

Pickering Castle, Yorkshire

Hazard information for Educational 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.

- There is car and minibus parking outside the castle but coach parking on site is not possible.
- Children should be supervised at all times in the car park as other traffic will be accessing the site.
- Coaches can drop students off and then park in Eastgate Car Park (see below). Access roads are narrow and have parked cars. The road does loop round but if coaches access via the market place and leave via Undercliffe, they will need to turn right and turn around after the level crossing.
- You can walk from Eastgate Car Park off Whitby Road. The walk takes approximately 15 minutes and there are footpaths all the way. Major roads have crossing points. There is a steep drop on one section down to the road.
- Access to the toilets and education room is across the car park so please take students in groups and supervise at all times.

The ruinous nature of the castle site may present many potential hazards.

- The floor surfaces are uneven throughout and there are old, uneven steps and staircases.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- There are steep banks and ditches, and all visitors are forbidden from climbing these.
- There are some low stone foundations in the grounds, and these pose a trip hazard and may be slippery when wet. Running on site is prohibited.
- There are steep steps leading up the motte to the ruined keep. Groups are advised to use the handrails where possible and to supervise pupils closely.
- There are steep drops down the sides of the motte. Students should be supervised at all times

Pickering Castle is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.

- There are potentially harmful plants on site, including some with thorns that can irritate the skin.
- There are animals and birds on site, and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard. Visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.
- Some areas contain flowers and so insect stings/bites are possible.

Outside the castle area.

- You can walk around the outside of the castle walls to view it from the outside.
- This area is a public footpath so please be aware there may be members of the public with dogs off leads there.
- Paths are a mixture – some gravelled, some earth and some grass and can be slippery.
- Climbing on the banks is forbidden.

Visitors on site.

- The castle is open to the public so please be aware that there will be other visitors on site. Please be respectful.
- Students must stay with leaders whilst looking around the castle.

Education Room.

- Please read the Risk Assessment for the activities.
- Activities are self-led and group leaders are responsible for the safety of students.
- Blocks connecting together to make the arches may fall so do not allow students to crawl through and students should work in groups of 2 or 3.
- Swallowing of game pieces may cause choking so supervise accordingly.