

**CARDIFF CASTLE “SAFETY INFORMATION” FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL GROUP VISITS.**

PRODUCED TO ASSIST WITH VISIT PREPARATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT.

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| Safety Statement | Cardiff Castle fully accepts its responsibilities under Health and Safety Legislation. A Health and Safety Policy is in place together with written risk assessments undertaken in respect of our legal duties relating to persons other than employees (i.e. visitors) coming onto our site and using our facilities.  Please be assured that your safety and health whilst on our site is of our utmost concern. As a venue operated by Cardiff Council, we have strict guidelines to adhere to and have worked closely with our Schools Health and Safety Officer regarding the well-being to all our visitors and to ensure your visit is a fun, enjoyable learning experience.  We operate a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment, which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for the safety and welfare of visitors / participants are qualified to undertake the duties they are assigned. All Castle staff are trained in Fire Precaution and Evacuation, and in Health and Safety.  We ask that teachers and group leaders work with Castle staff to carefully supervise the children at all times.  Schools are informed of the following details, which will aid the undertaking of your own school “educational visit” risk assessment for the purposes of your visit. PLEASE NOTE that these instructions DO NOT take the place of an individual risk assessment, which is a requirement of all LEAs. |

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| **Background** | |
| Experience | The venue has been open to the public since 1947 and is a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction under the Wales Tourist Board VAQAS scheme.  In 2007, 2012 & 2017, the Education Service at Cardiff Castle was awarded a Sandford Award for Heritage Education. This recognises excellence in the facilities and provision of educational activities at a venue.  Cardiff Castle is also the holder of a current Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (ref: R1QB 104035. Exp 16.06.23) |
| Venue Details | The venue offers visitors the opportunity to discover 2000 years of history in the heart of the city. Pupils can learn about the Roman settlers and Norman occupancy, experience the lavish Victorian interiors by William Burges or learn about the use of the Castle walls as an air raid shelter during the Second World War.  The average school visit lasts for approximately 3.5 – 4 hours, allowing time for a guided tour of the interiors, a session in the Education Centre, time for lunch, a visit to the Norman Keep using the Audio Guide, access to the Battlements and Castle Green and a visit to the Wartime Shelters.  There is an audio guide which is available in Welsh and English and there is a guide in both languages specifically for children. It can be downloaded in advance.  There is also an independently run Military Museum in the Interpretation Centre. This is managed separately and is not part of the Castle’s Education Service. |
| Visitor No s | Annually we receive approximately 300,000 visitors and approximately 23,000 domestic school visitors. |
| Suitability | The venue is considered suitable for pupils of all ages. There is something at the Castle for all key stages. |
| Contact Information | To book a school visit, please contact the Education Officer on 029 2087 8110.  Further information about the venue is available on our website – www.cardiffcastle.com.  We look forward to welcoming you however if you wish to discuss aspects of your visit or would like to arrange a pre- visit please do not hesitate to contact the Education Officer – Elizabeth Stevens on 029 2087 8110 or 029 2087 8100 or by e-mailing [EStevens@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:Estevens@cardiff.gov.uk). We thoroughly recommend a visit if possible – in particular for groups using the Education Centre.  The venue operates an emergency contact number for visitors if they should require assistance while on site. Please note that this number is 07970 127657 and is staffed during opening hours.  If after your visit you have any concerns or have experienced any problems regarding the management of the venue or safety and health of members of your party, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss these with you.  Tel: 029 2087 8100 or  E-mail: cardiffcastle@cardiff.gov.uk |
| **General Information** | |
| Animal Fouling in Public Access areas | The Castle Green is now open as a “Public Square” and dogs are allowed here if they are kept on a lead. All owners are expected to clear up after their dogs. |
| Communication Systems | All venue staff carry communication aids and will be happy to assist with any enquiries. |
