Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire

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

The car and coach park is located at the nearby LCC Leisure Centre.

- Coach drop off is to the north of the old hall on Parnell Street. If possible, approach from east to west: this means that the coach will be parked the correct way round for the drop-off and children will not have to cross a road.
- Coaches can park at the leisure centre but need to pre-book (so the height barrier is moved) Contact 01427 615169.

The site is open to the public April to October inclusive.

- Students should be supervised by leaders at all times.
- Please encourage students to move carefully around the building and be respectful of other visitors to the site at all times.

The historic nature of the site presents potential hazards including sharp surfaces and uneven flooring.

- The walls are rough in places and may contain sharp or abrasive edges.
- There are multiple flooring types which may prove slippery or uneven. Running on site is prohibited and groups must be supervised at all times.
- The first floor area accessed using the spiral staircase (by the Solar) has uneven floors and walls and can be disorientating. Please take care when moving through these rooms.
- There are worn cobbled and flagstone floors in the kitchen which create an uneven floor surface. Access carefully.
- It is very cold during the winter months so please come dressed for outdoor weather – hats, gloves and warm coats.

There are multiple interpretation and display items throughout the building.

- The kitchen is equipped with multiple interpretation pieces with sharp edges and some heavy moveable objects. Please do not touch.
- Items in the Buttery and Pantry are large and heavy and may cause injury if removed from their set location.
- The Great Hall and Gallery Chamber, Kitchen, Buttery and Assembly Rooms have large pieces of furniture with heavy doors and lids which should not be opened by visitors.

There are a number of steps and staircases on the site.

- There are a number of steep wooden staircases in the Old Hall.
- Steps are often uneven and worn.
- The steps to the Steward's Rooms above the kitchen are very steep**.**
- There is a wide, spiral staircase leading to the first floor by the Solar.
- The steps from the education room to the first floor are narrow and uneven and quite steep.
- Running is prohibited and students must be supervised at all times.

Education Room

- Tables and chairs can present trip hazards – students should be supervised as they move around the room
- The fireplaces are low, and students may bang their heads if they look into them. Please supervise accordingly.
- The outside door is heavy and could trap fingers – please hold it open for students as they go through.

Outside area.

- The lawns are quite uneven.
- The outside area is used as an area for walking dogs by local people. Staff check regularly but please be aware that dogs may have used the area before your visit.
- There are plants in the gardens which may cause allergic reactions so please take care whist in the area.
- The plants do attract bees so please be vigilant whilst in the grounds.
- There are mature trees on site that may drop branches in rare circumstances; care should be taken when passing under or near large trees.
- Students using the outside area should be supervised at all times. It is an area of public access and not part of the entry fee to Gainsborough Old Hall.