

\_\_\_\_\_ 's visit to Life



I am going to Life Science Centre!

Life Science Centre is a place where I can learn all about science and have some fun.

I can play with interactive games, enjoy shows about science in the theatre and the Planetarium. Plus I can see some LEGO® brick models of human inventions like the Metro!

Life Science Centre is in Newcastle.

I can get the train or Metro into Newcastle Central Station, and the science centre is only about a 300m walk away.

Or I can get the bus, which stops just outside the centre.

If I travel by car, Life has its own chargeable car park, which is a 200m walk across a busy road.





When I go inside Life Science Centre, I will see a friendly member of staff in a **dark blue polo top or jumper** at the reception desk. They will say hello and scan our tickets.



At the reception I can hire a Sensory Bag if I want one.

Sensory Bags contain things like ear defenders, fidgets and a printed copy of this visual story to support my visit.

Sensory Bags cost £10 to hire, but I get this back when I return the bag at the end of my visit.



There are nine different areas of Life Science Centre I can explore.

They are:

- Making Studios
- Brain Zone
- Science Theatre
- Experiment Zone
- Space Zone
- Wow Zone
- Lightbox
- Play Zone
- Hello World

I can ask for a map at the reception desk to help me find my way. On the other side of the map, I can see what activity is happening in each area.

If I need the toilet while I'm at Life, I can look for the signs around the centre to see where they are.

There is a Changing Places toilet opposite the reception desk.

There are also toilets and disabled access toilets next to Life Cafe on the ground floor, and next to the Hello World area on the upper floor.



Toilets near Life Cafe, ground floor



Toilets near Hello World, upper floor



When I walk through the turnstiles at reception, there is a huge planet Earth hanging from the ceiling. This is called Gaia.

I can look at Gaia from close-up or far away, and there is a viewing platform upstairs. It is safe to walk underneath Gaia, but I don't have to do this if I don't want to.

## Sensory Key



There is a speaker that plays the ambient sounds of the world. Some of these sounds can be quite loud, particularly the dolphin noises or people chattering.

Ear defenders are available from reception.





There are hands-on, interactive exhibits straight ahead when I walk through the turnstiles at reception.

This includes a spinning table, a photo booth, a wind machine and some puzzles.

This area is near to the entrance so can get quite busy at the start of the day. I don't have to do any of the activities if I don't want to.



## Sensory Key



Some of these can be quite loud, particularly spinning table and jukebox exhibitions.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



Lots of the exhibits rely on screens, and some show moving colourful patterns.

Next to these exhibits, I can view the LEGO® Wall.

This shows inventions and historical moments made in LEGO®, like Stephenson's Rocket train or a Metro carriage!

These LEGO® models are behind a glass screen, so I can't touch the models.



The Making Studios are next to the exhibits. This is a hands-on area where I can use different materials to create things.

A friendly member of the team can explain the activity to me and help me if I need it.

## Sensory Key



The hot glue gun won't feel sticky, if you touch it before the glue has dried it could burn you. The glue stick could make your fingers feel sticky.



An alarm might make a beeping sound as the Life team go in and out of the Making Studios office.

The 3D printers and laser cutter may make a humming noise while working.

I may also hear other visitors nearby.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



Brain Zone is to the right when I walk through the turnstiles at reception. Here, I can learn all about the human brain with some fun activities and games!

There are instructions around to explain the exhibits. Some of these exhibits might move, make a noise or light up when I play with them.



## Sensory Key



One of the exhibits has strong smells to remind me of memories. I don't have to do this if I don't want to.



Most of the exhibits in Brain Zone are on screens which play sound to help me learn or to complete an activity.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



There are some exhibits in Brain Zone that are made to look a bit scary, but there is nothing in the area that can hurt me. I can find out more on the next page.



I may see some exhibits that have a sign on saying they are out of use for my safety. There are still lots of fun things to play with though!  
An exhibit I can look out for when I visit is:



It's not a real trap door, just a screen on the floor that shows different images when I press a big red button. The button says 'do not press', but I am allowed to press but I can press it if I want to.



It's not a real toilet, this is actually a drinking fountain. I don't have to try the drinking fountain if I don't want to.

The Science Theatre is next to Brain Zone. This is where I can watch the live science show. I can find out when the next show is by looking on the screen next to the theatre entrance.

A limited number of people will be able to go into the theatre at one time, and I will be able to sit with my group.

I don't have to go into the Science Theatre if I don't want to.

The current science show is called Find the Fake.

During this show I will see illusions, and take part in mind challenges.



In *Find the Fake*, the wall behind the stage is decorated with black lights, with the phrase “FRESH ideas needed” painted across the back wall.