| Criminal History / Civil Actions | Teachers are expected to accompany groups at all times. Castle staff should therefore not be in a position where they are working individually with children. All reasonable measures are taken to ensure venue staff are in a position of prolonged contact with children have been subject to DBS checks. |
| Climbing/ Trip hazards | The climbing of trees and on walls within the venue is forbidden.  Please discourage children from climbing on the cannons and military field guns in order to avoid falls.  There are cobbled paths in various areas of the site, along with several trip hazards, which should be noted.  The area in front of the Interpretation Centre and most of the drive is covered with “bonded gravel”. Though children are less likely to skid on this surface than on loose gravel surfaces, falling on the surface will cause a nasty graze.  We therefore ask you to ensure that children do not run on this surface. They are welcome to let off steam on the grass though we would ask that they do not play ball games in front of the house. The larger area of grass can be used for that. |
| Emergency Evacuation | Emergency evacuation procedures are in place. All venue staff are familiar with these.  There will always be a member of staff with a group who will lead any necessary evacuation of the building. The Education Centre is the only exception to this as teachers may be left with their groups in the Centre without the assistance of a member of staff, for example, when eating lunch there; however, there are members of staff located nearby who will help in the unlikely event of an emergency.  Evacuation notices are posted within the Education Centre. We advise that you familiarise yourself and your colleagues with these at the beginning of your session.  In the event of an evacuation, please make your way to the grassed area outside the Education Centre unless otherwise directed by a member of the Castle staff. It is important that all areas if the driveway are kept clear in case fire engines need to attend.  On hearing the alarm, all visitors must make their way to the dedicated Assembly Point. Please leave all coats and bags in the rooms and encourage the children to remain calm and not to run or push those in front of them.  In the event of an alarm sounding when you are using the Education Centre, we ask that you try to clear the Housekeeper’s Room (Room 1) first in order to make way for people from the Steward’s Room (Room 2) to exit. A member of staff will come to check the room, and the toilet area to ensure that nobody remains in the area.  If you are using an indoor lunch space, such as the Undercroft or Bar, or the Education Centre toilets, please follow the green fire exit signs to make your way outside and gather on the grass in front of the main building. Groups in the Undercroft and Education Centre toilets will need to allow other classes from the Education Centre to exit first. A member of staff will come and check the areas to ensure that everyone has exited.  Once at the meeting points, please count all members of your group, as you would at school and inform a member of staff immediately if anyone is missing. |
| Facilities for visitors with Additional Needs | The venue tries to accommodate the requirements of visitors with additional needs. Schools and party leaders must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place in order that appropriate supervision and assistance is available to pupils with additional needs.  Physical Impairment – Wheelchair access is possible to the Education Centre and Undercroft though access to the main building and Keep involves many steps with lots of different levels and narrow doorways within the building. We regret that these areas are therefore inaccessible for those with mobility difficulties.  There is a lift in the Interpretation Centre that enables access to the Battlements and Air Raid Shelters, and these are also accessible via a sloping path. Visual Impairment – Wherever possible within the limits of what is permissible in a historic building, the edges of steps within the venue have been made more conspicuous with white paint on all steps that can be painted. Some steps may remain unpainted due to the nature of the building. The lighting level within indoor areas is generally good. There are handling collections in both rooms of the Education Centre, and a specially adapted tour of the Castle interiors can be arranged upon request. There is a version of the Audio Guide written especially for the visually impaired.  Hearing Impairment – We recommend that you advise Castle staff upon entry to the Castle if your party consists of anyone with a hearing impairment so that staff are able to endeavour to assist wherever possible. An induction loop is in place in the Education Centre. Please advise the Education Officer if you wish to use the loop. There is a signed version of the Audio Guide for those with hearing impairments and a large print versions of the audio guide script is also available. |
