

Una Haugh and Megan Swan

### **Virtual Tour Project 2021**

The Norwich Opportunity Area

Making the most of your virtual tour

Guide to support schools and nurseries to use virtual tours in creative and effective ways to maximise engagement and viewings







### Making the most of your virtual tour

So... you have your lovely, shiny new virtual tour and...now what?





### **Norwich Opportunity Area's Virtual Tour Transition Project 2021**

### Aim:

To support the transition process of children into various new stages of their education

### Scope:

This year the project involved:

20 Nurseries

9 Infant Schools/ Primaries

9 Junior Schools

So we've produced 38 virtual tours of your schools and settings in 3 months!

It also included:

136 film clips

400 media tags



So if we appear a little frazzled, you'll understand why!





# Insight UK: one of the leading providers of 3D virtual reality tours for the educational sector

More visual than a website...

More interactive than a video...

# **Úna Harrington-Haugh**Director of Operations and Finance at Insight UK

Assistant Headteacher of a large primary school until recently, Úna has a deep understanding of the complex demands on schools and the varying needs of the different stakeholders.

Úna's in-depth knowledge of the education sector has allowed her to develop virtual tour packages that are tailored specifically to schools both to engage and enthral current students through virtual learning and transition opportunities and to inspire prospective students through virtual open day technology.

Insight UK has grown rapidly in its 18 months of business and Insight UK's clients now include: the Norwich Opportunity Area, The Aurora Group, West Norfolk Academy Trust, Early Excellence, University of East Anglia, G2M Housing Group and Grand Designs.



# Megan Swan Managing Director at Boost Digital Marketing

Boost Digital Marketing was founded to help bridge the gap between agencies and independent business by providing a more personal and affordable approach to great digital marketing. From Social Media Marketing and Management to Facebook Advertising and Customer Generation Boost has a smart solution to your digital dilemma.

Megan and her team help you to expand your business, grow your customer base and BOOST your sales all through the power of social media! Her personal approach makes her another valuable member of your team-you'll wonder how you ever coped without her!



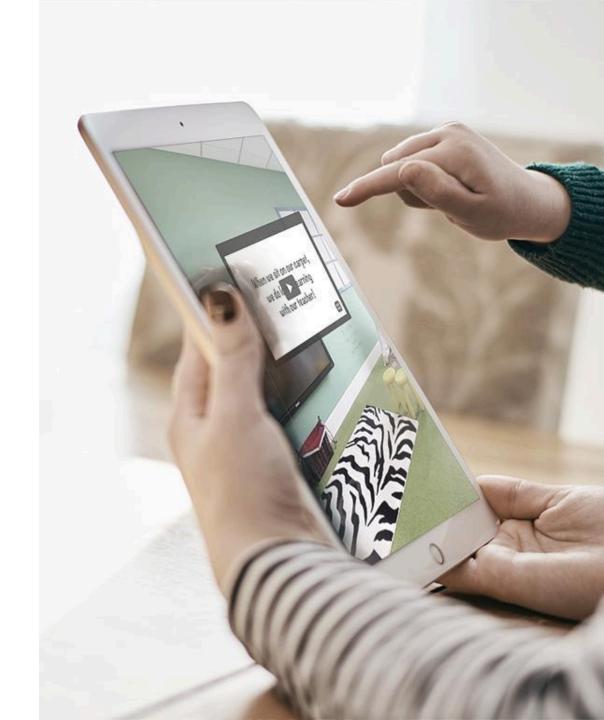
### Contents

### **Section one: The basics**

- The NOA's non-negotiables
- Promoting your tour with familiar resources: website, email, text
- How to upload virtual tours onto websites (Attached document)
- Identifying your key aims for your virtual tour and action planning
- Virtual open days
- Press releases/ local media coverage
- Other ways to use tours within school/ settings
- Practicalities and key features of your virtual tour
- User guides

### Section two: Digital marketing for schools and nurseries

- What is digital marketing and what can it help you achieve?
- Facebook- the benefits, features, ideas for content
- The Power of Facebook Ads- Increasing Exposure
- Other social media platforms: IG, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Hashtagging- what is it and why to use it
- Other digital avenues to market your virtual tour
- Resources: How to record a tour walkthrough by phone; social media content templates





