



# SCHOOLS AT ARVON: TIME AND SPACE TO WRITE

At Arvon we believe anyone can be a writer. Since 1968 we have been running residential creative writing courses for schools, groups and individuals. Each year we organise over 40 weeks for schools and groups from across the UK (and beyond). Five days that can ignite a life-long love of creative writing.



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# WHAT IS AN ARVON WEEK?

A residential creative writing course, held at one of our three historic writing houses in rural locations in Yorkshire, Shropshire and Devon. A chance for your students to spend a week living together in a beautiful place, immersed in words.

The weeks are tutored by two published writers (from genres of your choice, and selected in consultation with you) plus a guest writer who visits midweek. All of our tutors are highly experienced and will be selected to suit the needs and interests of your students.

The five days consist of group workshops, individual tutorials, time and space for students to develop their own work, and evening readings.

Groups produce an anthology of their work by the end of the week and read their best work to each other on the final night; some even perform their own play or record radio shows.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

**Five days at Arvon can be life-changing. Students (and their teachers) have commented on:**

- Expanded imaginations
- Enhanced creativity
- Improved writing, literacy and language skills
- Engagement and enjoyment in learning and raised achievement
- Development of self-esteem, confidence, social skills and team working
- A new passion for writing
- An experience of independent living (including cooking and washing up)

*"The week was perfect, the friendships I made and the skills I learned will last forever and the memories I have made are some of the best I've ever had."*  
—Student

*"My writing has definitely improved, my confidence has increased. ... I loved it and I would love to return - life changing and so inspiring. Thank you so, so much!"*  
—Student

*"The Arvon experience has completely exceeded all my expectations – the pupils have come back brimming with confidence, talking about writing, enthusiastic about writing... it allowed them to think more freely, become more independent writers. All of these things I'd hoped for but I didn't think we could achieve."* —Teacher



## HOW DOES IT WORK?

You can bring up to 16 students – accompanied by two teachers who act in loco parentis (see details below) and who take part in all writing activities. Throughout the week the Arvon staff run the house but do not stay on site overnight.

The students, teachers and tutors live, write and eat together for the week - the house becomes your home. Students stay in single or twin rooms. You all help yourselves to breakfast from a well-stocked kitchen, our staff prepare lunch and evening meals are cooked by the students in teams (recipes and ingredients are provided and our staff will be on hand to get the team started).

We can adapt menus and ingredients for specific cultural needs or allergies.

Our houses are in remote, rural locations with no mobile signal, TV or internet reception. Although this feels alien to some students at first, it allows them to immerse themselves totally in the experience.

Some teachers choose to bring a group of Gifted and Talented students who need to be stretched, whilst others bring students who are struggling with writing and learning, in order to raise their aspirations.

You can decide whether you would like your group to explore prose, poetry, drama or a mixture. We have also run projects with bilingual and multilingual young people and harnessed students' passion for football to engage reluctant writers.

Our centres have facilities for disabled writers - please discuss your specific needs with our team in case one centre is better suited to your group than another.

All tutors and staff are DBS checked. Our centre staff are First Aid trained and we can provide Health & Safety information and Risk Assessments in advance of your visit.

## WHAT IS THE TIMETABLE?

### **Arrival:**

Between 4pm and 5pm on Monday

### **Departure:**

10am on Saturday (or Friday after lunch if you have a younger group.)

### **Tuesday – Friday**

**Morning:** Group writing workshops led by the tutors

**Afternoon:** Tutorials (each student sees each tutor for a detailed one-to-one feedback session) and free writing time.



### **Tuesday evening**

Tutor reading

### **Wednesday evening**

Guest reading

### **Thursday evening**

A free night; some groups arrange readings where students read published writing, or teachers may want to organise another activity.

### **Friday evening**

A celebration with students reading from work that they have produced during the course.

This outline schedule shows the form that these weeks usually take, and each individual course will be adapted for the needs of each group.

## WHAT DO THE TEACHERS DO?

Two teachers who know the young people accompany the group. They act in loco parentis and carry out all supervision of students. Teachers take part in the writing activities - this is one of the most rewarding elements of our schools work. We ask the teachers to ensure a set bedtime is kept to and to supervise the cooks each evening.

Please make sure you have permission from senior management and teachers in other subject areas and that they do not object to pupils' absence for the course.

**WHERE DO WE STAY?**



**Totleigh Barton**  
Devon

—

A 16th-century manor house in one of the most peaceful and idyllic parts of Devon. Totleigh Barton is the first ever Arvon centre. There is a beautiful and productive garden and orchard, and walks along the nearby River Torridge.



**Lumb Bank**  
The Ted Hughes Arvon Centre,  
West Yorkshire

—

An 18th-century mill-owner's house set in 20 acres of steep woodland. The house once belonged to Ted Hughes and has a breathtaking view to the valley below – a Pennine landscape of woods and rivers, weavers' cottages, packhorse trails and ruins of old mills.



**The Hurst**  
The John Osborne Arvon Centre,  
Shropshire

—

A newly renovated 19th-century manor house, set in 26 acres of woodland with a spring-fed lake. Formerly the home of playwright John Osborne, The Hurst is situated in the Shropshire Hills, a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?**

Please contact us for up-to-date costs. We set our fees as low as we can so that all can afford to attend. Arvon can in certain instances assist with funding thanks to the generosity of individuals, trusts and foundations.

*"My voice, both writing and otherwise, feels stronger. It doesn't feel like an institution, you build a home with the people here and really feel cared for, and care for others. I think Arvon courses should be compulsory - it makes you appreciate the things that you value in life: friends, space and your passion. I wanted to find enough space - and I did." – Student*

**HOW DO I BOOK?**

For more information, or to get a booking form, email: **learning@arvon.org** or call: **020 7324 2562**

We can provide you with Risk Assessments, Health and Safety information and template letters to send to parents, as well as posters to display in school to advertise the trip to students.

See **arvon.org/schoolsandgroups** for more information and images, videos and case studies.