

_____ '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.

There will be hand sanitiser near the entrance, which I can use if I want to.



Sensory Key



The hand sanitiser can be quite sticky on my hands as I rub it in.



The sanitiser will have a strong smell.

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

They are:

- Creativity Zone and Making Studios
- Brain Zone
- Science Theatre
- Experiment Zone
- Space Zone
- Wow Zone
- 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.



Creativity Zone is straight forward when I walk through the turnstiles at reception.

Here I can try out a range of hands-on, interactive exhibits. This includes a spinning table and photo booth.

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



Inside the Creativity Zone, there are a group of exhibits for me to play with. Some of these can be quite loud, particularly the jukebox exhibition (pictured left).

Ear defenders are available from reception.



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

Near to Creativity Zone, 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 is next to Creativity Zone. Here I can make an egg-mobile and put it through its paces on the Easter Egg Hill!

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

Sensory Key



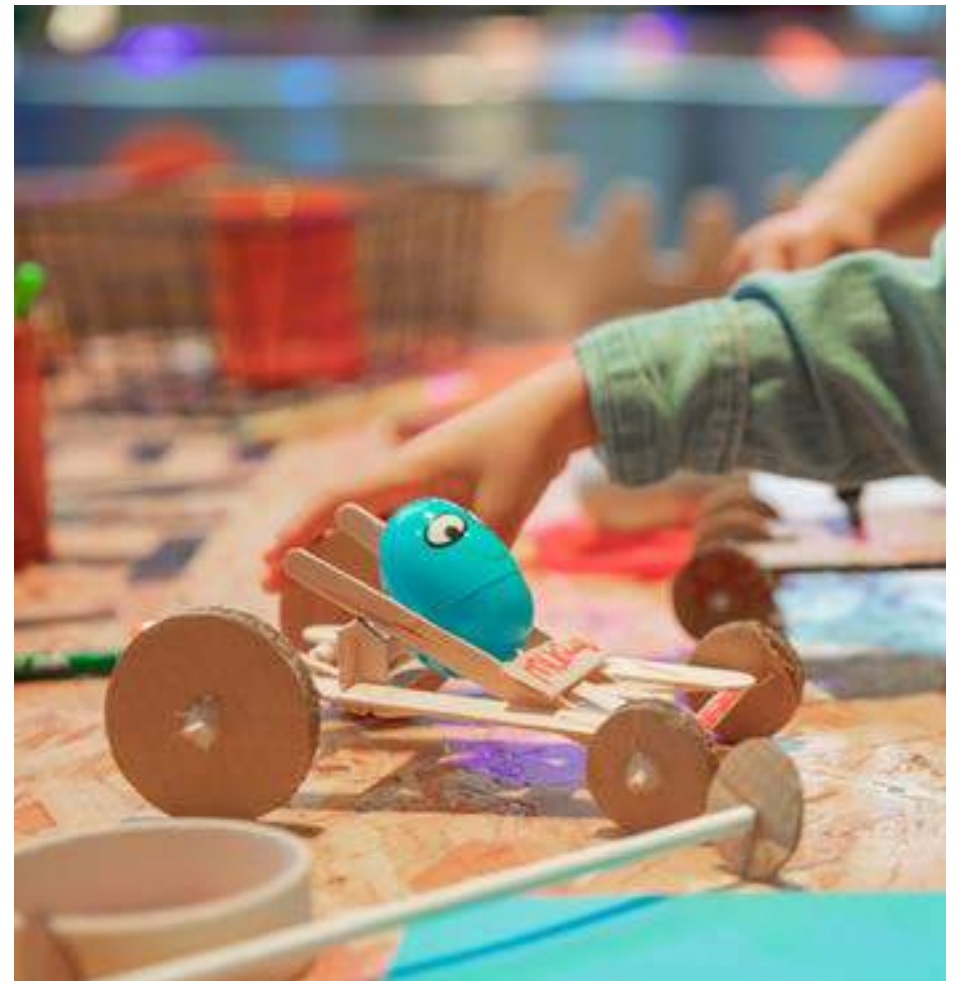
The hot glue gun won't feel sticky, if you touch it before the glue has dried it could burn you. The glue stick could make your fingers feel sticky.



