

Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire

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 site.

- Coaches cannot park on the castle grounds or use the overflow car park (there is not room to turn round).
- The coach park is in the council car park opposite to the entrance to the castle. From the coach bays, access to the castle is across a road used by two-way traffic.
- There is only room for one coach.
- If the space is occupied, coaches can drop students here and then move to the Morrisons Car Park in the centre of the town to park.
- The pedestrian entrance is also the vehicular entrance to the site, and there are often vehicles moving about the site. The site is accessed through the visitor centre. From here a path leads to the main gateway into the castle.

Surfaces may be uneven and change in level; please use paved pathways and designated walkways wherever possible.

- All surfaces may be slippery when wet therefore running is not allowed at any time and students must be supervised at all times.
- There may be animal holes in grassed areas which may pose a trip hazard.
- Floor tiles and staircase treads are worn and uneven; always use the handrail where provided and walk at all times.

Both the intact buildings and ruinous nature of parts of the castle range may present hazards.

- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- Floor surfaces are uneven throughout many areas and where exposed to the elements can be wet and slippery. Please walk at all times and supervise groups closely.
- In the Riding House access to the viewing gallery and second floor is via a wide dog-leg staircase. On the second floor the roof slopes down from the centre of the room, and some roof timbers are at a low level. Low glazed windows are protected by a barrier.
- Inside the Riding School, there are steps to tiered seating. The Riding School has loose sand flooring for most of the year. Access to the sand is restricted due to horse displays and cleanliness.
- Inside the Little Castle many rooms contain fireplaces with low overhanging stonework. Access to all floors of the Little Castle is via stone staircases, some of which are uneven.

- The wall walk is open to the public with access from the Little Castle and from the garden via a steep flight of stone steps. There is a steep drop and restored stone barriers on either side of the wall walk. Group leaders should ensure pupils walk across sensibly and are supervised at all times.
- In the basement of the Little Castle there is a series of rooms entered from a central corridor. In some cases, the latches on doors in this area can be opened from the inside of the room only if shut.
- The Beer Cellar has low levels of lighting and uneven floors. Supervision of students is needed at all times.

Bolsover Castle is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard. Visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.
- There may be rabbit holes on site which may pose a trip hazard.

The Adventure Playground may cause potential hazards for large groups.

- Groups are welcome to use the play area, but it is important to note that this is a public space and is very popular with general visitors.
- Students should be supervised by group leaders or accompanying adults at all times.
- Use of the Adventure Playground is entirely at the group's own risk. Please observe the signs regarding use of the play area which are located at the entrance to the Adventure Playground.
- One area is closed for repair (the largest climbing frame) and must not be used until further notice.
- There are wooden structures which may splinter. Use of the Adventure Playground is entirely at the group's own risk.
- There are high platforms and unguarded drops on some apparatus.
- There are short vertical ladders with no guards.
- There is some swinging and suspended apparatus with possible pinch points.
- The play equipment has an age limit of 12 years old.
- It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to supervise their groups when using the playground.
- Surfaces may become slippery in wet weather.

Visitors on site.

- The castle is open to the public so please be aware that there will be other visitors on site. Please be respectful.
- Students should stay with their group whilst looking around the castle.

The English Heritage / Taskmaster Education bookable Tasking Backpack may cause potential hazards for groups using it.

- Leaders should choose a large, safe, flat place to do the tasks, taking advice from site staff where necessary.
- Leaders should supervise students / groups whilst doing the tasks – there are some small resources and some that could cause injury through being handled incorrectly.
- Leaders should make site staff aware if any resources are broken.
- Participants should wash their hands after completing the tasks and before eating.