	School A- well promoted locally in Norfolk	School B- national/ international coverage	School C- basic in-school promotion/ website etc
Impressions	18.6k over 12 months 1552 average per month	135k over 12 months 11k average per month	1800 over 12 months 150 average per month
Visits	1566 visits over last 30 days 131 visits on average per day over last 30 days	10k visits over last 30 days 330 visits on average per day over last 30 days	300 visits over last 30 days 10 visits on average per day over last 30 days
Extra	Even after 12 months, there have been 45 viewings of the tour in the last 7 days	2100 views in the last 7 days. This tour ended up on the Matterport website and lauded as good practice within the VT trade.	This school did very little to promote their tour on social media and use within school was limited.

These statistics from last year demonstrate that you cannot simply upload your virtual tour to your website and hope for the best!! You need to actively promote it.

Virtual environments | Real Experiences



### **Section 1: The Basics**

### The Norwich Opportunity Area's Non-Negotiables

This is a list of the minimum actions the NOA expects each school/setting to do on receipt of your virtual tour

The NOA expects each school/setting to:

- Upload their virtual tour onto their website and promote it on their social media pages.
- Send the link to their tour to their target parents via text/email. (This may involve the school/setting liaising with their feeder settings where necessary). This should be done on at least 2 occasions before the end of term.
- Send their target parents a questionnaire to complete (you will have received a link for this).
- Complete a questionnaire to gather the schools/settings feedback on the product and how they have used it (again- this link will provided by the NOA).





### **Identify your key aims and actions**

Aim	Action Planning	Ideas
To aid transition for children progressing to next stage of their education (the NOA's primary aim)  Key action: Share the tour with children and parents (both current and transitioning)	Promote VT via all forms of communication you use within school (as per NOA's non-negotiables):  - Upload virtual tour onto your website (see additional guide) -Send link to the VT via text/email to current and transition parents -Promote on social media to both current school and feeder schools/nurseries	<ul> <li>Hold a launch event within school- show all children in assemblies/class</li> <li>Turn the launch event into a "Virtual tour premier" (like a film premier) with a large screen, a red carpet and popcorn!</li> <li>Hold a launch event with parents of current children (outside if necessary on a large screen) where you can answer questions on navigation and features. Have user guides printed and copies of the virtual tour link to take away.</li> </ul>
	-Get your feeder school/nurseries/ lower year groups on board and do all the above - Ensure your feeder school shares it with children in the relevant class/group	<ul> <li>Create a buzz at these events with the use of VR Headsets and transport the viewers into a fully immersive experience.</li> <li>Hold launch events as above for transitioning children and their families</li> </ul>
	-Are teachers doing <b>home visits</b> this year to new starters? If so, share the tour with the families and children then. If not, instead of just a phonecall, arrange a Microsoft teams meeting, Zoom or similar with each family and show them the tour and answer any questions in real time.	<ul> <li>Hold online virtual open days/transition events for those transitioning children and families via Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Speak to parents and children live and make new teachers available to introduce themselves and answer questions.</li> <li>Line up an online event with the feeder school/nurseries/classes where</li> </ul>
	-Focus on <b>SEN children</b> . This product is overwhelmingly powerful with many children with SEN. Go through it with them in small groups/one-on	<ul> <li>Line up an online event with the feeder school/nurseries/classes where the teacher shares the tour with the children and, again, the new Headteacher/teachers are available via Microsoft teams or Zoom to point out facilities and to answer questions.</li> </ul>
	one and show them where they can access it over the summer months.	nb There is limited time left this term, but please try some of these ideas and keep this bank of ideas for future years.