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

I may also hear other visitors nearby in Creativity Zone.

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 can press it.

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 *True Colours*.

It is about how we see colours and how they change under different light.



In *True Colours*, The wall behind the stage is filled with colourful hexagons. 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.

Ear defenders are available from reception.



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



We are testing the demonstrations to see if they still work for colourblind visitors. Blind and some partially sighted visitors will not get the full experience.

Near to 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.



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.



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 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.



There are lots of experiments I can have a go at.

Egg rolling involves exploring what factors might affect the behaviour of eggs when rolling down a bank.

Unfolding flowers involves placing folded paper flowers into water to find a link between the paper weight and speed of opening.

I can also practice using pipettes to make colourful patterns, and look at things like nail clippings, a key and a contact lens through microscopes in this area.

Sensory Key



The different materials in which the eggs are wrapped might make different noises such as crinkling.

I might overhear other visitors getting excited about their own experiments.



Outside the Experiment Zone, there is a pop-up play area where I can measure how tall, big or long things are.

There are scales for weighing and jars I can fill with rubber granules.

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

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

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

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 **Cloudy with a Chance of Diamonds**.



Sensory Key



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

The planetarium is an enclosed dark area where I can watch three shows:

Constellation Close Up is aimed at over-7s but anyone can watch. It will be on for about 20 minutes.

Little Bear is suitable for under-7s but anyone can watch. It will be on for about 10 minutes.

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.

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 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.



