

TYNEMOUTH PRIORY AND CASTLE, TYNE AND WEAR

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. Make sure you wear sensible footwear and dress appropriately 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, storm damage can sometimes affect the stability of stonework and branches of apparently healthy trees. 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.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

We want to reassure you that we're following government guidance to make your trip as safe and enjoyable as possible.

We've introduced a range of new hygiene standards and social distancing measures. Our staff and facilitators have received guidance to help them safely run education visits at this time, and we've also created a general risk assessment for education visitors to help you with your individual risk assessments. You can find this and other information about what to expect on your visit at: english-heritage.org.uk/schools-what-to-expect

We've also detailed key changes on the individual site schools pages of our website, so please check before you visit. Once your booking is confirmed, we recommend booking a free planning visit to help you prepare for your trip and familiarise yourself with the site.

Moving vehicles may pose a hazard upon arrival and while on the site.

- Coaches will need to drop off at an appropriate point outside the site. This may mean that groups will need to cross a busy main road through the village.
- There is a small area outside the priory for a minibus to drop off at.
- Access to the site is via a tarmac roadway which may be used by access vehicles.
- Grounds maintenance teams and other vehicles may access the grounds inside the castle.

The ruinous nature of the priory and the castle presents many potential hazards, including uneven surfaces, drops and low masonry.

- The floor surfaces are often uneven, and there are old, uneven steps and staircases throughout.
- Gravel paths and grassed areas facilitate movement around the site, both of which can be slippery in wet conditions.
- Walls are rough and contain uneven and often sharp stones.
- There is low masonry around the site.
- Climbing on the walls is not permitted and poses a significant hazard.
- Entrance to the castle gatehouse is via a steep, grassy slope with a low retaining wall.
- Access to the upper level viewing platforms is via a dimly-lit, narrow, spiral staircase.
- Steep drops are guarded by railing which should not be climbed or swung on.
- The chapel interior in the priory is dimly-lit and contains uneven steps.

- The southern part of the monastic precinct has slopes with unguarded drops onto grass or hard surfaces.
- There are several gravestones that are upstanding or laid flat around the priory site, some of which may be hard to see due to the undulating ground.
- The Tudor gun platforms are accessed via grassy banks. There is also a parapet with steep drops.
- Wall walks, where accessible, are protected by parapet walls or fencing.

The gun battery may pose possible hazards, including drops, concrete areas and low lighting.

- The battery is located near to the edge of the cliff.
- There are concrete, hard standing surfaces and exposed gun turrets and platforms with steep drops, some which are unfenced.
- The magazines are accessed by concrete stairs. The interior of the restored '6 inch' magazine is via a single stairwell and entrance. There is low level lighting and groups visiting this area should be in no more than 10-15 people at one time.

Tynemouth Priory and Castle are home to a wide variety of wildlife.

- There are animals and birds on site and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard.
- Children should be reminded to wash their hands prior to eating.

Asbestos has been identified on the site this is being managed and monitored by English Heritage.

- These areas are clearly marked with red stickers.
- No activities that may disturb the asbestos are permitted; please raise any concerns or accidental damage with the Site Manager immediately.