

The following information is provided to assist visiting teachers and group leaders in completing their own risk assessment prior to their visit. It is not intended to be a replacement for a group leader conducted risk assessment.

We recommend that you make a preliminary site visit if you are going to be leading a group to Newcastle Castle. You can organise this either by telephone (0191 230 6300) or emailing the Learning Officer (learning@newcastlecastle.co.uk) Preliminary visits are free and are useful both for planning the educational content of your visit and making you aware of possible safety issues.

Teachers and supervisors of educational parties are ultimately responsible for the safety and behaviour of their students while on site. Newcastle Castle's staff and volunteers will help to facilitate educational activities and give out safety advice on the day where necessary, but it is up to you as the group supervisor to monitor students and ensure their safety and co-operation.

The Hazard Identification highlights the everyday risks that groups may incur.

Location	Hazard Description	Our Controls	What you and your party need to do
Outside			
	<i>Bad Weather</i> – some of the Castle site is outdoors, and groups will need to move between the two buildings.	In case of very bad weather our guides will try and keep most of the visit indoors.	Make sure you are dressed for the weather. We recommend sturdy shoes (like trainers) and coats.
	<i>Slips, trips and falls</i> – the area surrounding the Castle Keep and Black Gate features cobbles, uneven ground, steps, bollards, railings, possible loose stones and trees.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers – be aware of possible trip hazards.
	<i>Vehicles</i> – There are two public roads adjacent to the site – St Nicholas' Street and Castle Garth.	Our guides will warn the group to beware of traffic.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers – please be aware of traffic.
	<i>Falling Masonry</i> – The Castle Keep and Black Gate are very old buildings, and there is a small risk of falling masonry.	We perform a daily visual inspection of the perimeter of the site, and a monthly inspection of the building fabric.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Black Gate – Entrance and stairs			
	<i>Walkways</i> – the wooden walkways can be slippery and present a trip hazard in bad weather.	Handrails provided	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Stairs</i> – There are a lot of stairs in the Black Gate, and they are narrow and steep.	Guides will warn the group to move slowly on the stairs, hold the rail and walk in single file.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. It is a good idea to spread group leaders out among the group while on the stairs.

	<i>Lifts</i> – The Black Gate has a lift at the back of the building, accessed via a wooden walkway.	Instructions clearly printed on both the inside and outside of lift, maximum weight stated.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Only use the lift if necessary for access.
Black Gate – Reception			
	<i>Furniture, low fireplaces and shop units</i> – These can present a trip hazard, or children might be injured running onto the edges.	Room is checked daily, monitored by staff	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Safeguarding</i> – Please be aware that this area of the Black Gate is open to the public.	Room monitored by staff.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Black Gate – Learning Room			
	<i>Furniture, craft materials etc.</i> – As in other areas there are possible hazards presented from tripping over or running into furniture.	Room checked daily to minimise risks.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Hot water</i> – There are sinks with hot taps and a kettle in the Learning Room.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Electrical sockets</i> – There are a number of power sockets in the Learning Room.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Toilets</i> – Possible hazards include slips, trips and falls, and the need for adult assistance in some cases.	Toilets cleaned and inspected daily, alarms present in accessible toilets.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please be aware of children getting their hands caught in the doors.
	<i>Safeguarding</i> – If the door is open members of the public may try to get access.	Door has lock, teacher's given door code.	Please feel free to politely ask members of the public to leave the Learning Room.
Black Gate – Exhibition Space			
	<i>Furniture and display cabinets</i> – Possible hazards include trips and collisions. Some of the objects on display are unsecured and could fall if handled.	Displays are checked daily, and there is adequate space to move around the exhibits.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. No running or unsupervised handling of objects.
	<i>Openable cabinets, trunks and other items</i> - Several of the displays feature elements which can be opened and closed, including chests and travelling trunks, a 'close-stool' and numerous cabinet doors and drawers.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please be aware of the possibility of fingers getting caught.

	<i>Electrical sockets</i> – There are a number of electrical sockets in the exhibition.	Unused sockets fitted with plastic covers.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Safeguarding</i> – Please be aware that this area of the Black Gate is open to the public.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Castle Keep – Entrance and throughout			
	<i>Steep and uneven stairs</i> – There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep. Some of these are spiral stairs which can be quite narrow in places.	Our guide will issue some basic guidance before entering the Keep which will be reiterated before going onto each set of stairs. Most of the stairs are fitted with handrails.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please ensure adults are spread out among the group to assist children with climbing the stairs. Climb slowly and carefully.
	<i>Weather</i> – The steps into the Keep are particularly hazardous in the rain or if the weather is icy.	Our staff makes a daily inspection in winter to make sure the steps are de-iced.	Take particular care on the steps in bad weather.
	<i>Safeguarding</i> – Please be aware that the Castle Keep is open to the public.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Cold</i> – The Castle Keep is cold year round and can be VERY cold in winter time.		Please ensure all children are adequately dressed for cold temperatures.
Castle Keep – 1st Floor (Museum)			
	<i>Wooden floors</i> – The floors are old and slightly uneven.	Daily inspections by staff.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Displays and cabinets</i> – There are a number of displays in the first floor including a replica crossbow, an armour stand, several artefact cabinets and a large table with thrones. Any of these may be a trip or collision hazard.	Daily inspections by staff, ensuring sufficient space around displays.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please do not run in the museum room.
	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above
Castle Keep – Ground floor (Cellar)			
	<i>Displays and information boards</i> – There are a few display boards in the Cellar which may be a trip hazard.	Daily inspections by staff, ensuring sufficient space around displays.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Stocks and pillory</i> – There is a set of stocks and a pillory in the Cellar. These could be a trip or collision hazard, or if they are handled incorrectly could trap fingers, hands or feet.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please only allow children to use these under supervision.