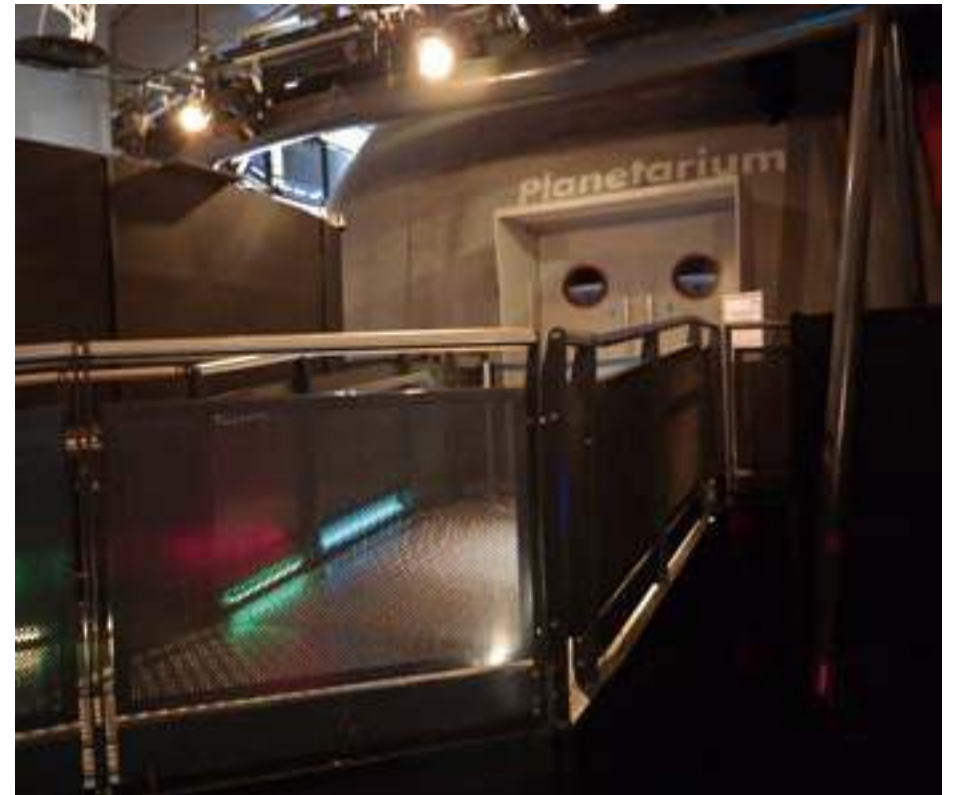
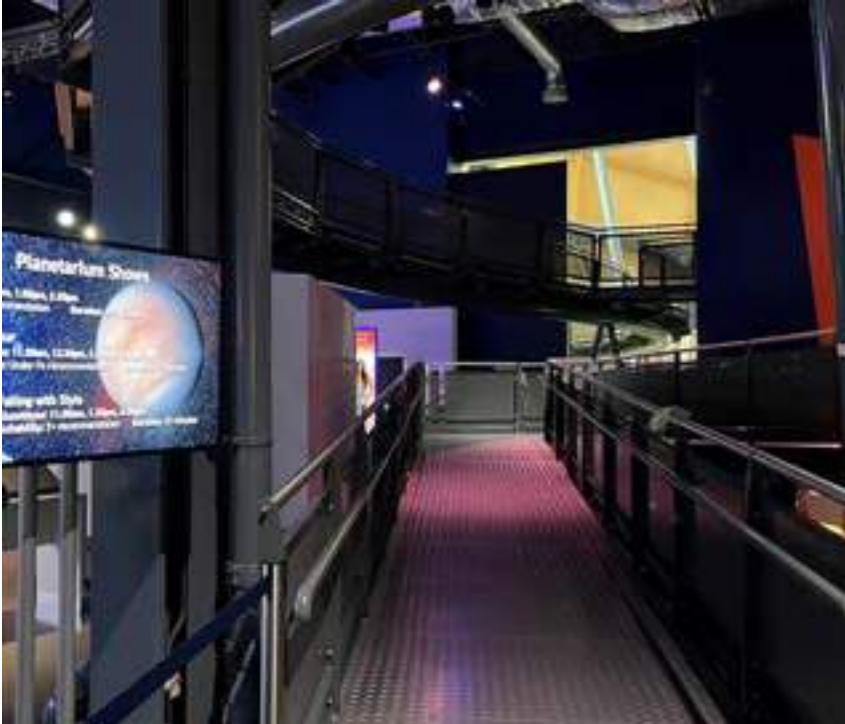
Planetarium shows feature voiceovers and sometimes music which can be loud.

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.

