

Things to do and notice in Eaton Park

We recommend you have a read through before you set out. Think about how to use these ideas to meet your child or children's needs and interests. Each one is marked on the map. You can go round in any order.

1. *Geometry and symmetry* What do you notice about the layout of the park? Are the paths straight or wiggly? What shape are the ponds? What about the bandstand? Look around you in all directions – how many rectangles and circles can you see?.
2. *The 'fake' bridge* Stand at the rotunda and look across to the model boat pavilion. There is a bridge between the lily pond and the boat pond, but the dark arches are only painted on. Why do you think this is?
3. *Tennis* How many tennis courts are there in Eaton Park?
4. *The gravel rectangle* Which game is played on this sports terrain? Where was it invented?
5. *Sports* Can you name ten sports that take place in Eaton Park?
6. *Fish* There are fish in both ponds. Can you see any today? Do you know why they are here?
7. *The rotunda windows* What is unusual about the windows in the outside walls of the rotunda (not including the café ones)? Why do you think they have been made this way?
8. *The pitch and kick trench* The trench starts half way to Bluebell Wood on the South Park Avenue side. Do you know why it is here? Clue – take a look at the bench! Now walk down the trench!*
9. *Cherry trees beside the railway station* Have you noticed that many of the cherry trees are a funny shape. The trunks look too fat for the branches growing above them? Do you know why?
10. *The bench near the model boat pavilion* Many of the park benches have writing on them. Who does this bench help us remember? Other benches tell us how much people have loved Eaton Park down the years. Which is your favourite bench message?

Answers and information

- 1 The park has lots of straight lines, rectangles, circles and lots of symmetry. Football pitches, ponds, tennis courts and ping pong tables are all rectangles, and pathways join up to make more rectangles. The rose garden and bandstand are circles.

Look south from the bandstand and you'll see the lily pond, fake bridge, boat pond and model boat pavilion. Notice how they all line up neatly and are symmetrical. Go to the rose garden to see more symmetry.

Aerial photos show the geometry and symmetry friendsofeatonpark.co.uk/history

- 2 Captain Sandys-Winsch, the man who designed Eaton Park, wanted a bridge for people to walk across and admire. Bridge building is difficult and expensive. This 'fake' bridge was easy and quite cheap to make. And if you don't look too closely, it looks real!
- 3 There are seven tennis courts. In the past there were over 40 grass tennis courts! Every time the grass was cut, the lines had to be marked out again. It was a lot of work and you couldn't play in winter – it was too muddy!
- 4 Petanque or boules. It was invented in France. Take a look at the nearby noticeboard for details of how to play.
- 5 Basketball, crazy golf, cricket, croquet, cycle speedway, football, footgolf, pitch and putt, table tennis, tennis, running, petanque, skateboarding, ultimate frisbee and walking. Eaton Park was designed as a sports park. There is something for everyone!
- 6 The carp in the lily pond were put there to help keep the pond water clear and because they look lovely. No one knows where the fish in the boat pond have come from! Perhaps people have released their goldfish there down the years.
- 7 From a distance the rotunda windows look like real windows but close up you can see that they are just painted on. The windows look good from a distance and these buildings would look a bit dull without them. Glass windows could easily be broken especially in a sports park where there are lots of ball games!
- 8 In the First World War, the lower part of the park was used to train soldiers. The area was known as "The Third Field" and is now the pitch and kick. The trench was dug so that soldiers could learn about 'trench warfare'. When they went to battle in France they would know how to dig and maintain a trench and how to live and shelter there.
- 9 These cherry trees were grown by 'grafting'. When they were young the stem of one kind of cherry tree was joined to the roots of a different kind. The idea is to make a healthy and successful tree. The top might have lovely blossom and the lower part might have great roots. Here the two types don't match well! The bottom has grown stronger and fatter than the top! They look a bit odd, but they are loved as they have the earliest cherry blossom in the park.
- 10 The bench helps us remember all the men who built Eaton Park in the 1920s. After the First World War there wasn't much work and some people were very poor. Building Eaton Park gave local men work to do and meant they could earn money to feed and house their families.

