

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'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](https://www.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.

- 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.

The ruinous nature of the Abbey remains may present many potential hazards.

- The floor surfaces are uneven throughout and there are old, uneven steps and staircases.
- 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 is currently cordoned off and out of bounds. The processing tanks have low walls and provide a significant trip hazard.

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. Children should be reminded to wash their hands prior to eating.