

Old Sarum, Wiltshire

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 should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times whilst on site.

Old Sarum encompasses the remains of an Iron Age hill fort and a medieval cathedral and castle; the site is outdoors and has no sheltered space.

- The site is exposed to the elements and high winds.
- The castle walls are rough and may contain sharp stones (flints).
- Climbing is not permitted on the walls, stone foundations, banks or ditches.

There are moving vehicles operating on site.

- Cars and minibuses may drop off and pick up in the car park, which is situated a short walk from the admission point and gift shop; there is no designated walkway through the car park.
- There is no access to the car park for buses or coaches. Drop off and pick up for these vehicles is in the layby on the main road. To access the castle site walk to the top of the layby and follow the chalk footpath to the castle drive, turn left and walk up the drive and over the wooden bridge to the castle. The ticket office is on your right.
- The only toilets on site are located in the car park area.

There are large areas of uneven ground and surfaces can be slippery when wet.

- Be aware of animal holes and dips in the ground in grassed areas; walk in short grass areas wherever possible.
- Low stone foundations remain in the castle and cathedral areas.
- Pits, wells and flues at ground level are covered with grilles.
- The wooden access bridge may be slippery when wet or icy.

There are steep banks and inclines on the sites.

- There is a footpath along the top of some of the steep banks of the inner bailey perimeter.
- A steep-sided, grassed dry moat lies between the inner and outer baileys; this is not accessible.
- The outer bailey has steep sides.
- The main path is fairly even, but it gets steep towards Iron Age ramparts and by outlines of the Bishop's Palace. When the site is dry, the main path is wheelchair accessible.
- The wooden access bridge is on a significant incline.

There are sheer drops around the site.

- The wooden access bridge spans a deep, grassed dry moat.

- There are unguarded high walls with long drops in the castle area.

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

- An open-tread wooden staircase in the castle has handrails provided.
- Stone steps in the castle area are uneven and do not have handrails.

All toilets at Old Sarum are shared between visitors and education groups

- There are no toilets reserved for education groups at Old Sarum. Students should be supervised when using the toilets provided.

There is no dedicated indoor or covered lunch space available on site.

- Groups can picnic on any public area of the site that belongs to English Heritage; please respect other visitors and remove all rubbish.

Wildlife and livestock may be present on site.

- The outer bailey is often used by dog walkers and dogs may be off leash.
- All animals may bite or scratch, please do not approach them.
- There are many rabbit droppings on site and the bridge railing is likely to have pigeon droppings on it despite regular checks. Animal droppings may present a zoonotic hazard; wash hands prior to eating meals.

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.

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.