

Yarmouth Castle, Isle of Wight

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. 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 as well as following any staff instructions and being mindful of temporary barriers and signage, please remain vigilant at all times. 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 should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times whilst on site.

The castle is accessed through a short pedestrian-only lane leading from Quay Road, which runs through the town centre.

- Quay Road is narrow, with one-way traffic, and has no pedestrian footpath.
- The area around the castle is often busy due to the adjacent ferry terminal.
- There is no vehicular access to the castle.

The historic nature of the site poses potential slips, trips and falls hazards.

- Floor surfaces are uneven throughout the site and when exposed to the elements these can become wet and slippery.
- There is low level lighting in some areas.
- Sensible footwear and outdoor clothing are advised.
- The Gunpowder Room is dark, has low headroom, and is up two steps.

The sluice area in the inner courtyard can fill with water in bad weather and in certain tidal conditions.

- The sluice area is protected by a railing.

The Master Gunner's House poses potential hazards.

- The house comprises a kitchen and parlour on the ground floor; both are furnished with simple period furniture and artefacts.
- The upper rooms are reached via a narrow twisting wooden staircase which has a handrail.
- Floor levels upstairs are uneven in places.

The inner courtyard and original entrance to the castle pose a number of potential hazards, including steps, weather and low ceilings.

- The original entrance to the castle is now closed with a heavy iron grilled gate.
- Headroom levels are low in parts of the inner courtyard area.
- There are 24 stone steps with a partial handrail leading from the inner courtyard up to the gun platform which is an open grassy area exposed to the Solent and overlooking the adjacent ferry terminal.
- The wind can be very strong on the gun platform.
- There is a stone wall and guard rail around the edge of the platform.

- Climbing is not permitted; students need to be carefully supervised in this area.

There are no toilet facilities inside Yarmouth Castle.

- The nearest public toilet facilities are about a 2-minute walk away from the castle; please ask site staff for directions.

Flaura and Fauna

- There are birds on site, and their droppings can present a zoonotic hazard. Visitors should wash their hands prior to eating.