

CARISBROOKE CASTLE, ISLE OF WIGHT

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'll need to remain alert at all times during your visit. Make sure you wear sensible footwear and dress appropriately 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, storm damage can sometimes affect the stability of stonework and branches of apparently healthy trees. 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.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

We want to reassure you that we're following government guidance to make your trip as safe and enjoyable as possible.

We've introduced a range of new hygiene standards and social distancing measures. Our staff and facilitators have received guidance to help them safely run education visits at this time, and we've also created a general risk assessment for education visitors to help you with your individual risk assessments. You can find this and other information about what to expect on your visit at: english-heritage.org.uk/schools-what-to-expect

We've also detailed key changes on the individual site schools pages of our website, so please check before you visit. Once your booking is confirmed, we recommend booking a free planning visit to help you prepare for your trip and familiarise yourself with the site.

The car park is situated at the end of an approach road that can be very busy

- There is a traffic light system in use owing to a blind corner.
- Visitors are required to cross the car park to reach the site entrance.
- The site is surrounded by a steep sided dry moat, with warning signs in place.

The inner areas of the site can only be accessed through the shop.

- There is a chain preventing access by any other means.
- Vehicles will sometimes be moving around the site.
- Pedestrians and vehicles share the main entrance to the site.

The ruinous nature of the castle presents many potential hazards, including uneven and slippery surfaces.

- Walls are rough and contain uneven and sharp stones.
- Floor surfaces are uneven throughout and where exposed to the elements can be wet and slippery.
- Sensible footwear and outdoor clothing are necessary.

There are a number of cannon located around the site which present a potential climbing hazard.

- No climbing signs are positioned in all relevant areas and these should be observed by all visitors.

The gatehouse ranges over several floor levels and lighting is dim.

- There is a narrow metal spiral staircase leading to an entrance/exit on the ground floor, into the gatehouse entrance which is used by vehicular traffic.

To the right of the Gatehouse is St Nicholas' Chapel which is still in occasional use.

- The steps down into St Nicholas' Chapel are old and worn.
- The floor is tiled and may be slippery.

Princess Beatrice's Garden, situated behind the chapel, is surrounded by steep grass banks.

- Climbing on the banks and stones presents a significant hazard and is not permitted.

Visitors are able to watch a donkey demonstration on the tread wheel in the Well House and can view an exhibition in the stable block.

- As with all animals, there may be a risk of zoonotic infection.
- Visitors should be aware that animals may kick or bite.

The 71 steps leading to the Norman shell keep are very steep and uneven.

- There is a metal handrail on one side of the wide stone steps and a grab rope on the other.
- The castle's high situation means that the upper levels of the keep are exposed and can be windy. In very poor weather conditions the wall and keep will be closed for safety reasons.
- The castle's outer walls vary greatly in height and in some parts are very low.
- There is a sheer drop from the upper levels.
- A metal guard rail runs around the inside of most of the wall walk.
- There is no set visitor route and congestion can sometimes occur in confined areas such as the battlement walk.

The Castle Museum building and its exhibits can present a hazard.

- The wooden staircase leading to the second floor is old and wide; visitors are likely to encounter others descending the stairs.
- There is an emergency exit via a winding staircase from the upper floor of the museum.
- 'Do not touch' signs inside the Castle Museum should be observed.