



Dorchester Abbey

Dorchester Abbey - St Peter and St Paul



Schools' Project



Finding out about Dorchester Abbey

Welcome

**The Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul
Dorchester-on-Thames
Oxfordshire
UK**

Dorchester-on-Thames is a small, picturesque village set amidst water meadows where the river Thame joins the River Thames, just 8 miles south of Oxford. It has one of the largest churches in Oxfordshire, which stands on the site of a Saxon cathedral built by St Birinus in the seventh century. The Abbey is the parish church of the village and has been the site of worship for over 1300 years



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History

635

The first cathedral church of the West Saxons was built in Dorchester by St Birinus

1140

The Augustinian monks led by Alfred, their first Abbot, took over the Saxon cathedral and began to build the Norman Abbey.

The church was enlarged and a new shrine was made for St Birinus. It became an official place of pilgrimage

1530's

Henry VIII ordered the monastery and the shrine to be Destroyed

1554

The Abbey was bought by Richard Beawforest and given to the people of Dorchester as their Parish Church

Restoration of the Abbey was begun and still continues. You may find work going on in the Abbey today. Look at the notice board to see what is happening



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Inside the Church

Close your eyes and listen then sit quietly and look around you.
How do you feel?

I can see

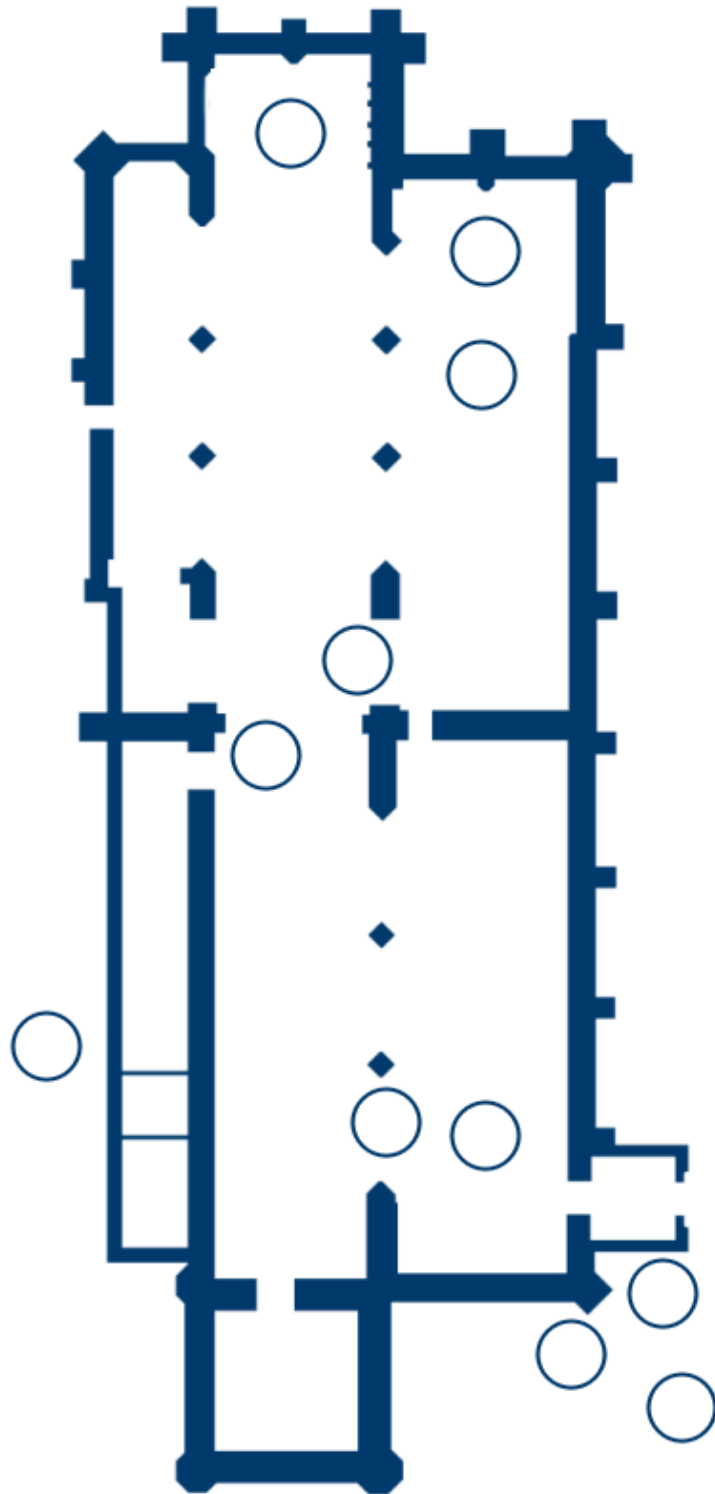
I can hear

I can smell

I can touch



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Looking at the Abbey

Find these things and mark them on your plan

- 1 Font
- 2 Pulpit
- 3 Monk's corbel
- 4 Shrine of St. Birinus
- 5 The cross-legged knight
- 6 Choir stalls
- 7 The High Altar
- 8 Sundial
- 9 Corbel of Edith Stedman
- 10 Preaching Cross

Find the newest building

Draw it on the plan



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Windows

Look at some of the windows

Find one with a picture

Draw it

Find one with a pattern

Draw it

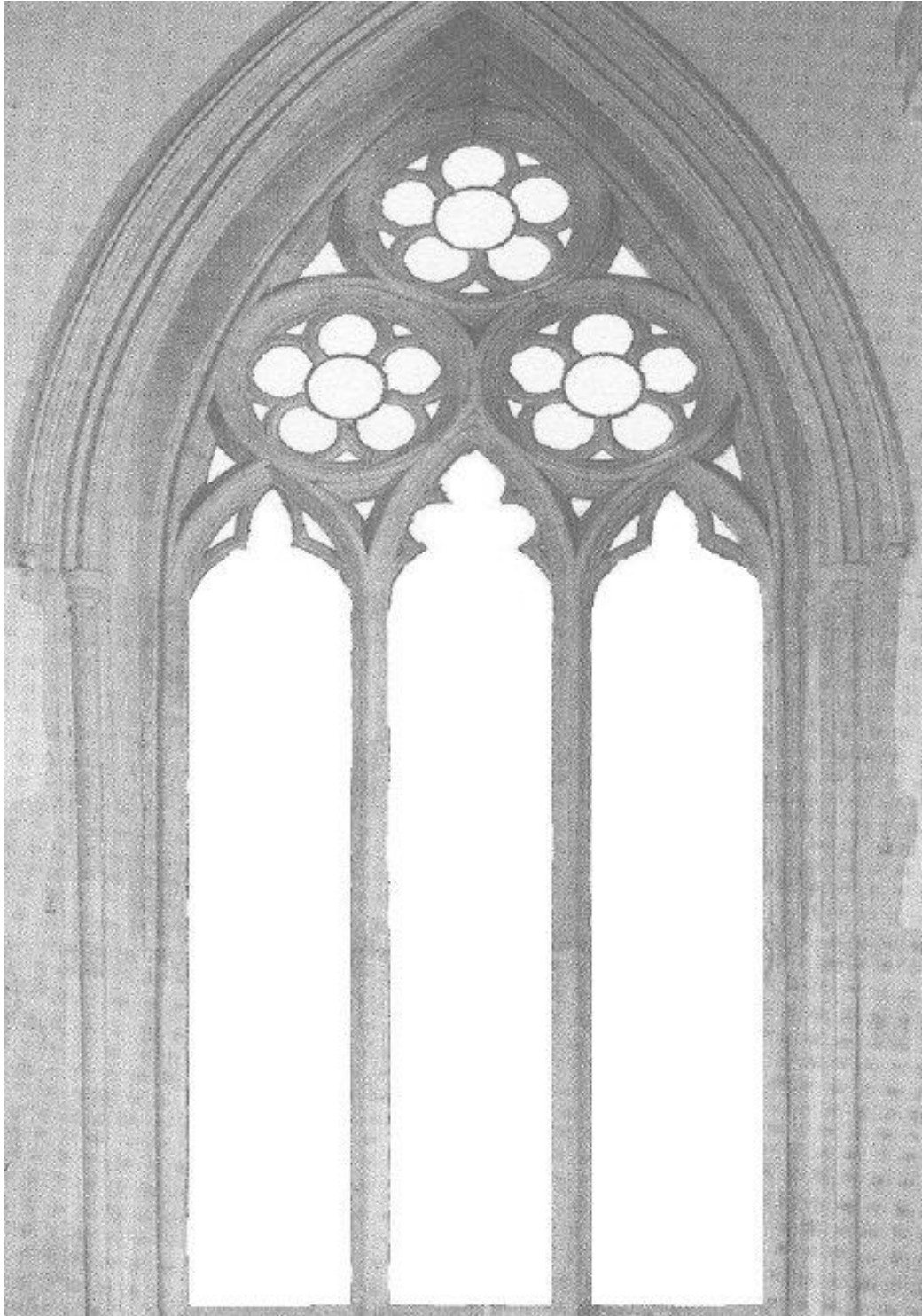
How many colours can you see in the window you like best

