

## Special Projects

Apart from day to day work with schools CRL has also been engaged in a number of special projects, such as My Mill Hill and Operation Stickleback. These have involved working with schools, youth clubs, scout groups and cycling organisations thus broadening the scope and reach of CRL's educational work. For further details of the many special projects undertaken by CRL go to <https://downtheline.org.uk/projects/>

**Mill Hill** near Blackburn had fallen into decline and suffered from repeated vandalism and trespass resulting in a growing reluctance from the local residents to use the station. Blackburn with Darwen Council working in partnership with Northern Rail secured funding to install CCTV at the station. BwD then asked CRL to develop a community based project which became known as My Mill Hill. Amongst the many organisations that got involved were two primary schools who produced artwork highlighting the dangers of trespass on the railway. The artwork was made into a banner, see below, which was displayed on the fence facing the island platform.



Getting the safety message across in a memorable way!

**Operation Stickleback** involved the pupils at Padiham Green Primary School in imagining a journey made by a stickleback from Rose Grove to Manchester via the newly restored Todmorden Curve. The story was made into a book which was launched at Burnley Manchester Road station. Rose Grove was well known in local railway circles for taking water from the nearby Leeds - Liverpool Canal and often sticklebacks were found in the water tanks when the engines went in for maintenance!



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### Want to know more?

Go to: [www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/school-engagement](http://www.communityraillancashire.co.uk/school-engagement)

or: [www.downtheline.org.uk](http://www.downtheline.org.uk)



# Educating the 'PASSENGERS OF THE FUTURE'



One of the outcomes is that school parties are using the train again for local and longer distance trips



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# Educating the 'PASSENGERS OF THE FUTURE'

In 2004 the Strategic Rail Authority published the groundbreaking 'Community Rail Development Strategy' which has been the blue print for many Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) ever since.

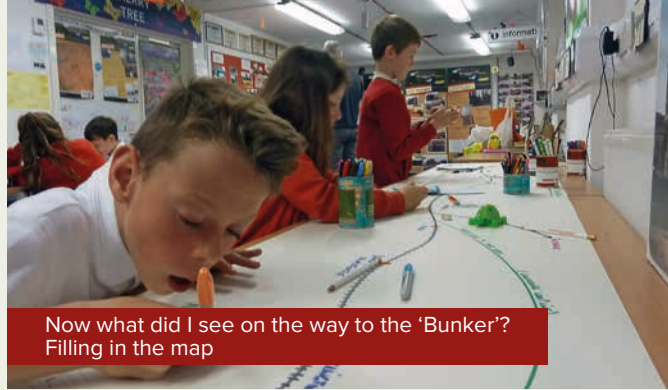
A key aim of the strategy has been to make the railway more outward facing and placed considerable emphasis on CRPs engaging with the local community as a means of increasing awareness and use of local lines. It is, therefore, not too surprising that many CRPs see engaging with young people as one of the key ways to meet this objective as they are the 'Passengers of the Future'.

Community Rail Lancashire (CRL) has made it a core activity to work with schools using its base at Accrington Railway Station. For CRL a key focus has been to work with primary children at key stage 2 in the National Curriculum. To be successful the package has to work for the school, which means meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum, whilst at the same time delivering CRL's objectives. So to ensure that it is a win win it is important to visit the school, talk to the Head and staff who will be involved and develop an educational package that works for them.

It is also important to remember that for many children (and teaching staff!) this may well be the first time they have travelled by train. So the experience needs to be memorable! Looking out of the window can be fun and also made into an activity that can be reinforced later at Accrington.



'I-spy' out of the window!



Now what did I see on the way to the 'Bunker'?  
Filling in the map

## So why work with schools?

As we know education is a life long process. Yet things learnt at an early age can remain with us for the rest of our lives - just like knowing ones ABC or times tables. So, as we have seen, one of the key objectives of CRL is to introduce young people to the excitement and benefits of rail travel so they become the passengers of the future.

Although CRL tries to develop a bespoke package for a school there are nonetheless a number of core activities that it will include, for example:

- An escorted rail journey to show case the railway as an enjoyable and safe way to travel.
- Planning a journey and learning how to read a timetable - especially important for children and families that haven't used a train for many years.
- Learning how to buy a rail ticket.
- Learning where to catch the train.
- Learning how to behave at the station and on the train. Safety is a key theme and CRL works closely with the British Transport Police (BTP) who are based at Preston station.



BTP - an important part of the CRL team



Fully engaged and hard at work - dressing up is also part of the learning and is fun at the same time

## Passport to Safe Rail Travel

CRL has developed its special 'Passport to Safe Rail Travel' which was inspired by the work of two pupils from St Annes and St Josephs School in Accrington. This reinforces the key messages BUT importantly encourages the children to get their parents to try the train as they can travel free so long as they have a fare paying adult with them!



Jacob & Joseph who were the inspiration behind the Passport



Launching the Passport to Safe Rail Travel