

FURNESS ABBEY, 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.

- There is a public car and coach park adjacent to the entrance to the abbey. Other vehicles use this area.

Accessible works across the site may pose potential hazards.

- Areas under construction work have temporary fencing barriers to enclose the ongoing works. Access behind the barriers is not permitted.
- Building work can create loud and sudden noises.
- Construction traffic may move throughout the grounds.
- Some areas on the site may not be accessible during this work. Please check with site staff on arrival and follow the prescribed route signage.

The exhibition area may pose a possible hazard.

- The area houses a display of stone effigies and carvings, many of which are mounted at a low level.

The ruinous nature of the abbey presents many potential hazards.

- The floor surfaces are often uneven and can be slippery in wet conditions.
- 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.
- There is an open stone staircase beside the cemetery gate, which should not be climbed on.
- Unguarded streams and culverts flow across the site, including a large opening at the south end of the Infirmary Chapel, through which there is a fast-flowing water course.
- A tunnel runs under the remains of the Abbot's House, which is open at both ends. Close supervision is needed in this area.

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.

Furness Abbey is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard.

- Visitors are advised to wash 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.