### **Identify your key aims**

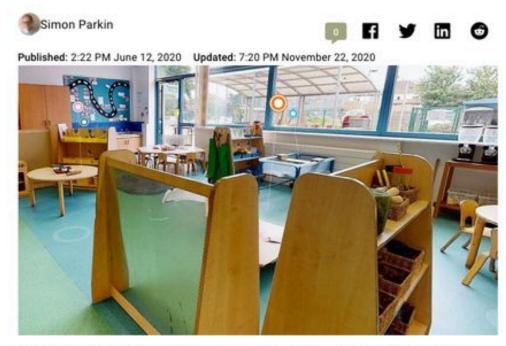
Aim	Action Planning	Ideas
To increase admissions  Key action: Use the VT as part of the organisation's wider	Virtual open days	<ul> <li>Use of targeted FaceBook advertising to recruit potentials</li> <li>Eventbrite to set up invites/ harvest data</li> </ul>
(digital) marketing strategy	Press releases- local newspapers/TV channels  Other digital marketing strategies eg social media	<ul> <li>Devise a "newsworthy" angle eg new head; visit from a famous author; fantastic/unusual outcome to a unit eg plastic sculpture, performance for the Lord Mayor's Parade</li> <li>See section 2</li> </ul>
Brand building or establishing presence/reputation among your local community  Key action: As above- part of wider (digital) marketing strategy	Other digital marketing strategies eg social media	See section 2
To get maximum engagement and viewings  Key action: Any creative and exciting ways you can encourage children and parents to visit your tour again and again. More viewings bumps up your Google ratings and you will get closer to the first page of relevant searches.	Competitions (spot the x in Ms Smith's classroom; how many books can you count in the school library?); Encourage children/families to access their class webpage through the virtual tour The class with most visits gets a prize	You are the experts! Teachers and Early Years practitioners are brilliant at coming up with creative ideas- please share your successes with us!



### **EDP Article on Norwich Opportunity Area's project 2020**

Click **HERE** to read the article in the EDP

# Schools turn to virtual reality and video tours for new pupils



A classroom at Lakenham Primary School in the interactive virtual reality tour for new pupils.

Picture: Lakenham Primary School/Insight Media - Credit: Lakenham Primary School/Insight Media





### Other ways to use virtual tours





### **Virtual learning**

Link your online learning provision to your virtual tour via media tags. Students can enter their virtual classroom and have live lessons with their teachers via video conferencing. In addition, they can access their work set by their teachers, watch online assemblies through embedded videos, read newsletters and see upcoming events and enjoy displays of their work.

Virtual reality can transport students around the world without having to leave home on virtual field trips! With the "gamification" of their learning experiences making it more interactive and engaging, students enjoy and feel more connected to their learning whilst they are away from the classroom. Watch Insight UK for more of these in the near future.

No one knows what the future holds for education, but it is inevitable that the events of the past year will instigate change. Introducing virtual reality technologies now is a savvy way to build resilience and help to make your educational institution future-fit.

# Early Excellence Inspirational Learning

Click link to Early Excellence's virtual tour <a href="https://mv.matterport.com/show/?m=KqTP59LcFv5">https://mv.matterport.com/show/?m=KqTP59LcFv5</a>

### Staff training and health and safety planning tool

For a busy school, it is useful to pre-record essential training videos for example on safeguarding and staff conduct. **Early Excellence,** the leading provider of early years' resources, furniture and training, have embedded their informative videos into their Insight UK virtual tour to great effect (see link to tour on this page).

In addition, use your digital twin to plan health and safety and Covid-safety measures such as one-way systems and locations of cleaning stations. Your 3D tour can be cloned (contact Insight UK for information on this) and different information embedded for the differing audiences: maximising its use within school.



Some of our SEN children, in particular, find our virtual tours invaluable. They visit them repeatedly in the months prior to starting and it makes a huge difference to their confidence levels when they start in September. There are so many features to promote inclusivity too such as the voiceover media tags, automatic walk-throughs and dyslexic-friendly fonts and colours. Virtual tours are an essential part of our transition process now as well as our digital marketing strategy with the runaway successes of our online Virtual Open Days.

Head of Marketing for a leading SEN specialist schools provider



### Practicalities and key features of your virtual tour

How to upload your tour onto a website:
 See accompanying document.

Key features to note:

**Highlight reel** 

**Automatic walkthrough** 

3D Dollhouse view

2D plan

**Measuring tool** 

Share

View in VR

**Full screen** 

Media tags

**Navigation techniques** 

See next pages for more information on these.





### **User Guide to Key Features**



### **Navigation**



The virtual tour works a bit like Google Maps. You can move around the building by using your mouse to click on the white circles or use the arrows on your keyboard to move around (some find this easier).

