

RIEVAULX ABBEY, 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.

- The car park is situated at the entrance to the abbey site.
- Occasionally maintenance vehicles use the gravel path between the visitor centre and the museum.
- Coaches will need to drop pupils off at the car park and then park in Helmsley. Visitors will need to walk across the car park to enter the site.
- The toilets are accessed from the car park.

The ruinous nature of the Abbey remains may present many potential hazards. Students must be supervised at all times.

- The floor surfaces are uneven throughout and there are old, uneven steps and staircases.
- Running on site is prohibited.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- Climbing present a significant hazard and is strictly prohibited.
- Grass banks are steep and can be slippery, particularly in wet weather.
- There is an open drain forming part of the Reredorter, which contains standing water.
- Wooden steps can be very slippery in wet weather and all visitors must use caution.
- There is a set of uneven and steep stone steps descending into the Day Room/Scriptorium. There is no fixed handrail and gravel is often washed onto the surface of the steps during heavy rain making them very slippery.
- The Tannery area has uneven flooring; the processing tanks have low walls and provide a significant trip hazard.
- The Tannery has water flowing through it.

Rievaulx Abbey 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; wash hands prior to eating.
- There is a herb garden near the museum building and so bees and wasps may be present.

Visitors on site

- The abbey is open to the public, be aware that there will be other visitors on site. Please be respectful.
- Students should be encouraged to stay with their group whilst looking around the abbey.

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.