

RMS Microscope Activity Kits reach more than 200,000 children!

A major outreach and education milestone was recently passed, as the total number of primary school-aged children to have benefitted from the **RMS Microscope Activity Kits (MAKs)** - since the scheme was established 15 years ago - went beyond 200,000.





The MAKs were launched in April 2011 to combat the declining use of microscopes in UK primary schools, and to help expose more primary school children to the wonder of microscopy and science education. The idea was to create a user-friendly kit with all the essential equipment and instructions needed to inspire young minds, and to make this available for schools and other educational settings to loan for free.

The RMS Outreach committee, headed at the time by Professor Susan Anderson, designed the kits, providing resources not often found in Primary Schools, along with a number of pre-prepared activities. The activities come with the relevant equipment, worksheets for the children and notes for the teachers on how to set-up and run them.

Susan said: "Microscopes are a fun way to enter the world of science, providing many 'wow' moments. More than that, they enable children to truly investigate, discover and record their findings in an interactive way. Teachers have told us that young people engage more with science and try harder with the writing and maths elements of tasks when the microscopes are involved. MAKs have been as far as Guernsey and Skye and are also available for the home-schooled community. Beyond the UK MAKs are also based in Ireland and Malaysia for a wide variety of activities including with rural communities and with refugees. Our MAKs are maintained between journeys by our partners who employ people who need support beyond reasonable adjustments in the workplace. The MAKs are truly a force for good and I am enormously proud of the kits reaching this milestone number of children through our scheme, which has always remained free and accessible to all".

The microscopes included in the kits are RMS-approved, meaning they fulfil the criteria the Society feels is necessary for a microscope for use in a classroom.

Each kit typically includes:

- 8 microscopes with light source
- 1 digital camera
- 6 curriculum mapped activities
- Activity Worksheets
- Teachers' Notes Booklet
- CD of instruction videos

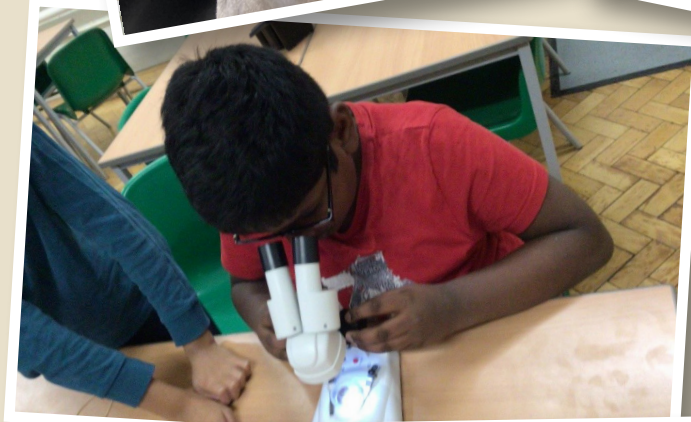
The RMS-approved microscopes are suitable for KS1 and KS2 children. They are robust and easy to use and allow pupils to obtain clear images with minimum setup or assistance. The digital camera is included so that the discoveries can be shared and described with the class via the interactive whiteboard. This is a feature of the boxes and has ensured that it is really straightforward to use.

In no time at all, children see new things by examining the materials provided; whether it is the intricate, criss-cross detail of a piece of woven cloth, or the snowy landscape of table-salt, the impact is immediate and the children are captivated. They are encouraged to describe what they see, and can then move on to making their own slides with samples that they can find and choose. All activities are mapped to curriculum targets.

The MAKs are delivered and collected by the RMS and are free to borrow for a whole term. There are currently 50 Kits that cover England, Wales and Scotland with an extra 6 in Ireland, as part of the Under the Microscope project. The Society also has a couple of smaller kits available for primary home school educators.

The success of the MAKs over the years – and the limited number available – has meant the kits are always in high demand, and they are currently booked out for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately this means we are not currently taking further application requests.





