

MOUNT GRACE PRIORY, YORKSHIRE

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 50m from the entrance to the priory. The narrow approach road to the monument entrance is used by traffic.
- Grounds maintenance teams may use vehicles throughout the grounds and gardens.
- Deliveries in large lorries also happen so please supervise students carefully.

The ruinous nature of the priory may present 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. Running on site is not permitted and students should be supervised at all times.
- From October through until March the site can get extremely marshy and boggy. Wearing warm/waterproof clothing and sensible footwear is particularly important at this time of year.
- There are streams, a spring house and a lake in the gardens and grounds. There are also small ditches forming part of the monastic waterways that can have water in them.
- The windows are very fragile and students are therefore asked not to touch them or sit on the windowsills when visiting.

The reconstructed Monks Cell may pose possible hazards for use by large groups.

- There are very steep wooden stairs to the first floor of the reconstructed monk's cell. Groups should only use these stairs under very careful supervision.
- The monk's cell does not contain electric lighting and is therefore lit by natural light. Groups should allow time for their eyes to adjust to the darker environment inside this part of the site.
- Do not touch or try to open the windows in the reconstructed Monk's Cell – they are heavy and stiff.

Mount Grace Priory and Gardens is home to a wide variety of wildlife and plants.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard. Visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.
- Rabbit holes may pose a trip hazard.
- There are swans on site and these should not be approached as they can be dangerous.

- Some plants may cause allergic reactions if touched and could be poisonous if eaten. Please supervise groups carefully.
- Surfaces can be slippery when wet so please walk at all times. Running is not permitted.
- There is a lake and moat on site. The water is very deep. Students are not allowed to enter the water and should be supervised at all times.

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.
- They are in areas the public do not normally access.
- 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.