

Pevensey Castle, East Sussex

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 park that is run by the council and located outside the east gate; charges apply all year round. The car park has room for a limited number of coaches.
- Visitors approach the east gate through a town council public car park.
- There is no raised pavement in the public car park; a busy road runs adjacent to the site and there is a sharp bend in front of the east gate entrance. A small, concreted area in front of the gate is surrounded by bollards on the roadside.
- When works are happening onsite, there may be moving vehicles within the Roman wall.

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

- Climbing on chapel ruins is not permitted.
- Climbing on the cannon carriage and cannon is not permitted.
- Climbing on trees is not permitted.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.

Walking surfaces may be uneven and change in level; please use gravel pathways and designated walkways wherever possible.

- Ground surfaces may be slippery when wet.
- Be aware of animal holes in grassed areas.
- There are old, uneven steps and staircases throughout.
- There is a pile of catapult stones in the inner courtyard, and a well, which is covered by a metal grille and surrounded by a low wall. These present trip hazards.

The site is subject to poor drainage and in wet weather paths can become particularly wet and muddy.

- Sensible footwear and outdoor clothing should be worn.
- Towers and other areas of the site may be closed if flooded.

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

- The site is surrounded by a Roman wall that is of a low level in places. On the other side of this there is an unseen drop of up to 8 metres above a busy road.

- A waist-high wooden fence borders a steep sided moat immediately beside the inner castle wall. Please note: the moat is full of water which can be deep in places.
- There is a wooden bridge across the moat and into the main gateway. The bridge can become slippery in wet weather.
- The upper level roof of the north tower can be accessed via a flight of modern wooden stairs with a wooden handrail. These are fully exposed and can become slippery in wet weather. There is a small landing at the top of the steps with a waist-height metal fence. The upper chamber is exposed to the elements.

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

- Access to the dungeon is via a spiral staircase.
- The dungeon can be prone to flooding, and the damp conditions mean that there is plant growth on the walls.
- There may be other visitors travelling in the opposite direction.
- Access to the north and south tower has steep and uneven stairs. These stairs can become slippery in wet weather and there is a warning sign in place.
- There are areas of low headroom on staircases and areas of low lighting; please take care when moving around.
- The basement in the north tower has two flights of steep, uneven stone steps. Light levels may vary in this space and the steps can be wet and slippery.

The site can be busy and some areas may become congested, including access to the inner bailey.

- Groups should assemble outside the ticket office.
- To reduce overcrowding, only 15 students are allowed in the exhibition spaces at any one time. Only 5 students are to visit the shop at any one time.
- Event traffic may impact on access to the site at certain times of the year.

The basement room in the North Gatehouse Tower (known as an oubliette) and the well in the inner bailey have metal grilles.

- Do not stand on the metal grilles.
- Do not try to reach through the metal bars.

Dogs and wildlife may be present on site.

- Pevensey Castle is popular with dog walkers; dogs should be on leads.
- The ruinous nature of the castle provides many nesting sites for birds and there may be grass snakes on site. There may be a risk of zoonotic infection. Visitors are advised to wash their hands before eating.
- Visitors should be aware that animals may bite.

There are no toilets on site, but visitors can use the public toilet in the car park nearby.

- The toilet facilities at Pevensey Castle are located in the car park.
- These are public toilets and children should be supervised when using them.

There is an Education Room in the South Tower.

- The Education Room is accessed by going up two stairs and down three. It is not wheelchair accessible.
- There is a small lip on the threshold of the door into the room.
- The windows have areas with long drops beyond. To prevent any unsafe access there are bolts on the windows.
- The surface of the ceiling is uneven in places but is safe.