### **Highlight reel**



Click the upward or downward arrow (Bottom LHS of screen) to either display or hide the highlight reel. This shows key areas around your site and your viewer can click on any of these to quickly navigate to that area.

### **Automatic walk-through**



Click this arrow to sit back and watch the tour play automatically. If an area catches your interest, simply click on the main screen at any time to stop the automatic walk-through and to explore that space in more detail.

### 3D Dollhouse view



Click on this icon to reveal a 3D model of your building. You can move it around and look at it from all angles! Meta tags can be accessed easily from here and it helps with navigation too. Simply click on the area you are interested in and to be transported there.

### 2D plan



Click this icon for a 2D plan of your building. This, and the 3D model, are great for visualising new room layouts, planning one-way systems and ensuring health and safety compliance and organising fire procedures and evacuation routes.

### Measuring tool



This handy measuring tool works to architectural levels of accuracy! It can be used whilst within the tour or viewing it in 3D or 2D modes. It makes ordering new furniture a breeze!

### **Meta tags**



Throughout the tour, you will see brightly coloured dots (media tags). Click on these to find out more about the organisation.

Red = Information text and weblinks

Yellow = Films of staff and/or children

Blue = Information text with audio voiceover

Green = shortcuts/links to other areas of the school including 360 photos of our outside areas.

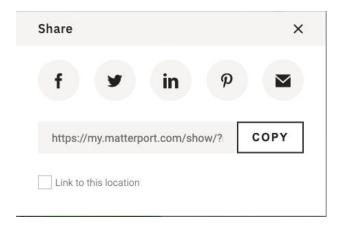


### **User Guide to Key Features- Bottom right of screen**

### **Share**



Click this icon to share your virtual tour easily on a variety of platforms. When the screen below pops up, click "copy" to copy the link to the tour and then click on the required service to share the tour there by pasting in the link.



### View in VR from mobile phone



With your tour activated on a mobile phone, this can be placed into a VR headset. Click this icon to transport the viewer into a truly immersive experience.

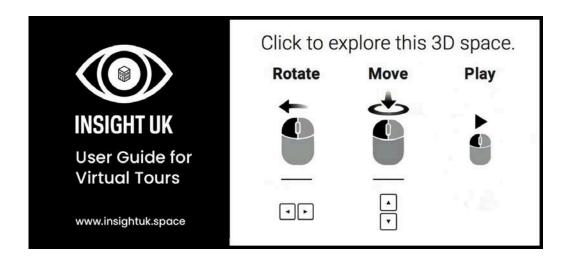
### **Full screen**



Click this icon to view your virtual tour on a full screen of your device.



### **Guidance for users**



Add some guidance for users on your website to explain how to navigate around the tour and what the various features are.

Feel free to add this user guidance to your website



### Some additional features/uses of virtual tours:

- Screenshot views from the virtual tour to produce images of your school
- Higher quality images from the tour can be purchased from Insight UK
- Meta tags can be added, changed, removed or updated at any point in the future! So, if you have a change of staff, curriculum or anything else you would like to add or update eg pleasing media coverage, contact Insight UK for amendments (extra fees apply)
- Your films can be used eg posted on websites or social media, independently to the tour via the Vimeo links you received with your virtual tour
- Use VR Headsets with a mobile to fully immerse viewers in the virtual tour- children love this!
- Google Street View- we can make a version of your virtual tour accessible from there (extra fees apply)



### Section 2: Digital marketing for schools and nurseries

- Schools report an increase in admissions by up to 35% since the addition of a virtual tour to their website
- Virtual tours increase viewer engagement and enjoyment which increases enquiries
- Users spend up to 10 times longer on school websites with virtual tours
- 97% of searches for educational institutions start on Google
- VR tours improve your ratings on Google and edge you to closer to that golden first page
- 300% increase in **click-through rates** with the addition of a virtual tour to your Facebook business page



# How to use your 3D Virtual Tour as part of your digital marketing strategy!

### Aligning with your marketing goals and aims.

With a focus on expanding your school's exposure, improving your reputation and increasing admissions, this document will give you a tip of the iceberg overview for how to get the most out of your virtual tour and how to incorporate it into your digital marketing strategy.