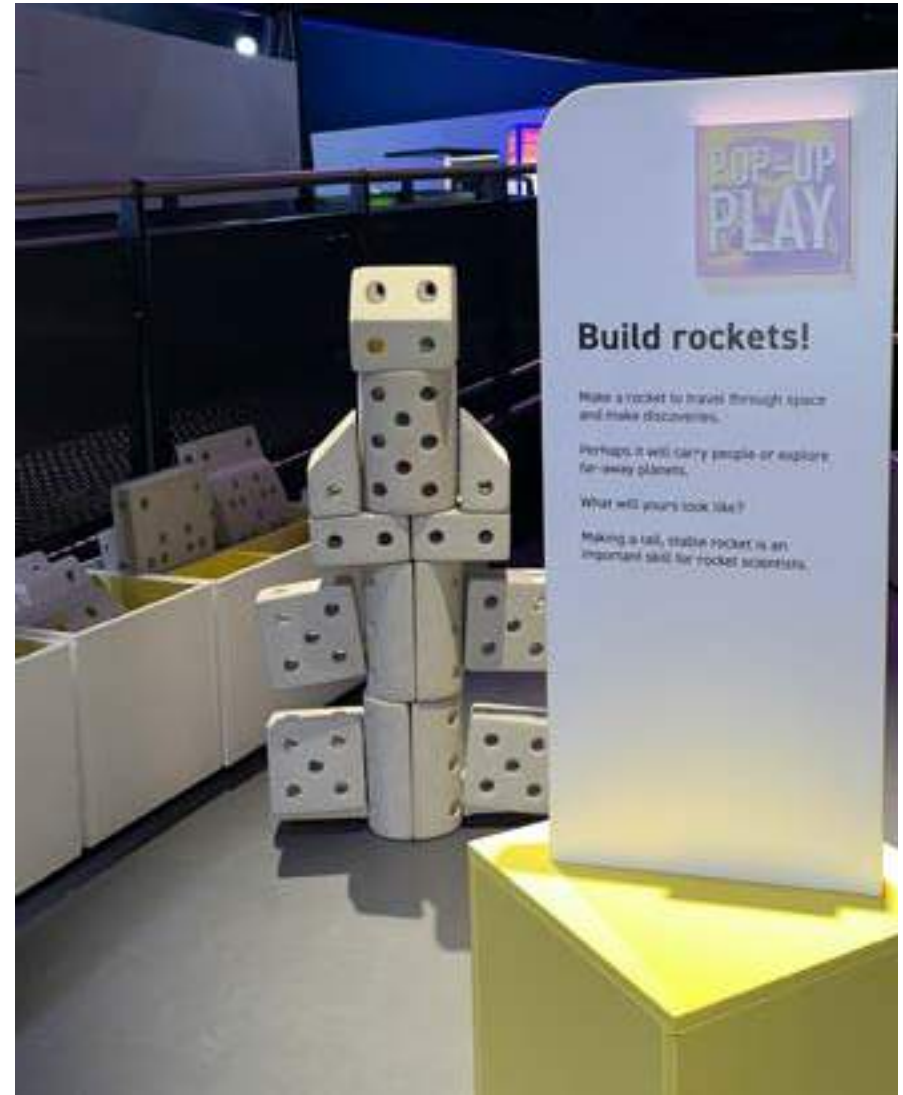
A friendly member of the Life Team will be at the door if I need any help.



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.



There is another pop-up play area on the other side of the planetarium entrance.

In this area there are different things I can use to make paths to roll balls, like planks and gutters. There is colourful lighting in this area.

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



Sensory Key



The balls rolling on wood in this area can be an overstimulating sound.

I may be able to hear sounds from the Sphere show, nearby in Space Zone. This sounds like someone talking.

Ear defenders are available if I want to use them.

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 hand dryer, alarm and dimmer switch on the 'circuits workbench'. 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 'light island'.



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.

As Wow Zone is 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

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.



There are six stations at 'circuit workbench' I can play with to make different things happen, such as turning on a hair dryer, burglar alarm or a light bulb. The dimmer switch station involves metal scratching on metal - which might not sound very nice.

Next to Wow Zone, I may notice that the lift is no longer there. Our new Lift is currently under-construction, and to close off this area, there are some barriers in place.

The Life team are building a brand new lift, so I might overhear banging or drilling noises as they work.



Sensory Key



Building work might be noisy.

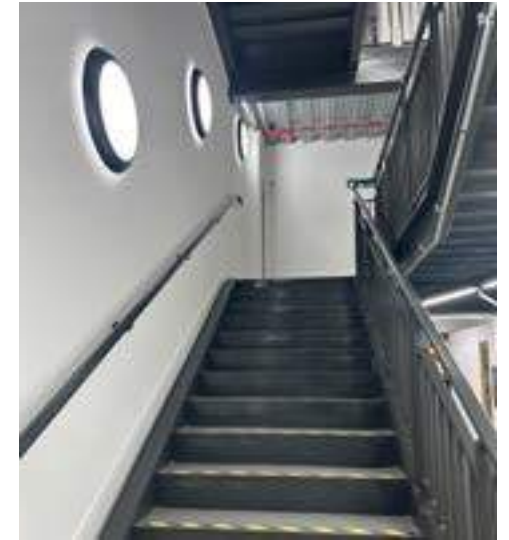
Ear defenders are available from reception.

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

I can go up a new stairwell next to The Making Studios.

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.



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.

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 board where I can place stickers on the earth and write a note on a leaf to stick on a tree.



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 especially 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.