| First Aid | There are a number of trained first aiders on site who have access to fully equipped portable first aid bags. If assistance is required, please approach the nearest member of staff to you who will contact the relevant first aider immediately.  In the event of an emergency whilst in the Education Centre, please telephone 029 2087 8100 and ask a member of staff to contact the duty first-aider. |
| Guided Tours | To visit the House (the Victorian part of the Castle) your party will be allocated a guide (called a “Visitor Host”), who has considerable experience and knowledge and will be with your group throughout the guided tour of the interior of the building.  Visitors using the Audio Guide will be able to do so in their own time and in any order they wish (using the site panels located all over the site).  The Audio Guide takes you up the Keep (steep steps and spiral staircases), onto the Battlement walks and through the Air Raid Shelters. There are also Audio Guide stops within the House itself. Please ensure that all children are careful of their footing when walking around. There is a screen on the handset of the guide and we recommend that they stand still when using it to avoid tripping over or walking in to anything. |
| Height Restrictions | There is a height restriction of 3373mm and width of 2642mm through the main Castle gate though vehicles may only come on site with prior permission. |
| Insurance (Public Liability) | We have a public liability or third party to £50 million.  A copy of our insurance certificate is provided to visiting parties upon request. |
| Loss of Bearings | Please note that due to the nature of the venue children are at risk of getting lost if they stray from organised parties. |
| Lost Person Stations | Any lost persons should congregate and be collected from the area near main gate (a member of staff will ensure the safety of the child whilst waiting).  If a teacher or group leader realises that a child has been separated from the group, please inform the gate or Ticket Office staff, who will alert radio users to help find the child. |
| Maximum Party Sizes | Each guided tour for domestic school groups can accommodate up to 35 people, including teachers and adult helpers as can each room in the Education Centre.  During to the Covid-19 Pandemic, maximum numbers on guided tours were greatly reduced and teachers were required to split classes for guided tours.  Should the need arise for group sizes to be reduced again, you will be informed of the change upon booking or by e-mail.  We operate an adult-child ratio for school visits, which is as follows:  Nursery Children – 1 adult free per 3 children  Reception– 1 adult per 5 children  Year 1 & 2 - 1 adult free per 6 children  Year 3-6 (Primary) – 1 adult free per 10 children  Year 7 upwards – 1 adult free per 15 children.  Ratios will be different for those accompanying children with special needs and will be agreed at the time of booking.  We are also flexible should your local authority or school have a different set ratio of accompanying adults to children for school visits. |
| Medical Needs | The venue should be contacted by the school or party leader if any pupil is known to have any specific or serious medical condition / need. Discussion will be required to consider emergency arrangements.  We will, where it is safe to do so, aim to fully include pupils with specific or serious medical conditions within activities offered. |
| Harmful / Poisonous Plants / Fungi | At certain times of the year some poisonous berries may be prevalent on trees and shrubs within the grounds. Schools should advise all children that berries should not be picked or eaten.  Certain fungi are also known to grow periodically. Schools should advise all children that fungi should not be picked or eaten. |
| Required Visitor Conduct (no access to areas for site staff only) | Visitors must not  -enter areas which are not open to the public, such as areas marked for staff only  -behave in an unruly manner  -climb on the walls and trees  -access the battlements other than on the path provided (i.e. by climbing the banks or coming down the banks from the Battlements).  -take photographs inside the building using flash  -use mobile telephones inside the building  -eat or drink inside the House  -ignore the instructions of the guide/ visitor host or any member of staff  Party leaders must not leave children unsupervised. |
| Schematic Map | A map is available which includes the location of the Education Centre, toilets, catering facilities, as well as other items of interest. This is issued to group leaders upon arrival at the Castle. |
| Site Inspections of Venue Facilities / Areas | Castle staff conduct regular inspections of the facilities and an internal reporting mechanism is in place for any safety hazards. Site inspections are recorded in a log.  All equipment is regularly checked to ensure that it is in good working order. |
