

Carlisle Castle, Cumbria

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 on Devonshire Walk. Groups will have to walk from here to the site beside a busy main road. If groups are dropped off on Annetwell Street, an underpass can be used to cross the main road to reach the castle. The narrow approach road to the castle entrance is used by authorised vehicles.
- Grounds maintenance teams and site tenants may use vehicles throughout the grounds.

The historic nature of the castle presents many potential hazards.

- The floor surfaces are often uneven, and there are old, uneven steps and staircases throughout.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- There is low masonry around the site.
- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- Some buildings contain spiral and steep, narrow staircases. Students should ascend/descend in single file under careful supervision, holding the handrail while doing so.
- The approach to the keep passes over a small, wooden walkway. Groups should be supervised while crossing.
- The lighting levels vary from area to area. Groups should allow time for their eyes to adjust.

The wall walk and moat pose potential hazards.

- The castle's high situation means it is exposed and can be windy along the wall walk. Groups should be supervised at all times.
- The moat is steep. It is protected by rails and a wall at its steepest point. Climbing is not permitted.

Carlisle Castle is home to a 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.

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.