# Mobile prison visits West Yorkshire school to teach children about crime consequences



Students at an elementary school in West Yorkshire were recently introduced to a unique educational experience when a mobile prison, designed to simulate life behind bars, arrived at Crigglestone St. James Academy. Former police officer Mick Amos, who spearheaded the initiative, welcomed the students dressed in inmate attire, immersing them in a lesson about the stark consequences of crime. “You are now gonna become prisoners,” he told them, setting the scene for an interactive experience that included being scanned, photographed, and fingerprinted.

The prison cells, constructed with materials salvaged from local jails—such as stainless-steel toilets—aim to create a realistic and thought-provoking environment. This innovative approach is intended to instil an understanding of personal responsibility among young students. For instance, sixth grader Ava expressed her discomfort at being locked in a cell, describing it as "disgusting" and noting the feelings of claustrophobia and anxiety that overtook her. “It was really sad to see all the cards and pictures on the walls and to think about not being able to see your friends and family,” she stated, reflecting the emotional weight of the experience.

The responses from the students highlight the programme’s effectiveness. One child remarked, “It's made me think I don't want to do anything wrong to ruin my life — and I don’t want to go in there.” Such reflections mirror the initiative's objective: to foster open discussions about critical subjects, including drugs, alcohol, and violence. Amos underscores that this endeavour is not merely a scare tactic but a genuine effort to inform and prepare young people for the realities of their choices, particularly in a legal system that allows for arrests from the age of ten.

The mobile prison is part of a broader educational trend in the U.K., where initiatives such as the 'Education Behind Bars' programme are gaining traction. This programme operates in various decommissioned prisons nationwide, providing immersive educational experiences tailored to the national curriculum. It includes guided tours, educational activities, and opportunities for self-guided discovery, inviting students to explore the history and realities of incarceration while gaining critical insights into their own lives and decisions.

Not only does this initiative serve schools, but it also extends to youth clubs and sports organisations, emphasising the importance of reaching young people in various community settings. The funding for this mobile project is ingeniously sourced from cash seized from criminal activities, turning ill-gotten gains into educational opportunities that might steer young individuals away from a life of crime.

As educational institutions increasingly recognise the value of experiential learning, programmes like these could play a pivotal role in shaping the choices and perspectives of future generations. By exposing students to the stark realities of life behind bars, educators hope to empower them to make informed decisions that contribute positively to their futures. Whether through a mobile unit or a visit to a decommissioned facility, the goal remains the same: fostering awareness and understanding about the consequences of crime in engaging and impactful ways.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.yahoo.com/news/prison-wheels-visits-u-k-175718025.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.yahoo.com/news/prison-wheels-visits-u-k-175718025.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.yahoo.com/news/prison-wheels-visits-u-k-175718025.html), [[2]](https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/education-behind-bars/), [[3]](https://www.ukschooltrips.co.uk/news/shrewsbury-and-shepton-mallet-prisons-education-behind-bars-a-national-educational-programme/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/education/primary/), [[7]](https://www.ukschooltrips.co.uk/shrewsbury-prison-education-behind-bars/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.yahoo.com/news/prison-wheels-visits-u-k-175718025.html), [[4]](https://www.shrewsburyprison.com/education-behind-bars/), [[5]](https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/educational-visits/education-behind-bars/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/prison-wheels-visits-u-k-175718025.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/education-behind-bars/> - Shepton Mallet Prison offers the 'Education Behind Bars' programme, an immersive educational experience designed to support learning through thought-provoking exercises and activities. Aligned with the national curriculum, the programme provides education packs for students and supportive materials for teachers, ensuring that school visits are educational and extend beyond traditional methods. The programme is delivered nationally across decommissioned prisons, offering students and teachers access to environments not often experienced. It is available to schools, colleges, universities, and other groups, including home educators and sports groups, making it inclusive for all.
3. <https://www.ukschooltrips.co.uk/news/shrewsbury-and-shepton-mallet-prisons-education-behind-bars-a-national-educational-programme/> - The 'Education Behind Bars' programme, created by specialists in education and history, is aligned with the national curriculum and designed to support learning through thought-provoking exercises and activities. The programme provides education packs for each student and supportive learning materials for teachers, ensuring school visits are truly educational and reach beyond the traditional. It is being delivered nationally across decommissioned prisons, providing students and teachers accessibility into a world which is not often experienced. The programme is offered to all schools, colleges, and universities and can also be delivered to SEN & PRU establishments, with adaptations designed to support each student's individual needs.
4. <https://www.shrewsburyprison.com/education-behind-bars/> - Shrewsbury Prison offers the 'Education Behind Bars' programme, which includes a guided tour, an educational activity, and self-guided discovery. The programme is designed in line with the national curriculum and is delivered to the key stage of the students. The tour is led by experienced guides who take students on a journey behind bars, touring all areas of the prison and including an in-cell experience. The educational activity is specifically designed in line with the national curriculum and delivered to the key stage of the students. The self-guided discovery allows students to explore the prison, completing activity tasks designed to get them thinking and experiencing the realities of life behind bars from the Georgian era to modern day.
5. <https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/educational-visits/education-behind-bars/> - Shepton Mallet Prison's 'Education Behind Bars' programme is a national educational initiative for schools, colleges, and universities. Created by a team of specialists in education and history, the programme is aligned with the national curriculum and designed to support learning through thought-provoking exercises and activities. It provides education packs for each student and supportive learning materials for teachers, ensuring school visits are truly educational and reach beyond the traditional. The programme is delivered nationally across decommissioned prisons, providing students and teachers accessibility into a world which is not often experienced.
6. <https://www.sheptonmalletprison.com/education/primary/> - Shepton Mallet Prison offers primary school trips through its 'Education Behind Bars' programme. The programme includes a guided tour, an educational activity, and self-guided discovery, all designed to support learning outcomes via the curriculum. Each student receives an education pack containing an educational activity, activity booklet, site map, and certificate of completion. The guided tour is run by a guide with encyclopaedic knowledge of the prison’s history, from when it opened to the day it closed. The educational activity is specifically designed in line with the national curriculum and delivered to the key stage of the students.
7. <https://www.ukschooltrips.co.uk/shrewsbury-prison-education-behind-bars/> - Shrewsbury Prison provides an interactive learning experience through its 'Education Behind Bars' programme. The programme includes a guided tour, an educational activity, and self-guided discovery, all designed to support learning outcomes via the curriculum. The guided tour is led by experienced guides who take students on a journey behind bars, touring all areas of the prison and including an in-cell experience. The educational activity is specifically designed in line with the national curriculum and delivered to the key stage of the students. The self-guided discovery allows students to explore the prison, completing activity tasks designed to get them thinking and experiencing the realities of life behind bars from the Georgian era to modern day.