptions (20). Foil votives was only 7 children’s favourite (perhaps because it was the shortest activity), but often appeared in lists of things children had enjoyed more generally.

**Past, present and future teaching:**

A series of questions were used to explore how the Romans were being taught in these schools and whether the project would make a difference to that teaching in the future.

Five of the six teachers usually cover the Romans with this age group. The other teacher had opted to teach the Greeks, and commented how the children “liked linking them”. Teachers listed a range of topics covered in their normal teaching of the Romans:

- Invasion (mentioned twice)
- Roads
- Slaves
- Mosaics
- R.Britain
- Latin Roots
- Legacy (mentioned twice)
- Celts – Boudicca,
- Army, Shields/catapults (mentioned twice)
- Roman Numerals
- Houses
- Food
Only one school had ever done Latin inscriptions before (making rubbings). All said that they were interested in using Latin inscriptions in the future (although in one case this was dependent on the School deciding to cover the Romans). Several teachers mentioned adopting and adapting activities for their own classroom use, e.g.:

“We might add this to our Roman planning”

“I particularly liked how the Roman commands fed into hurling ‘Metal bullet’ insults. This activity could have taken an hour in itself. Definitely not a criticism, but an observation should I repeat the activity independently.”

All teachers expressed interest in some sort of follow-on activity. The most popular was a repeat visit (5 respondents), followed by online materials (4 respondents), Museum visit (3 respondents) and finally hired activity box (2 respondents). All of the schools signed up for our mailing list to receive copies of worksheets and news about the project.

There are strong indications that the project will continue to have an impact beyond the six sessions. Teachers gained ideas and resources for future years’ teaching and expressed an interest in continued engagement with the Ashmolean.

**Future lessons**

While responses from both teachers and pupils were overwhelmingly positive, there were a few suggested improvements. Two teachers mentioned minor classroom management issues. One suggested making sure that the outreach leaders used the same method for getting class attention as the teacher. The other suggested finding techniques to ensure sling bullets were not thrown by the children. These suggestions were taken on board straight away. Workshop leaders adapted sessions to incorporate the host school’s classroom management techniques and by letting children have a controlled outlet for the urge to throw the bullets.
Some children commented on struggling with particular craft activities in their evaluations. This issue was spotted early on in the workshops and improved with a clearer demonstration of techniques.

Other children asked for more information in general or for coverage of particular topics. In response, a set of follow on activities are being developed for schools to deliver as enrichment.

The other issue raised by both children and teachers was time. In many cases, this was caused by time constraints placed on the workshops by the school. Teachers responded by using “finishing off time” to allow children to finish any craft pieces they had not had time to complete.

Children’s critical comments included:

I really liked it when picked our Roman names but I didn’t like it when you didn’t tell us more about the romans ****(and ½)

I liked all the art but you should do some out door stuff and maybe Roman food tasting ****

I loved it when we got to pick names and Jobs I didn’t like that you didn’t tell us much *** (and ½)

They were very fun but could have more time on the metal bullets *****

Clay inscriptions. I liked the clay inscriptions because I like clay and it was fun painting the writing but I think you can let people choose which colour paint they want ****(1/2)

Metal bullets. The metal bullets were fun because they were actually foam eggs. Next time you could let us colour them in ****

I liked the riteing on clay because we got are hands really messy but next time can you give us more clay *****

**Long term impact**

We have already seen that teachers expressed a strong interest in future involvement with the Ashmolean. As well as swelling visitor numbers, this has the potential to raise money for the Ashmolean, since schools pay a fee for visits.

The project also offers a tangible benefit to the Ashmolean in the form of an AshLI Legacy Trolley. This contains tools and resources to run the activities developed for the outreach project with visiting school groups and in future outreach. The kit contains all the tools and resources needed to run similar workshops. [provide full details and photos when finished]

The project has also built on the lessons drawn from evaluation to create additional worksheets and to supplement existing resources. These will allow teachers and museum educators to deliver these activities without prior experience and enrich activities with additional resources (e.g. brick stamps and dressing up clothes).
The workshop activities have been incorporated into the education department’s repertoire and have already been used with several visiting school groups.

All worksheets and teacher notes will be available online (on both the Ashmolean Education and AshLI websites), allowing teachers from around the world to use and adapt them.