Design your own window. It can be a picture or a pattern.

Use the window shape on the next page to help you



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Kneelers

What are kneelers for?

Do you like the colours?

Choose a kneeler you like

Does it have a pattern?

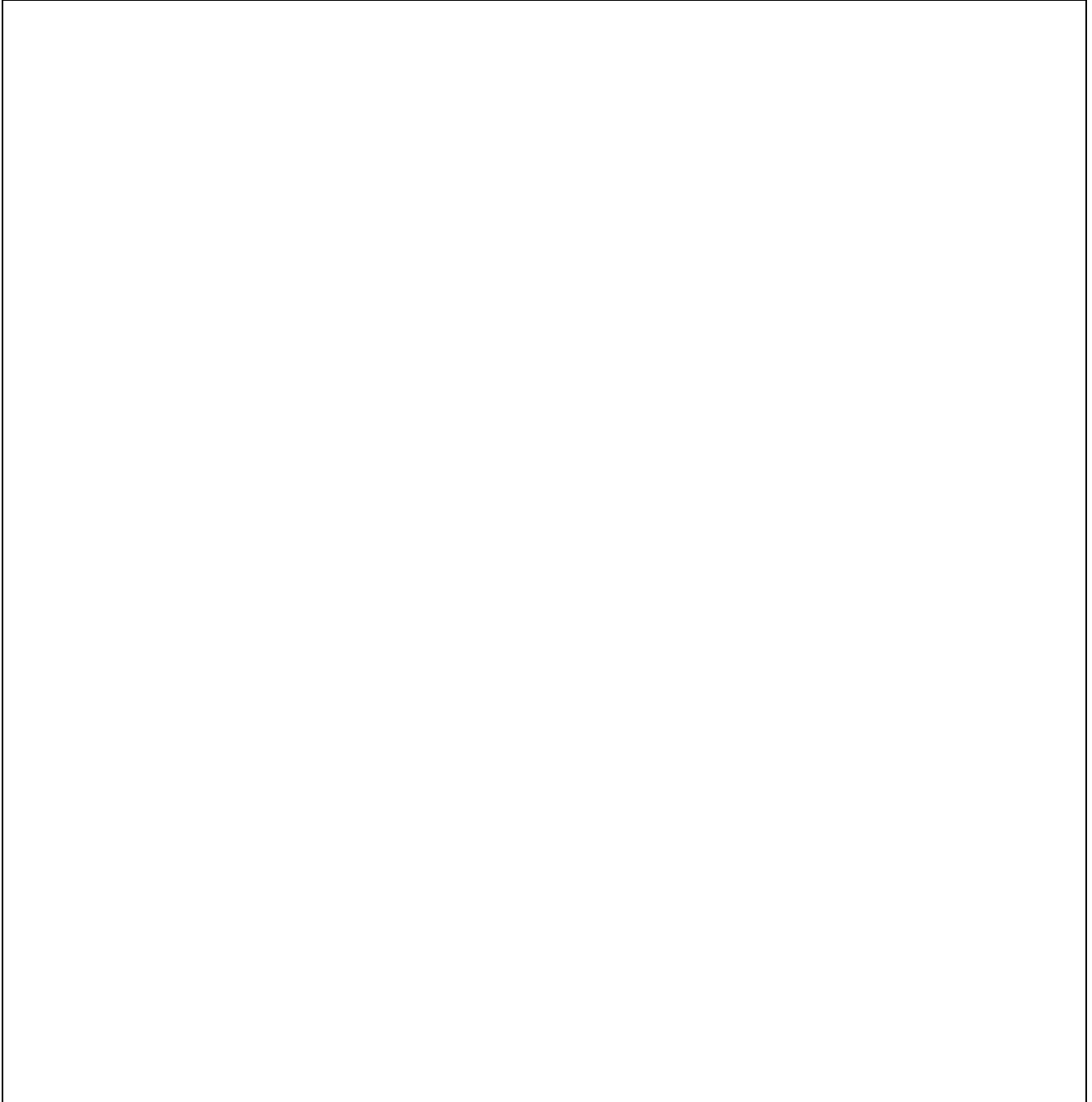
Does it have a special sign or symbol? What do you think this represents?