	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above
Castle Keep – Chapel			
	<i>Low stone ledge</i> – There is a low stone ledge around the outside of the Chapel which could be a trip hazard.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above
Castle Keep – Great Hall			
	<i>Furniture</i> – Some trip hazards from furniture may be present.	Furniture is kept to the edges of the room.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Well Room</i> – This room off the Great Hall has some stairs and an uneven stone floor.	Handrail along one side of the room.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Cell</i> – The cell is a small chamber up some steep stairs off the Great Hall. The floor is uneven and the room is quite narrow.	Our guide will warn any group before entering this room.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Only enter this room in small groups and be very careful on the stairs.
	<i>Solar Room</i> – There are two large wooden chests and a display board in this room which could be a tripping hazard, and a narrow corridor leading to the ‘garderobe’ (medieval toilet.)		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Only enter the corridor to the garderobe in small groups.
	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above
Castle Keep – Gallery			
	<i>Falls from the gallery</i> – The gallery opens onto the Great Hall	High fences on all openings	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Uneven floor</i> – Trip hazard		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above
Castle Keep – Roof			
	<i>Falling from roof</i> - possible due to slips, trips and falls.	Regulation height barrier in place, along with warning signs. Roof de-iced if necessary. Our guide will issue a warning before we go up to the roof.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Low doorways</i> – low stone doorways, especially up to the turret.	Warning sign	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Weather</i> – The roof is exposed and can be	Roof is checked	Wear sensible clothing.

	cold and slippery in bad weather.	daily and de-iced if necessary.	
	<i>Low lighting</i> – When re-entering the Keep from the roof it can take a short time for your eyes to adjust to the light levels.	Your guide will warn the group to move slowly on the stairs.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Stairs</i> - There are steep, uneven stone stairways throughout the Castle Keep.	See above	See above

Hazard ID for Educational Activities

Activity	Hazard Description	Our Controls	What you and your party need to do
Knight School Workshop			
	<i>Weight of objects</i> – Armour and weapon replicas are heavy and made of metal.	Guide will help with handling.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. We recommend one of the adults with the group tries on the armour.
	<i>Sword training activity</i> – risk of being hit with prop sword	Use of safe foam swords for activity Guide will issue safety instructions at the start of activity	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Sharp edges and hinges</i> – some of the pieces of armour have moving parts and sharp edges which could catch fingers or cause injury	Guide will help with handling and issue safety instructions at the start of activity.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Adult to pass objects between children.
	<i>Risk of injury or damage</i> – Weapons can be dangerous.	Weapon replicas are blunted. To be handled only under careful supervision.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Adult to pass objects between children.
	<i>Medieval dancing</i> – risk of tripping and falling.	Guide will explain the steps to the group. Dancing to be done slowly.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. It is useful if adults can join in with children in this activity.
	<i>Medieval manners activity</i> – risk of tripping and falling.	Guide will explain the activity to the group in advance. Activity to be done slowly.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. It is useful if adults can join in with children in this activity.
Castles & Courts Workshop			
	<i>Medieval dancing</i> – risk of tripping and falling.	Guide will explain the steps to the group. Dancing to be done slowly.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. It is useful if adults can join in with children in this activity.