| Site Staff Identification | Castle staff wear blue uniform bearing the Castle logo.  All staff can be easily identified by looking for the logo or a personal identification badge. |
| Vehicle Traffic | Within the grounds, certain vehicles may require access though this is limited. The speed limit (5 m.p.h.) will be strictly observed but group leaders should be aware of possible vehicular movement.  There is no coach parking available on site, however there is a coach park in nearby Sophia Gardens – approximately 15 minutes walk away from the Castle. It is also possible to drop off groups there, who can then walk through Bute Park to Castle Street, where they will walk on the pavement alongside a two-way cycle lane to the entrance of the Castle.  It is no longer possible for coaches to drop off directly outside the Castle. At the time of writing, the nearest coach drop-off points are in the layby on North Road (going North), just beyond the Castle and outside the National Museum of Wales. A map of these and coach parking areas is available upon request and information is on the Visit Cardiff website – [www.visitcardiff.com](http://www.visitcardiff.com) |
| Weather Protection / Sun Safety | A number of areas are available throughout the venue, which offer protection from the weather (adverse conditions or hot sunny days). These include areas under one of the many trees in the Castle, areas of the Norman Keep, the Interpretation Centre, Air Raid Shelters and Firing Line Museum.  There is additional seating with shelter to the right-hand side of the main House, which can be used by school groups.  We strongly advise that children bring sunscreen and hats during the fine weather as there is a lot of open space without shade in the Castle. |
| Welfare Facilities | Toilets are usually available adjacent to the Education Centre which are solely for use of educational groups. These are accessible down a fairly steep flight of stairs at the end of the corridor leading to the Education Centre.  A disabled toilet is available in the Education Centre and is situated adjacent to the Housekeeper’s Room.  Male toilets are also located near the main entrance to the Castle, with extra female toilets at the foot of the Clock Tower.  The Keep Terrace – the catering facility in the Interpretation Centre offers a selection of snacks and drinks.  We endeavour to provide an internal eating area in inclement weather, but this cannot be guaranteed.  As a venue run by Cardiff Council, we operate a strict no smoking policy throughout the site. |

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| **Areas of Higher Risk** | |
| Adventure Activities | NA |
| Contact with animals | N/A. |
| Residential Accommodation | NA |
| Rides and Attractions in Theme Parks | NA |
| Safety Equipment / Clothing | Please note that appropriate sunscreens are recommended for use particularly during the long hot summer days! |
| Underground Activities | NA |
| Water Courses & Ponds | The Keep is surrounded by a deep moat. A fence surrounds the moat. Teachers and group leaders are advised not to allow children to climb or sit on this fence.  There are lifebuoys provided at various points around the moat, which are checked by Castle staff regularly. These are clearly identifiable and are orange. Please use these if a member of staff is not readily available to assist.  If any member of your party should fall into the moat please  inform the nearest member of staff who will take control of the situation , summon additional help, and call for a first aider. |

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| **Other Relevant Information** (including items not covered above or where details of any of the above specifications cannot be met) | |
| Please ensure that children wash or sanitise their hands before and after using the Education Centre.  We kindly request that all fire doors are kept closed if you are using the Education Centre, and Education Centre toilets, when open. Propping these open contravenes fire regulations. Please also ensure that you do not prop open the door into the corridor near the Education Centre (at the bottom of the ramp). If you discover a fire door that has been wedged open, we would be grateful if you could close it. Some doors will be required to remain open to assist with ventilation (Covid-19 precautions). Please check with a member of staff if unsure about whether a door should be left open or not.  Special events are held at regular intervals during the holiday periods and sometimes at weekends. Please telephone Elizabeth Stevens on 029 2087 8110 if you have any enquiries about special events. | |
| Signed | Elizabeth Stevens |
| **Date** | May 2023 |
| **Name (In capitals)** | ELIZABETH STEVENS |
| **Position in Organisation** | Education Officer |
| **Telephone No.** | 029 2087 8110 |
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This document is available in Welsh / Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg