

WARKWORTH CASTLE, NORTUHAMBERLAND

Hazard Information for Education Visits

It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to complete a risk assessment prior to the site visit. The following information is intended as an aid and does not replace the group leader's own risk assessment. We recommend coming to the site on a free planning visit, to help you with your risk assessment. Please note: where possible, English Heritage staff at the site will be happy to assist you with your queries, but cannot check or sign any section of your risk assessment.

Environmental conditions at historic sites may change rapidly and you will need to remain alert at all times during your visit. Most accidents are the result of slips and trips so please make sure you wear appropriate footwear and dress sensibly for the site and weather. Please be aware that the site may close at short notice due to adverse weather. Where applicable, stonework and trees at our sites are inspected regularly; however, extreme weather conditions can sometimes affect stonework and trees so as well as following any staff instructions and being mindful of temporary barriers and signage, please remain vigilant at all times. On-going conservation work may pose a temporary hazard; a member of staff will advise you of any works when you visit. Dogs on leashes may be present on site.

All learners who are 16 years or younger must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times whilst on site.

Moving vehicles may pose a hazard upon arrival and while on the site.

- There is a public car and coach park adjacent to the entrance to the castle. The car park can be very busy at peak times and groups should be aware of vehicles entering and leaving the area.
- The toilets are located at the far end of the car park and groups will need to cross the car park from the castle to access them.

The ruinous nature of the castle presents many potential hazards.

- Access into the castle grounds is via a wooden walkway, over a dry moat. The moat has steep, unfenced grassy banks which should not be climbed down.
- The ground within the castle walls is grassed and can be slippery during and after wet conditions.
- Ground surfaces within ruined spaces are paved or gravelled. An access pathway can be found in the bailey.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and sharp stones.
- There is low level masonry which presents a climbing hazard.
- The interior of the church crypt is dimly lit, and the ground is uneven and damp. There is a sudden drop from the crypt roof; the low chain fence protecting it should not be crossed.

The sculptures in the castle grounds may pose potential hazards.

- The sculptures form part of the interactive trails and vary in size and scale. Climbing is not permitted on any of the sculptures.
- The models of the castle and the castle keep must not be climbed on. The scale model of the castle must not be touched due to the fragile nature of the model's material.

The castle keep may pose possible hazards.

- There are steep wooden stairs to the first floor of the keep. These may be slippery during and after wet weather.
- There is limited lighting throughout the keep rooms and numerous changes of floor levels, with uneven stone floors throughout.
- The first and second floors of the keep have a complex series of inter-connecting rooms and staircases which may disorientate people.
- Close supervision of groups is need at all times.

Warkworth Castle is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard.
- Students should be reminded to wash their hands prior to eating.

Asbestos has been identified on the site. This is common with older buildings and some historic artefacts and is being managed and monitored by English Heritage.

- These areas and objects are clearly marked with red 'a' stickers.
- No activities that may disturb the asbestos are permitted; please raise any concerns or accidental damage with the Site Manager immediately.

Covid-19 and flu.

- We follow government and [NHS guidelines](#) to reduce the risk of transmission. Please also follow their guidance and do not visit if you have flu or Covid-19 symptoms or have recently tested positive.