A member of the team will carry out demonstrations on stage and ask for volunteers to help. I do not have to volunteer if I don't want to.



## Sensory Key



Sometimes, people in the audience might clap, cheer or make other noises. One of the demonstrations includes a power drill that will make a whirring noise.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



Most of this area is dimly lit, so I can see the demonstrations on stage properly.



During sections of the show the colours and the intensity of the lights will change.



Several demonstrations involve a bright flame, but this will not hurt me.

Near the Science Theatre, there is a small staircase leading down to the Science Now! Hub. Here, I can learn all about nature-inspired materials.

I can play quizzes on touch screens, look at cool objects from a research lab and watch videos about academic research.

## Sensory Key



Speakers will play sounds of nature in this area, which might feel uncomfortable.



Ear defenders are available from reception.

Later in the day the lights around the exhibit will be turned on. These are very bright to light up the area.





Experiment Zone is a large area inside glass walls where I can carry out science experiments using real chemicals and equipment.

For safety reasons, Experiment Zone is for people aged 7+ only.

Under-13s need to be supervised by an adult while they work.



## Sensory Key



To the right of the entrance to this area, the staff door may set off an alarm sound as people come in and out.



When I visit Experiment Zone, there will be a range of different activities to choose from.

There are touchscreens on the benches that will tell me what I need to do.

If I need help, I can ask a member of staff in a dark blue polo top or jumper.

They will give me instructions so I can do the experiments safely.

I can decide whether I would like to try these experiments, or not.

I will be asked to wear a lab coat and goggles for safety reasons. If I am worried about this, I can speak to a member of the team.





Outside the Experiment Zone, is the Story of Life exhibition.

Here I can learn about the history of Life, from the team who made it happen, to the amazing stories of people whose lives have been transformed by the work on site.

### Sensory Key



I may be able to hear visitors from Creativity Zone and Experiment Zone while in this area.

Some parts of this exhibition show videos which I can listen to, through headphones connected to the display.



The Story of Life has screens which I can watch.

In Space Zone, there are lots of things I can explore:

- International Space Station
- Sphere - digital globe
- Mission Control
- Planetarium

I don't have to go in the Planetarium if I don't want to.

## Sensory Key



Some exhibits have automatic beeping noises and voiceovers playing. Different exhibits may be heard at the same time. Ear defenders are available if I want to use them.



The International Space Station exhibit is brightly lit. Sunglasses are available if I want to use them.



Most of Space Zone is dimly lit compared to the rest of the centre.



In the International Space Station, I can smell the smells of space.



Mission Control has lots of screens in it for me to play on, and includes lots of blue lights. The James Webb Space Telescope mirror shows a distorted reflection.





If I do decide to go in Space Zone, there are lots of fun things to play with!



The International Space Station mock-up is very bright and white, and some sections include strong smells. The space station has white noise.



Mission Control has lots of screens in it for me to play on, and includes lots of blue lights.



At the end of Space Zone, there is an exhibit about natural disasters like volcano eruptions. I can avoid this if I don't want to see this activity.

The Sphere is a large globe with seating that is showing a short film about the weather and climate on different planets in our solar system. It is called LUNA Hotel & Spa.



## Sensory Key



When a show starts in the Sphere, the lights will be turned down so I can see the show better.



Sphere shows feature voiceovers and sometimes music which can be loud.

Ear defenders are available if I want to use them.

The Planetarium is an enclosed dark area where I can watch a range of different shows.

Part way through the show, the images on the dome move quickly which can be disorientating, but this doesn't last long. I can look away for this bit, or close my eyes.

There are rows of seats that recline so I can see the domed screen really well when I sit back.

## Sensory Key



When a show starts in the planetarium, the lights will be turned down so I can see the screen better.



Planetarium shows feature voiceovers and sometimes music which can be loud.

Ear defenders are available if I want to use them.



There will be a screen outside the Planetarium entrance to tell me what time the shows are on, and space to queue.

A limited number of people will be able to go into the Planetarium at one time, and I will be able to sit with my group.

A friendly member of the Life Team will be at the door if I need any help.

