

WREST PARK, BEDFORDSHIRE

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'll 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.

There is a one way system operating at Wrest Park.

- Please be aware of the one way system operating on site and stick to this route to avoid congestion and to maintain social distancing with other visitors.

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

- The driveway into the estate is a busy access route for vehicles with 20mph signs displayed. Group leaders should be aware of vehicles when walking children from the coach drop off point along the driveway.

Surfaces may be uneven and change in level; please use paved pathways and designated walkways wherever possible.

- There are uneven surfaces throughout the house and gardens.
- Some areas have loose gravel surfaces and there may be potholes and various trip hazards around the site.
- Some paths and slabs may be slippery when wet.

The fire alarm at Wrest Park is not tested during opening hours.

- If the alarm is activated, exit the building. Please do not be alarmed; site staff will be on hand to assist. Teachers are responsible for a roll call once you have exited the house.

The playground and congestion within the visitor centre may pose a hazard.

- School groups access the house and grounds through the Visitor Centre and café seating area upon arrival. As this area can become busy with other visitors and staff please plan your journey through any crowds with care.
- The playground outside the Visitor Centre contains apparatus for infants and older children. It is the responsibility of teachers and group leaders to decide on suitability of equipment for their groups. Surfaces may become slippery in wet weather.

The historic mansion house may pose various hazards and the staircase treads may be worn and uneven.

- There is a one way system throughout the house and grounds, please split your class into smaller groups of 10 to help with social distancing.
- As the mansion is a working environment for many businesses, noise should be kept to a minimum and leaders should ensure that children enter the mansion in small groups.
- During your visit there may be hospitality events taking place in the mansion state rooms. If this is the case, extra care and consideration should be exercised.
- Please join us in protecting and conserving the objects and paintings in the house, and instruct your students to not touch any items unless advised in the house. Please encourage a 'look only' policy.

The historic grounds and gardens of the estate may pose various hazards, including garden buildings, unguarded water features and on-going garden maintenance.

- There are a number of garden buildings including the Orangery, Bowling Green House, Archer Pavilion and Bath House. The Archer Pavilion has very steep steps inside and the Bath House is near water. Windows in these buildings do not contain safety glass. Steps and terraces around the buildings can be slippery when wet.
- General garden maintenance work may be taking place during your visit.
- There are a number of water features and large bodies of water within the grounds; a river runs around the park, and there are various lakes, streams, ponds and fountains throughout the gardens. The edges of some of these are indeterminate and may be slippery or muddy.
- Paths around the gardens can be slippery and muddy when wet and there may be trip hazards such as projecting roots.
- There may be slow moving vehicles in the gardens, including contractors, garden buggies and suppliers. Drivers should be driving at a low speed whilst watching for pedestrians.

Trees onsite may pose a hazard.

- There are a number of trees throughout the gardens which may have low or loose branches. Trees identified as dangerous will be clearly roped or taped off.
- To ensure your safety and to protect and conserve the landscape please do not climb on any of the walls or trees.