Buckingham Palace chosen by children as the first Google virtual-reality school visit in the UK

Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, is the first UK landmark to be part of an innovative VR (virtual-reality) project with Google designed specially for schools. The Google Expeditions app allows teachers to take their students on a virtual field trip to the Palace from any classroom in the world, giving them a taste of what more than 60,000 of The Queen’s guests and over 500,000 visitors to the Summer Opening of the Palace see each year.

Google Expeditions draws on Google's strengths in VR and education technology to provide an immersive experience for students. Expeditions are collections of linked VR content and supporting materials that make them easy to integrate into classroom learning and are best experienced through a viewer, such as Google Cardboard.

The Buckingham Palace Expedition takes you on a tour of some of the Palace's State Rooms, simulating the experience of walking through the rooms and seeing the works of art from the Royal Collection that furnish them. Starting at the Grand Staircase, students learn about the history of the Palace as a royal residence, before discovering how the State Rooms are used today by The Queen for official events.

The Google Expeditions app includes more than 150 trips to extraordinary locations around the world, from the White House and Great Barrier Reef, to Mount Fuji and the Borneo rainforest. Buckingham Palace was selected in response to requests from thousands of schoolchildren, who chose it as the number-one destination that they wanted to visit.

Jemima Rellie, Director of Content and Audiences, Royal Collection Trust, said, 'For schoolchildren, Buckingham Palace is one of the most iconic, magical buildings in the world. We’re terrifically excited that, thanks to the VR potential of Google Expedition, children, their teachers and families can visit the Palace, wherever they live.'

The Buckingham Palace Expedition will be launched at BETT (British Educational Training and Technology show) on Wednesday, 20 January 2016.

To accompany the Expedition, a virtual tour of Buckingham Palace with audio is available to view on the British Monarchy YouTube channel. To experience the tour in VR (virtual-reality) or 360 format, view through the YouTube app on a smartphone.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gen0NgJjry4&feature=youtu.be
Buckingham Palace Expedition is available to schools that are signed up to the Expeditions Pioneer Program. Find out more and sign up here: https://www.google.com/edu/expeditions/.

For further information and images, please contact the Royal Collection Trust Press Office, T. +44 (0)20 7839 1377, press@royalcollection.org.uk.

Notes to Editors

Royal Collection Trust, a department of the Royal Household, is responsible for the care of the Royal Collection and manages the public opening of the official residences of The Queen. Income generated from admissions and from associated commercial activities contributes directly to The Royal Collection Trust, a registered charity. The aims of The Trust are the care and conservation of the Royal Collection, and the promotion of access and enjoyment through exhibitions, publications, loans and educational programmes. Royal Collection Trust’s work is undertaken without public funding of any kind.

www.royalcollection.org.uk

Royal Collection Trust Learning aims to inspire audiences to engage, enjoy and learn about the Royal Collection and the official residences of The Queen by delivering education programmes and resources online or onsite at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

www.royalcollection.org.uk/learning

The State Rooms at Buckingham Palace have opened to the public during the summer since 1993. This year they will be open 23 July - September 2016 and will include the special exhibition Fashioning a Reign: 90 Years of Style from The Queen’s Wardrobe.

To avoid any incompatibility the video is best accessed via a link to the British Monarchy YouTube channel rather than imbedding the video directly onto a website.