

Stokesay Castle, Shropshire

Hazard Information Sheet 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 remain vigilant at all times. Please follow any staff instructions and be mindful of temporary barriers and signage. 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.

The car and coach park is situated opposite the main site entrance.

- There is no footpath through the car park.
- Access to the site from the car park is across a minor road.
- Hedges and a bend in the road may obstruct views when crossing.

The historic nature of the castle presents many potential hazards.

- The walls are rough and may contain sharp stones.
- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- There are outdoor courtyard areas which are exposed to the elements.
- Capacity in the South Tower is restricted to 30 persons. Please split into smaller groups to explore the South Tower to assist visitor flow.

There are large areas of uneven surfaces around the property.

- The towers have uneven floors.
- Ground surfaces are uneven throughout and can be slippery when wet.
- There are single steps and wooden framing which may be a tripping hazard.

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

- The South Tower has low, open windows at the top.

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

- There are steep, wooden steps leading from the Great Hall to the North Tower.
- There is a very narrow, worn stone spiral staircase leading up to the South Tower.
- The steps into the moat have no handrail.

There are some areas with low headroom.

- The doorways and staircases in the keep have low headroom.

There are various plants and wildlife in the garden and grounds; some may pose a hazard.

- Plant material and thorns may be toxic or poisonous.
- Bird droppings may present a zoonotic hazard; always wash hands prior to eating meals.