	<i>Ingesting play-doh</i>	Non-toxic play-doh used during activity	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Medieval manners activity</i> – risk of tripping and falling.	Guide will explain the activity to the group in advance. Activity to be done slowly.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. It is useful if adults can join in with children in this activity.
	<i>Acting</i> – Activity involves acting out a scenario, which involves risks of tripping, bumping into other children etc.	Guide will coordinate activity and ensure space is clear. All props used in activity will be safe and non breakable.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Medieval Medicine Workshop			
	<i>Medieval surgical equipment</i> – Replica medieval surgical equipment is sharp and can be dangerous!	Surgical equipment shown to pupils under strict control of guide.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Pupils are not to handle sharp pieces of equipment, other pieces to be passed between children by adults.
	<i>Gruesome!</i> The descriptions of symptoms and treatments in this session can be gruesome and may cause distress.	Guide will tailor delivery for age group and according to your own wishes. Gory descriptions but no actual gore!	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Session can be stopped momentarily if anyone becomes distressed – you know best what level of gore your class can handle!
Medieval Dungeon Workshop			
	<i>Replica Artefacts</i> – Replica artefacts include an axe, a scourge, manacles and other items which may be hazardous or distressing.	Objects only to be handled under strict supervision by the guide.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Adult to pass objects between children. Teacher has final say over whether certain items can be handled by pupils (axe, sword etc.)
	<i>Gruesome!</i> The descriptions of crimes and punishments in this session can be gruesome and may cause distress.	Guide will tailor delivery for age group and according to your own wishes. Gory descriptions but no actual gore!	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Session can be stopped momentarily if anyone becomes distressed – you know best what level of gore your class can handle!
Fairy Tales Workshop			

	<i>Acting</i> – Activity involves acting out a story, which involves risks of tripping, bumping into other children etc.	Guide will coordinate activity and ensure space is clear.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Scary Stories!</i> Some of the stories discussed in this session can arguable be quite scary which might lead to some children becoming distressed.	Guide will do their best to tailor the session to the age of the children.	You are the best judge of the sensitivity of children in your group and should monitor anyone you think might be at risk of becoming distressed.
Siege and Storm Workshop			
	<i>Artefact Handling</i> – The workshop involves handling real and replica artefacts from the Civil War era. Some of these, such as cannon balls and swords, have the potential to be hazardous. Some smaller items may have chips or be fragile.	Guide will issue instructions on safe handling before objects are passed around. Any particularly hazardous items will be handled only under strict supervision.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. If necessary adults to supervise handing of objects from one pupil to another.
	<i>Pike Drill</i> – Uses bamboo canes to simulate pikes and involves physical activity. Risks of tripping, collision or being injured by canes.	Guide will issue safety instructions. Teachers and accompanying adults will be asked to supervise session closely.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Tudor Newcastle Workshop			
	<i>Bessie Surtees House</i> – Please note this workshop takes place away from Newcastle Castle at Bessie Surtees House, a separate site maintained by Historic England. Please see separate attached risk assessment for hazards associated with the building.		Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
	<i>Artefact Handling</i> – Some objects may be heavy and cause injury if dropped. Others may have chips.	Our guide will issue instructions on safe handling before the objects are passed around.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. If necessary adults to supervise handing of objects from one pupil to another.
	<i>Herbs and Spices</i> – There is sometimes a handling session allowing pupils to handle and smell real spices used to in Tudor times. There is a risk that some people may be allergic to these.	Our guide will ask before handling if anyone has any allergies.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Please make guide aware of any allergies in your group.
Craft activities			
	<i>Scissor cuts</i>	Round tipped scissors used.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.

	<i>Ingesting glue or paint</i>	Non-toxic glues and paints.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers.
Artefact Handling			
	<i>Weight of objects</i> – Some objects used in handling sessions may be heavy	Guide will help with handling	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. We recommend one of the adults with the group hands round difficult items.
	<i>Risk of injury or damage</i> – Objects are made of a variety of materials which may break or be dropped during handling.	Guide will help with handling. Objects are chosen to minimise risks.	Group to be supervised at all times by school staff and school volunteers. Adult to pass objects between children.
COVID - 19			
	<i>Artefact handling</i> – risk of Covid-19 transmission through touching objects at the Castle	Artefact handling has been reduced in all sessions. All objects used are cleaned and disinfected after session	
	<i>Group activities</i> – risk of Covid-19 transmission through mixing of groups	Group activities have been reduced in all sessions We will follow school's own guidelines on groups working together Time given before and after session for hand washing	Group to be supervised by school staff at all times to ensure social distancing where necessary Advise Castle staff at beginning of session on school guidelines re: group working
	<i>Toilets</i> – Only two toilets in Harbottle Suite for whole group, risk of Covid-19 transmission via touching surfaces	All surfaces in toilets disinfected after each group visit to ensure clean for next group Hand sanitiser and soap provided, hand washing instructions displayed in toilets	Please remind pupils during lunch to wash their hands properly
	<i>Public areas</i> – Risk of Covid-19 transmission through contact with Castle staff, public etc	School visits only offered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when Castle closed to public. Reduced staffing level – only staff delivering session will be on site	Please be aware the outside areas of the Castle are public land, keep group supervised to ensure distance kept from members of the public
	<i>Castle site</i> – Risk of Covid-19 transmission on surfaces in Castle site	Surfaces on Castle site cleaned and disinfected daily, before and after visits	Please bring own hand sanitiser to ensure good hygiene
	<i>Castle staff</i> – Risk of transmission from Castle staff to visitors	Castle staff will wear face shields while delivering session and will maintain 2m distance where possible from pupils and school staff	Supervise pupils to ensure distance correctly maintained where possible