Draw the kneeler you like the best. (You could try different colours). You can use the next page



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Kneelers





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The Font

The font is made of lead. It is nearly 800 years old. The pictures show the Apostles. People stand round the font when somebody is baptised and welcome them to church.

Choose the best words to describe the font:

Big small dark colours plain pictures wood metal stone
high low

Use some of the words and write three sentences



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Draw the Font in the Space below

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing the font.



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People

Can you find these names? Write out the full name and copy some of the writing under the name

E Stedman

S Fletcher

F Dandridge

M Desvalpons

Where did you find these names?

(Words to help you: floor wall window ceiling inside outside high low)



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Explore Outside the Abbey

What is written on the Lych Gate?

Find the Museum. What is the date of the Guest House?

What is the date of the School?

In the Cloister Garden. Look for a memorial to the 7th Photo Reconnaissance Group.

What does it say?

Look at the new building on the side of the Abbey. It is built of green oak. Draw it on the back of this sheet.

Look for the face of Edith Stedman high up near the West Door.

Draw it on the back of this sheet.

Find the Preaching Cross. It is not complete; two pieces are in the Abbey, one on a high windowsill, the cross in a niche in the Nave. Can you draw the complete Cross on the back of this sheet?

Can you tell the time using the sundial? You can only do this if the sun is shining.



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Memorials

Look at some of the ways in which people are remembered in this church.

Find a gravestone or memorial that you think is interesting.

Write down the names of the people.

When did they die?

How old were they when they died?

Draw one of the memorials, or take a rubbing of a gravestone inside the Abbey.



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People Today

Why do people come to this church?

What do you think happens here on a Sunday?

Look on the notice board to find information about what will be happening in the church during the week.

How do you know that children come to this church?

Can you find any names of people who come to this church?

What is the name of the Team Rector?

What do you think the Team Rector does?

What are the names of the Church Wardens?



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Birthdays

How old are you?

When is your Birthday?

Draw some things that are special on your Birthday.

In church, NATIVITY means the Birthday of Jesus.

Jesus was born in a stable.

There is a picture of baby Jesus in a manger, with Mary and Joseph, in the big East Window.

When you get back to school you could:

Make a birthday card.

Make a bar chart of your friends' Birthday months.

Write invitations to a Birthday party.