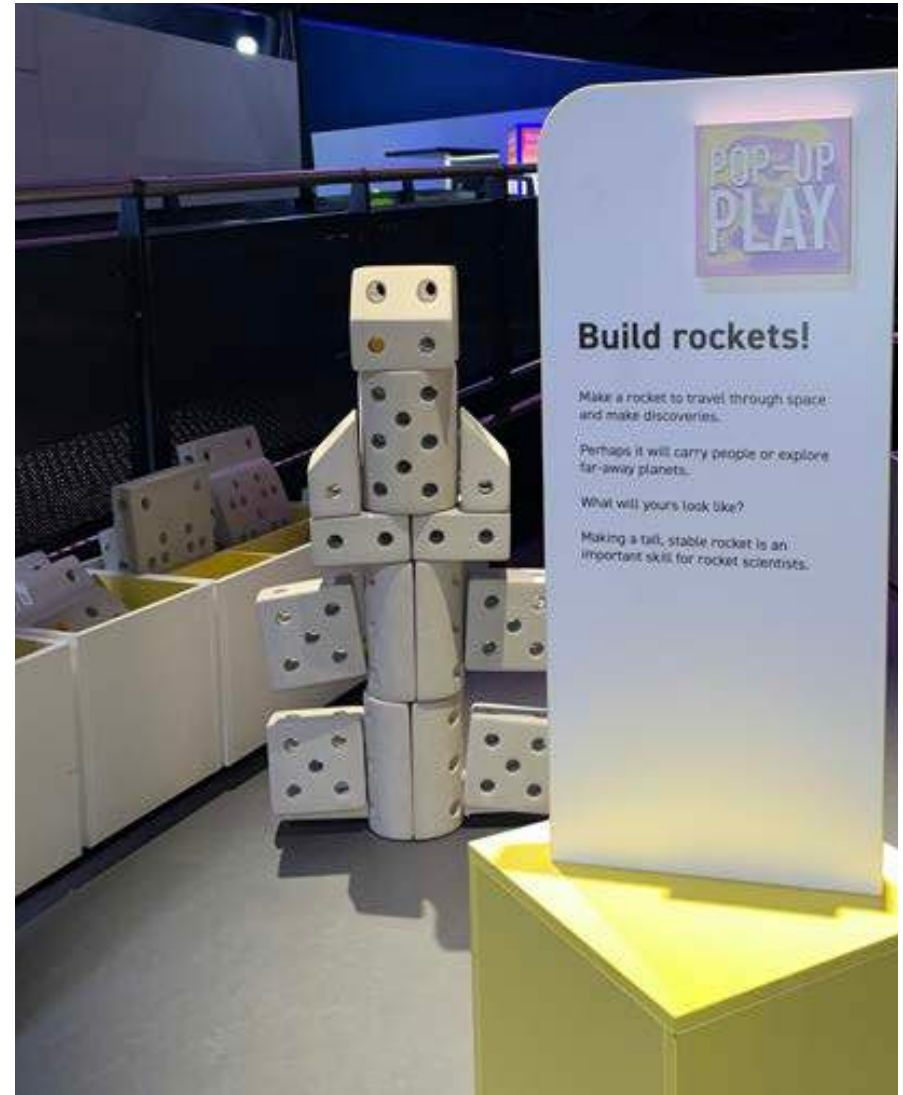




Near the Planetarium entrance there is a pop-up play area.

In this area, there are blocks that I can use to build into different rocket shapes. The blocks have a soft texture on the outside, and the area is dimly lit.

This activity is designed for under-7s but anyone can take part.



Wow Zone is a part of the science centre with lots of fun and interactive things to play with.



There are instructions around to explain how to use the exhibits. Some might move, make a loud noise or light up when I play with them.

There are exhibits I can play with on my own, and others that will require teamwork. I can work with my family or friends if I want to.

## Sensory Key



Lots of the exhibits in this area are noisy, such as 'visible vibrations' which has a low, but loud humming noise, and the 'lightning strike' which makes a buzzing noise. I may also find 'build a bridge' noisy when the blocks fall down.

The hydrogen power tower makes a loud bang as it launches a ball inside a tube. I will be able to hear this even if I'm not using it. Ear defenders are available from reception if I want to use them.



Some exhibits in this area involve bright lights, such as the 'lightning strike' tube, the 'coloured shadows' and the 'playing with light'.



The 'heat camera' shows what I look like in infrared on a screen, using colour combination of blue, yellow, green and red. It might feel a bit strange to look at.



There are also some metal symbols I can touch to see how this effects the infrared display. These will feel cold as I press my hand on them.

Some of the things I can look out for in Wow Zone include:



'The Big Machine' has lots of mechanisms which I can push, pull, twist and turn to move plastic grain-like pellets around.



There are two 'pulley chairs' which I can sit in and pull myself up using the rope. I can go up quite high, but there is a seatbelt I need to wear to keep me from falling out. When I let go of the rope, I'll come down slowly.



Some of the things I can look out for in Wow Zone include:



The 'lightning strike' exhibit involves electricity in a tube with a model statue inside. The tube is filled with a mixture of gases, which makes the electricity visible when there's a high voltage. I can touch the tube to change the lightning's direction, and I might feel a small shock or tingling sensation.