Your tour is a fantastic way to elevate your online presence and shows current as well as prospective students and families that you are on the cutting edge of education. It's a fantastic way to showcase what your school is all about, from your team to your facilities and everything in between, your tour is the perfect tool for marketing!

When it comes to digital marketing, social media is your best friend! The vast majority of parents you're looking to target will have at least one social media platform if not more, making it the most time and cost effective medium to reach and advertise to them.





### Your 3D Virtual Tour helps you:

## Fulfil your wider digital marketing strategy

Your tour gives you an excellent foundation to work with, it serves as a digital base to everything you do, from providing you with a wealth of social media content, blog topics and newsletter material to great PR opportunities the possibilities are endless!

### Improve your search ranking and generate website traffic

When utilised your tour will help your websites SEO (search engine optimization) rankings on sites like Google, meaning you will start to climb the golden ladder and get closer to those top results. When properly marketed, your tour will start to generate more traffic to your website, telling Google and other search engines that your site is relevant and users are spending more time there, in turn helping you boost your ranking. This improvement should see a boost in admissions as your school becomes a more popular search and tour helps you stand out against the competition.

## Increase engagement with pupils, their families and the wider community

With the right strategy your tour should become a focal point through your social media channels, think of it as an additional website that is far more interactive and visual. It gives you a great medium to connect and share with current and prospective students, their families as well as your surrounding community. By increasing your online engagement, you're growing your exposure and displaying to your new found audience your school's ethos.



# Focusing on Facebook: Organic ways to nurture and grow a community, boost your exposure and increase online engagement.

Looking at Facebook in particular, it currently serves as the most popular social media platform and also the most useful for the education sector. It works well for schools as Facebook has several functions that allow you to showcase what it is you do and also communicate with pupils, parents and the wider community.

Much like the virtual tour's relationship with your website, your Facebook page will also serve alongside your site as an easy go-between for the school itself, parents, pupils (where appropriate) and prospective families.

Facebook has a great range of content choices, such as polls, events, the ability to share news and updates, being able to answer questions, reviews, have live chats and upload videos. There is a lot of potential to build a really enriching and informative environment for your followers.

We have put some templates together which focus on various ways you can share your virtual tour from the initial 'look what we've got!' to other styles of post to ensure your audience is getting the most out of it. The presence of your tour on Facebook on a regular basis will also serve to drive even more traffic to your website so it's a win win!





# The power of Facebook Ads: Increasing your exposure and admissions through paid advertising.

Running paid ads through Facebook's in-built advertising platform is a fantastic way to reach prospective parents and get your school in front of them, whether they're around the corner or three hours away.

Utilising all of the data and patterns it has from users, Facebook advertising is a very powerful and efficient way of getting more exposure. You can run multiple ads at a time targeting various categories of people, such as new parents or people who have recently moved to your area and narrow it by age to ensure you're hitting the brackets you're after.

You can target people who have visited your site, people who have interacted with your tour and re-target similar audiences such as people who may live in the general area you wish to advertise to, or market to your mailing list through Facebook.

Create your ad using any medium you like from images and videos to your virtual tour and good news stories, there are endless possibilities and combinations to catch the attention of your target audience.

We have included some links to basic Facebook Ad resources to help you get started, but we would highly recommend doing some research into ads specifically for the education sector and getting help from a professional.





# How to get the most out of your tour using other social media platforms.

When it comes to marketing your school through social media, Facebook is currently king. However, it's important to consider what else is out there and how you can be making an impact on the other platforms.

For instance, the platforms attract different demographics. Currently many of your school's parents will probably use Facebook as their dominant social media, however younger parents will probably lean towards Instagram. Another example is parents in various professional sectors are likely to engage with LinkedIn and the more prestigious your school the more expected you will be to maintain a page on LinkedIn.

So it is definitely worth exploring your options in order to maximise your exposure and increase your admissions. We would recommend setting up a Linkedln, Twitter and Instagram account even if you're time poor and can only post occasionally, as every extra profile you have is another source of traffic for your website, a path for you to contact new parents and grow your community.

