

# 2,500 pupils enjoy Feel Good Field Trips with Avanti West Coast

March 12, 2024



Avanti West Coast's groundbreaking **Feel Good Field Trips** initiative – which helps children access to fun and educational experiences – has reached a key milestone, welcoming its 2,500th pupil.

Launched in April 2022, the scheme aims to give up to 5,000 pupils aged between four and 18 the chance to travel by train for culturally diverse days out and hands on learning – experiences that may previously have been inaccessible for them.

A recent trip by pupils from Beechwood Primary School in Crewe saw the number of children who had enjoyed a day out with Avanti West Coast hit the 2,500 mark.

A class of 30 Year 3 pupils made the train journey to Liverpool to visit the Royal Liver Building, enjoy a ferry ride on the River Mersey, and explore some of the city's landmarks.

Avanti West Coast Managing Director, Andy Mellors, joined Beechwood Primary School pupils at the top of the Royal Liver Building to celebrate the milestone with a specially designed banner. It acknowledged their participation, as well as the thousands of young people who have benefitted from learning experiences over the last two years.

Since launching in April 2022, over 100 planned excursions have taken place – from trips to Gladstone

Pottery Museum in Stoke-on-Trent, to outdoor adventuring in the Lake District, and art workshops at The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry. Children from Avanti West Coast's network of partner schools, which all have high pupil premium rates, have enjoyed these hands-on learning experiences.

David Savage, of Community Rail Lancashire, who facilitates the Feel Good Field Trips, was presented with a certificate to thank him for his efforts to deliver the days out that offer the opportunity for children to discover key destinations on the west coast.

He said: "I am thrilled that the Feel Good Field Trips initiative has reached a significant milestone having taken our 2,500th pupil on an unforgettable journey to Liverpool. Many of the children I've had the privilege to accompany had never before experienced rail travel or ventured beyond their hometowns.

"The best part of my job is witnessing the children's wide-eyed excitement as they embark on adventures onboard Avanti West Coast's train. Each trip offers a fresh and exhilarating experience. As a former geography teacher, I understand the value of field trips in enhancing students' learning experiences, which is why I'm immensely proud of the positive impact our Feel Good Field Trips have had – not only on the children who participate but also on the schools facing budget constraints and the cost of living challenges.

"I'm delighted we'll be offering even more exciting destinations for our trips and I'm filled with excitement and anticipation to continue providing enriching experiences for students across the West Coast Main Line."

Joining the schoolchildren on their trip to Liverpool, Andy Mellors said: "It was a memorable experience to be able to see first-hand the opportunities we're offering young people and what it means to them.

"Connecting thousands of school pupils to opportunities they would never otherwise have the chance to experience is what this initiative is all about, so we're excited to have reached this latest milestone and send a big thanks to Dave at Community Rail Lancashire who has made it possible.

"We've loved taking children from all backgrounds to destinations along our route, so they can discover something new, and we cannot wait to welcome another 2,500 onboard our trains to enjoy days out on the west coast."

The campaign builds on the Avanti Schools Programme, which aspires to connect young people from a range of diverse socio-economic backgrounds to opportunities across the route and follows the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw school trips paused.