The 'air cannon' exhibit involves launching a tennis ball using the force of air. One end of the tube is wide and contains a bowling ball. The tube then narrows at the other end, containing a tennis ball. When I drop the bowling ball, I can fire the tennis ball out the top of the tube.



The 'heat camera' shows what visitors would look like in infrared on a screen, using a colour combination of blue, yellow, green and red. It might feel a bit strange to look at. There are also some metal symbols that can be touched to see how this effects the infrared display. These will feel cold when touched.

Lightbox is a new part of the science centre with lots of fun and interactive things to play with.



There are instructions around to explain how to use the exhibits. Some might move, make a loud noise or light up when I play with them.

There are exhibits I can play with on my own or I can play with my family or friends if I want to.

## Sensory Key



Lots of the exhibits in this area are noisy, such as 'String Wave' which has a loud whipping noise, 'The Tornado' which makes a whooshing noise and 'The Chladni Plate' which has a low, but loud humming noise. I may also hear other visitors playing around me in this area.

Ear defenders are available from reception if I want to use them.



Some exhibits in this area involve bright lights, such as the 'String Wave', 'Coloured Shadows' and 'Water Play'.

As Lightbox is very new, we may have missed some important sensory information. If there is something we should include in this visual story, please let us know by emailing [info@life.org.uk](mailto:info@life.org.uk).

Some of the things I can look out for in Lightbox include:



I can move a giant 'string' of light to make glorious, glowing shapes with 'String Wave'.



I can play with digital water in a huge projection just by moving my body with 'Water Play'.

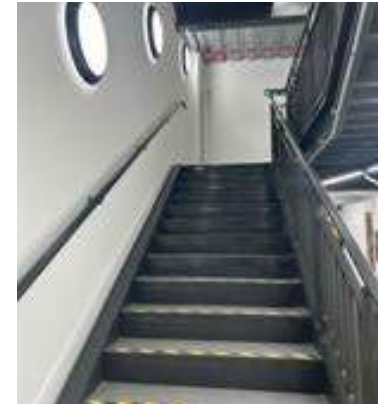


I can step inside a six-metre-high swirling tornado tower, and create my own twister with 'The Tornado'.



There are three ways I can get to the upper floor of the centre.

I can go up a stairwell next to the Making Studios.



I can go up in the lift, which is by Life Café.

There is also a ramp that circles the whole centre, so that visitors with push chairs and wheelchairs can get to and from the upper level, easily.



I can get onto this ramp from Brain Zone on the ground floor.

## Sensory Key



The stairwell next to the Making Studios is brightly lit.

Hello World takes up half of the upper floor in the science centre. Here I can look at Gaia from a different angle, and draw and write about what I see. There is also a Book Nook where I can read about the world and nature.

If I want to, I can display my thoughts and artwork on the gallery wall.



## Sensory Key



I might overhear noise from visitors in Play Zone and a 'white noise' sound from the Gaia exhibition downstairs.

There is a staff door near this area. When it opens it makes a beeping noise which I might hear.

Ear defenders are available from reception.

There is also a wall where I can learn about animals and rivers in the North East.



## Sensory Key



I might overhear noise from visitors in Play Zone and a 'white noise' sound from the Gaia exhibition downstairs.

If it is hot inside the centre, I might hear a buzzing noise from the fan.

Ear defenders are available from reception.

Play Zone is on the other half of the upper floor. Play Zone is specially for under-7s and includes a boat, market stalls and other fun things to play with.

During busy times, this area might get very noisy.



## Sensory Key



During busy times, this area might get very noisy.

If it is hot inside the centre, I might overhear a buzzing noise from the fan.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



If I want to buy food to eat in, I can visit Times Square Café.

Times Square Café is open every day to the public as well as science centre visitors.

There are friendly staff (in black polo tops and aprons) around to help me if I need anything.

If I have brought my own packed lunch, I can eat this in the packed lunch area downstairs. A member of staff can show me where this is.



### Sensory Key



I might smell strong food and drink smells in the café as the staff prepare orders for other people.



The blender can make a loud noise.

Ear defenders are available from reception.

Sometimes, it might be necessary to evacuate the science centre. If this is the case, I will hear an alarm sound and a voice over a loudspeaker politely asking me to exit the building.

If I'm unsure about how to exit the building, I can ask a member of staff.

I should then go to the Assembly Point, which is under the gantry with the Life logo on in Times Square.



# Enjoy your visit!



This Visual Story uses 'Atkinson Hyperlegible' typeface, designed by Applied Design Works and the Braille Institute to be accessible to the visually impaired community.