

Dover Castle, Kent

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 parking in a public coach park 200m away from the site.
- It is necessary to cross and walk along a busy road to reach the site entrance from the coach park; there is a pavement.
- There is parking on site for minibuses.
- There is vehicle movement around the site; 10 miles per hour speed limit.

The walking surfaces may be uneven and change in level; please use designated walkways wherever possible.

- All surfaces may be slippery when wet.
- Steps may be worn and uneven; single steps may pose a trip hazard.
- Be aware of animal holes in grassed areas.
- Wooden ramps and bridges on site may be slippery.

The construction of the site provides numerous climbing hazards; climbing on walls or over/under barriers is not permitted.

- Walls are rough and may contain sharp stones.
- Guns around the site must not be climbed.
- Climbing any of the trees or banks on site is strictly forbidden.

There are high walls and sheer drops on site, some of which are unguarded.

- The outer battlements are accessible, but care should be taken and only the pathways used.
- There are steep grass banks around the entire site.
- There is a low rail on the viewing platform of the Fire Command Post.
- There is a low wall around the Roman Pharos and the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Staircase treads may be worn and uneven; always use the handrail where provided.

- Steps may be slippery when wet or icy.
- There are spiral staircases in the Keep and steps between levels.
- There is a spiral staircase on the exit from the Underground Hospital Tour.
- There is a metal staircase to the viewing platform at the Fire Command Post.

There are areas of low lighting in the Secret Wartime Tunnels; please take care when moving around.

- Entry to the Secret Wartime Tunnels is by pre-booked guided tour only, subject to availability.
- Surfaces are uneven and sometimes slippery.
- It is important to follow safety instructions from the tour guide.

There are learning resources that can be used by groups on-site, including handling collections.

- The objects in the handling collection may have rough edges, points or protrusions.
- Learners must be supervised at all times by Leaders while using the resources.
- The objects may have been handled by multiple groups; always wash hands after use.

Grazing livestock may be present on site.

- All animals may bite and/or kick; only approach them if advised it is safe to do so.
- There may be a risk of zoonotic infection; visitors should wash their hands after contact with animals.

The site can be very busy, and some areas may become congested.

- Care should be taken on the staircases in the Great Tower.
- Some areas of the site may be closed in adverse weather conditions.

The Secret Wartime Tunnels contain loud noises and lighting effects.

- The Underground Hospital contains a simulated air-raid which can be distressing or overwhelming for some visitors: please advise your group accordingly of what to expect.
- The Operation Dynamo tour contains flashing shows and loud explosion effects.

The site is on an exposed hilltop and can experience extreme weather conditions.

- The wind speeds can be extremely high and may result in areas of the site being closed.
- Large areas of the site provide little shelter from rain or sun.

The Siege Play Area 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/ accompanying adults at all times.
- Use of the Siege Play Area 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.
- It is the responsibility of group leaders to supervise their groups when using the playground.
- Surfaces may become slippery in wet weather.
- The structures are made of wood which may crack or splinter