

Portland Castle, Dorset

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.

Portland Castle is the remains of a Tudor castle; the site has outdoors areas and some indoor sheltered spaces.

- Walls are rough and may contain sharp stones.
- There are multiple climbing hazards and visitors should keep to the pathways and steps indicated.
- The site is exposed to the elements, high winds and the sea.
- There is a limit of 60 people, including the public, in the keep at any one time.

The large car park is situated a short walk from the site; coaches should park at Cheswell Beach.

- The site is a 20 metre walk from the car park, along a pavement.
- Use of the entrance area is shared by both pedestrians and cars.

There are areas of uneven surfaces in the keep and on the site.

- Ground surfaces are uneven throughout and can be slippery when wet.

There are high walls and sheer drops around the site.

- The Upper Gun Platform wall walk has open embrasures with drops onto the Lower Gun Platform and into the sea.
- The East Gun Battery has a low wall, with drops onto the beach and into the sea.
- The raised stone benches and the metal bridge in the Governor's Garden have short drops.

There are a number of small steps and staircases on the site; these can be slippery when wet.

- There is a worn, spiral stone staircase in the keep, with a rope handrail.
- There are worn stone steps in the Drawbridge Room and on the access to the Lower and Upper Gun Platforms.
- Some stairs on site have limited handrails.

There are some areas with low headroom.

- There is low headroom in the doorways and staircases in the Tudor castle, and in the gun casemates.

There are plants present in the garden.

- Plant material and thorns may be toxic or poisonous.
- Always wash hands prior to eating meals.

There are no bins on site.

- All rubbish must be taken away with you.

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.