Each of these profiles should have either your website and / or your tour linked on the front page in the bio section alongside other important information so that they are easily accessible. As for what to post on these platforms, each platform has different posting styles so we've included some examples for you that you can change to make your own and get you started.





### #Hashtagging

Hashtags are another powerful part of your social media posts which vary platform to platform but are important to understand to make sure you're getting the most out of your post and getting your content in front of the right audience.

### Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

For Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn we recommend using a handful (no more than 5) of specific hashtags. These can be area specific such as #NorwichNursery or broader terms like #SecondarySchool, #FirstDayBack or #OnlineLearning. For platforms like Twitter and Linked in be mindful of topical events or topics you can engage with to help your post reach more people.

### Instagram

For Instagram you are allowed up to 30 hashtags and we recommend you use them all! Start by seeing what other nurseries or schools who have good accounts are using, or have a quick Google to see what options you have. We suggest using a mixture of niche hashtags such as #NorwichParents #NorwichMums or #NorwichNurseries in combination with more general hashtags which are likely to get your post seen by bigger audiences.

### Don't use the same hashtags every time

Keep an eye on your posts and see how using different hashtags effects your reach, levels of engagement and follower count across your profiles and you'll soon figure out what works best for your school and gives you the most return.

### What is a hashtag?

A hashtag is a label used on social media which makes it easier to find information with a theme or specific content. Hashtags encourage social media users to explore content that catches their eye. You can use hashtags like #NorwichNursery to reach an audience who are searching for and interested in schools in Norwich.



### Other digital avenues to market your tour

The aim of the game is to maximise the number of places and ways you utilise your new virtual tour so it reaches as many prospective families as possible, increasing your exposure boosting your admissions and ensuring that your schools is getting the most out of it.

### **Get blogging**

Blogging is a great way to boost your SEO and showcase your brand new tour, so if this isn't something you do already it's a fantastic topic to kick off with. You can write blogs about more or less anything to do with your school, from any recent achievements, to news, updates, meet the team pieces to a more detailed look at your school's ethos. or recently or you have something exciting coming up.

### Start a newsletter

Sharing your tour through a monthly newsletter is also a great way to spread the word not just to current pupils and their families but prospective parents also. Newsletters are a brilliant way to keep your mailing list up to date with everything going on at your school, you can even link your recent blogs for readers to check out!

### Think outside the digital box

Lastly consider uploading your tour to any appropriate portals, secondary websites or review platforms. One example of this would be updating your Google page (which comes up whenever someone searches for you so it's worth getting it in order) which is accessed through setting up Google business, allowing you to modify what people see when they search for your school on Google. Including your tour here will give an excellent first point of contact for anyone interested in you and the same goes for any other place you embed or link your tour to.



### Resources

### How to record a tour walk through using your phone

### **iPhone**

- Go to Settings > Control Center, then tap the Open Control Center, tap the Open Center, tap the
- the screen, then tap stop.

#### **Android**

- 1. Swipe down twice from the top of your screen.
- 2. Tap Screen Record
- 3. Choose what you want to record and tap Start. The recording begins after the countdown.
- 4. To stop recording, swipe down from the top of the screen and tap the screen recorder notification

Once you've turned on the screen recording feature on your phone, simply switch screens onto your tour (open this up on your phone before you start recording) and explore your tour! This creates a great video you can use to showcase particular parts or features of your tour, or to upload to your social media as a standalone video.

#### Facebook Ads

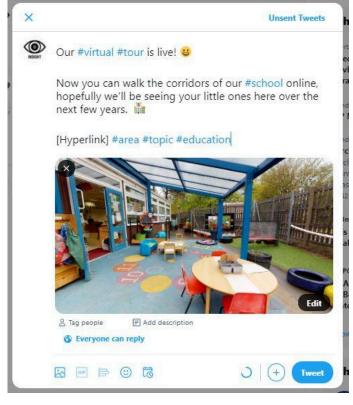
Here is a great article which focuses on the Facebook Ad basics and should help give you an understanding of how to get started. This is also a great resource with more in-depth links.

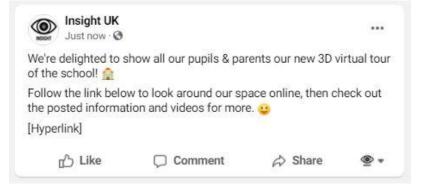




### Social Templates to launch your tour









### Social templates to show off your tour features

We're pleased to be taking our school to the next level with a 3D virtual tour.