What equipment will you be using? How will you use it?	A microscope A film slide A light pointing to the slide A lens  Twisting knob to help it focus	What do you all know about finger?
Maybe we'd be able to see germs.		All fingerprints made by pre fingers into
We might see ridges in our fingers from our skin.	Black lines and white gaps between them.  Patterns of swirls in the lines.	Police use them to catch criminals.
Use observations to suggest answers	Lines that break off into different lines. None of our fingerprints looked them without the microscope, but very similar when under the lens.	Observe
What might you be able to see if we used your finger and not fingerprint?	What did you see?	



Feedback from schools:

Middleton Primary School, Milton, Buckinghamshire

"This is a fantastic resource, the microscopes are great. I will highly recommend this resource to other teachers/schools. Thank you very much for selecting our school to use this resource! The children loved the club!"

Lickey Hills Primary School, Worcestershire

"The children have all been very positive about the experience and described 'being like real scientists' as they used the kit. Our Year 6s enjoyed Activity 6, which was very different from their normal science lessons."

Balshaw Lane Primary School, Chorley, Lancashire

"This is an amazing resource with many of the children who used them saying 'wow' when they looked at everyday objects. Many children said it was the best lesson they had ever had!"

St Mary and St Thomas CE Primary School, Merseyside

"We really enjoyed the kit, which isn't the sort of equipment we would normally have access to. It increased enthusiasm and engagement in Science and the children were very positive about the microscopes."

Homer First School and Nursery, Windsor

"It was a great resource for all of the children. They were so excited and, during the lesson, they were totally engaged. The planning and the resources make it so easy for the teacher to deliver a good lesson."

Port Ellan, Isle of Islay

"As an island school, access to equipment and science experiences like this would not be possible without generous funding and seamless organisation, so thank you!"

Dykesmains Primary School, Saltcoats, North Ayrshire

"This is a fabulous resource that motivated and engaged our learners. We utilised them during parent workshops too and their feedback was great too."

St Stephen's CE Primary School, Bury

"The children loved using the microscopes as this isn't usually something that can be accessed in a primary school."

Geoffrey Field Junior School, Reading

"The children were very excited to use them. They were used in one of our special 7 week 'university' afternoons where children apply to participate in a course. Feedback on using the microscopes was that this one of the best ever courses as well as a lot of 'wows!'"

Malmesbury Primary School, London

"It was fantastic having this opportunity, as we would not normally have access to this equipment and it really had a powerful and memorable impact on those that used it."

Geoffrey Field Junior School, Reading

"As a school in a high area of deprivation this was an amazing resource, and the children were so excited to use them. We would love to borrow them again and embed them in our curriculum. They were used for the science curriculum, after school club and a 5-week science afternoon."

St Keverne Primary School, Helston

"Thank you for providing us the opportunity to engage with microscopes. The children have had a great time learning how to use them and carrying out experiments."

Eyke Primary School, Woodbridge, Suffolk

"Thank you, it's a great opportunity and a lovely resource."

Social Media Posts from schools:

Sam Maxwell @MrsSMaxwellHCPS · 12m
 Can't wait to get these microscopes/samples/activities out to classes from next week to support #PrimaryScience @HazelSchool. Completely free loan thanks to @RoyalMicroSoc. A few of our teachers had a chance to explore how to use them during our recent science subject surgery 🙌



Our Lady of Muswell Primary School @OurLadyMuswell
 We are so lucky to have a set of microscopes at school for the whole of the autumn term. Children will carry out a range of activities where they will be able to really study different materials and living things up close, to support their learning. @RoyalMicroSoc

Our Lady of Muswell Primary School @OurLadyMuswell · Oct 7
 Nursery have been very excited to be using microscopes in class. They have been looking closely at different materials. Take a look at the last photo to see some of the items through the microscope 📸
 @RoyalMicroSoc



St Stephen's CE Primary School, Bury.
 26 September at 17:26
 Science After School Club
 The children had a great, first session this afternoon. They gathered their own objects and brought them back to the classroom to observe and investigate. Thank you so much to [Royal Microscopical Society](#) for loaning our school a set of microscopes to use!



HenryWhipple @HenryWhipple1
 Year 1 have their very first experience with microscopes today. We have discussed what they are, why they are used and collected our own natural resources to look at closely. We then drew our discoveries
 @NST_forschools @RoyalMicroSoc



2:43 PM · Feb 4, 2026 · 5 Views

Find out more about the MAKs