

HIGHFIELD OVAL

Children's Guide



Follow the trail to discover the story of the first children
of Highfield Oval.

Instructions



As you read the story of Highfield Oval,
follow the trail on pages 8 and 9.

You will find five posts in the spots that
are numbered on the map. Each time you
find a post, take a rubbing of the metal
picture on its top.

Use wax crayons and the paper sheet
provided.

When you have finished cut out and stick
your pictures into the spaces provided in
this book.

Good Luck!

DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION by
LIVI GOSLING.CO.UK

A Kind Man Who Wanted To Help

Thomas Bowman Stephenson was a Methodist Minister who lived in London over 150 years ago. He was sad to see many children living on the city's streets. The children slept outside, even on the cold winter nights. Their clothes were ragged and they had no one to care for them. Thomas Bowman Stephenson wanted to help. He set up a home for children, which grew and grew and became the National Children's Home.



Over time the home ran out of room and still more
children needed help.

Moving Out Of The City

In 1913 the children were moved from London to a new home in the countryside built especially for them - Highfield Oval.



How do you think the children felt as they arrived at their new home?

Circle the words below.



A New Home In The Country

Over 200 children at a time lived at the Oval. They lived together in small 'family' groups and were looked after by carers called Sisters. The boys' houses were on one side and girls' houses on the other. The children had their own school, bakery, chapel and a big field to play in. There was even a little hospital.



Can you find the children's medicine, outside the old hospital?

CUT & STICK
YOUR RUBBING
HERE

1.



Busy Days At Highfield Oval

The children played cricket and tennis. However, they also had to help out in the home. A big bell woke them up at 6.30 in the morning and there were lots of jobs to do before school!

To Do List

Date.../.../...

Here is a list of some of the children's chores.

How do you help out at home?

Tick the boxes that apply to you!

- Changing the bed sheets..... ☐
- Polishing the floors..... ☐
- Sweeping up..... ☐
- Washing the dishes..... ☐
- Cleaning the bathroom..... ☐
- Feeding the animals..... ☐
- Helping in the garden..... ☐

Our Daily Bread

Feeding all the children and staff was busy work too - every day the baker baked 100 loaves of bread!



Can you find the loaf of bread near where the old bakery use to be?

CUT & STICK
YOUR RUBBING
HERE

2.

MAP





A New Home In The Country

Can you spot the building with a zigzag roof?

Once this building was a printing school. The children learnt to print and make books. In the workshops they were also taught to make shoes, furniture and clothes.



Can you find something that the children might have made?

CUT & STICK
YOUR RUBBING
HERE

3.

Growing Food

Over 200 children eat a lot! Luckily all kinds of food was grown at Highfield Oval.

The children grew vegetables in the gardens behind the houses and ate apples from the orchard. The children's home also owned a farm which provided milk, eggs, chicken, potatoes and other vegetables.



Can you find something that the children ate that still grows at the oval today?

CUT & STICK
YOUR RUBBING
HERE

4.



Into The Wood

Part of Highfield Oval is ancient woodland. In the spring the woods are full of bluebells.



Can you find a bluebell?

CUT & STICK
YOUR RUBBING
HERE

5.

Wonderful Woodland Wildlife

Tick the things you see.



Did You Know?

The children's home's cemetery can be found in a peaceful corner of the wood.



Highfield Oval Today

The children's home closed over 30 years ago. However, children and families are still at the heart of life at the Oval today. The Oval is now home to Youth with a Mission (YWAM) Harpenden, a Christian charity. Here are some of the projects that YWAM runs from the Oval.

1. The Orphans Know More project works in Uganda to help children whose parents have died of AIDS to find new homes with local families. YWAM helps the foster families plant fruit trees so they can earn an income.
2. YWAM's medical ships provide health care in poor regions. YWAM's ship *The Next Wave* is supporting refugees in Greece.
3. YWAM has helped set up the new Harpenden Hopper Community bus so that local people who don't have a car can get around
4. Thousands of people have been trained at Highfield Oval by YWAM. They have gained skills to help people in need all around the world.



THANK YOU

We couldn't have done it without you



Heritage Lottery Fund
Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Action for Children (formerly NCH)
Harpenden and District
Local History Society
St Albans Museum
Watford Museum
Highfield Heritage Project
Livi Gosling Illustration
Highfield Oval Heritage Project Volunteers