Keep an eye on our page to see all of the updates we'll be making to our school as we add videos, pictures & information to our tour over time!

#schoolmarketing #eduaction #schools



Choose who can comment on your post



















### Other post ideas:

'Check out our new classroom (activities, or displays, new arrangement) using our virtual tour! (insert some text about why the new changes are great) [hyperlink your tour]'

'Have you seen our wonderful outdoor area? It's full of amazing activities for the children to get involved with and learn whilst they play! [hyperlink your tour]'

'The children have been working on this amazing (project, play, activity) and want to share it with you! Check it out in X room, using our virtual tour [hyperlink your tour]'



### **Final thoughts**

- For any further support on the technical aspects of your tour, uploading it to your website and sharing on social media or on digital marketing, get in touch with Insight UK.
- Monthly support packages or one-off fees for amendments to meta tags or digital marketing are available (or one-off consultations to get you started).
- Renewal of hosting fees will be due in Oct 2022.
- Add us to all your social media platforms and tag us in your virtual tour posts.
   Remember: mutual tagging and sharing builds a powerful network and helps all of us to benefit from each other's audiences and marketing power.
- Keep in touch- let us know any interesting or creative ways you have shared your tour with your communities. Share successful events on social media and tag us!
- If you like what we've done, please recommend us to other organisations!





### Other services we provide:

Outstanding school photography for websites and prospectuses

- Copywriting for websites and prospectuses
- Award-winning marketing films
- Virtual tours of your entire school
- Drone
- API overlays onto your tour giving more features
- Digital marketing/marketing support
- Virtual field trips to places of interest including: museums and art galleries (watch out for more of these in the future).





### **Insight UK Social Media Handles**



Insightuk1



@InsightUK\_



Insight UK or Una Harrington-Haugh



insight\_uk\_

### **Acknowledgements**

Una and Mike, at Insight UK, would like to thank all of the talented people involved in this project who have worked tirelessly to make it happen:

Ben, Chris and Flora- VR operators

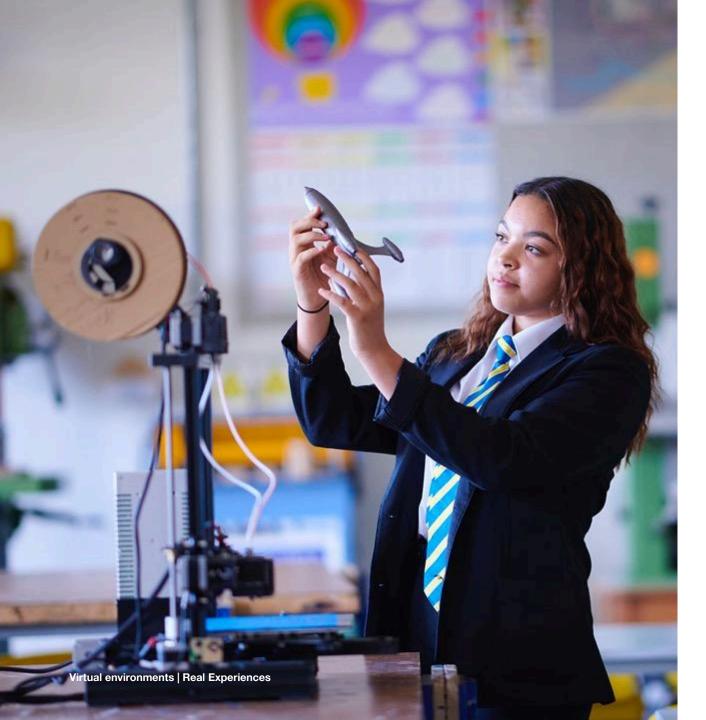
Flora- graphic design/editing

Joe Harrington- filmmaker

Ashley Cater- Community Champions Project Manager at the

Norwich Opportunity Area

Virtual environments | Real Experiences





### Contact

una@insightuk.space

07734945979

Or

mike@insightuk.space

07771992284

The possibilities are endless...