

**Welcome to Mountfitchet Castle
and the House on the Hill Museum**

Stansted Essex CM24 8SP

Telephone Number: 01279 813237

info@mountfitchetcastle.com

www.mountfitchetcastle.com

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An example itinerary of a school visit: Mountfitchet Castle.

Arrival. Most groups/parties arrive between 10.00am and 11.00am. The castle opens at 10am. There is a car park directly outside Mountfitchet Castle with coach parking spaces. This car park is operated by the Council, and the 2026 daily charge per coach is £6.00. (Please note that this is subject to change by the Council)

Checking in and Payment. Person in charge of the group/party comes to our front desk to check in. Please have ready the actual number of children and adults that you have brought along with you on the day. Don't worry about working out the 1-15 free adult ratio – we'll do that for you. The invoice will be made out for you while you wait (or you can leave your figures with the member of staff on the gate and come back later in the day to settle up) Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'. If you are taking away an invoice for an unpaid visit, the visit must be paid within 14 days as per the terms on the bottom of the invoice.

Entering the complex. Bring the group/party through the main gate and straight through into the picnic area to gather and organise and read out our guidelines to the group/party (enclosed).

Lunch. Most schools/groups like to have their lunch, after an initial look around the castle, anytime between 11.30am and 1.00pm. The lunch room and picnic area can only be booked upon arrival in the morning on a 'first come'. The outdoor covered picnic area can accommodate up to 100+ people at one sitting and can be used if you wish. We do book lunch slots when you arrive and these are on a half hourly basis as we may have a lot of schools to sit down for lunch. We have a café which provides hot & cold beverages, freshly made sandwiches, toasted herb paninis and sandwiches with a filling of your choice, delicious home-made cakes, ice creams etc.

Souvenir Shop. Just before or after lunch is a popular time to souvenir shop and most school children bring about £3.00 to £10.00 to spend but we cater for all spending ranges. For the convenience of the party of large groups our advice is to come into the shop in groups of 10 – 15 children with a supervising adult.

Student activity booklets. We have designed activity booklets for you to use for your students (with a separate answer booklet) for KS1, 2 and 3 which can be found on our website free of charge. These are available for you to print in advance of your visit. They are fully editable so that they can be adapted to suit your curriculum needs or used exactly as they are.

Animal Food. Feeding of the animals is always very popular with the children and bags of animal food can be purchased from the shop for £2.00. Important – children must wash their hands thoroughly after contact with the animals and before they eat their lunches.

The Haunted Manor. If you have a combined visit (you are visiting both the Castle and the House on the Hill Museum) we have a Haunted Manor in the museum which is very popular for students and it adds another exciting element to their visit. It is just £1 to enter and can be paid for either at the Toy Museum in cash or added onto your school's invoice.

Time to go? We are open until 5.00pm, but most schools tend to start leaving by around 2.00pm to be back in school by 'home time'. All groups are welcome throughout the day but you must arrive by 3.00pm.

Combined Visit? If you are visiting both the Castle and the Museum there are several different ways in which you can organise your day, these will depend heavily upon the size of your group.

Up to 30(ish) you could stay all together and visit one attraction in the morning and the other in the afternoon. For larger groups it is recommended that you split the group up and take it in turns to visit the Toy Museum (each group must be accompanied by a supervising adult)

The Toy Museum can hold a capacity of about 35 – 40 children with accompanying adults comfortably.

NB: Dinosaurs. The dinosaurs live near the entrance to the Museum and can only be visited if your group are doing a combined visit or just the Museum. If you are visiting just the Castle and Norman Village then the dinosaurs are out of bounds.

An example itinerary of a school visit: House on the Hill Museum.

Arrival. Most groups/parties arrive between 10.00am and 11.00am. The castle opens at 10am.

There is a car park directly outside Mountfitchet Castle with coach parking spaces. This car park is operated by the Council, and the 2026 daily charge per coach is £6.00. (Please note that this is subject to change by the Council)

Checking in and Payment. Person in charge of the group/party comes to our front desk to check in. Please have ready the actual number of children and adults that you have brought along with you on the day. Don't worry about working out the 1-15 free adult ratio – we'll do that for you. The invoice will be made out for you while you wait (or you can leave your figures with the member of staff on the gate and come back later in the day to settle up) Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'. If you are taking away an invoice for an unpaid visit, the visit must be paid within 14 days as per the terms on the bottom of the invoice.

Finding the Museum entrance. Bring the group/party through the main gate and pass through the visitor centre to the doorway that takes you onto the pathway leading to the Museum. The dinosaurs are gathered near the entrance to the Museum, so don't worry, you won't miss them.

History of toys. For teachers wishing to give the children an educational talk on the history of toys, including the ever-popular story of how the Teddy Bear got his name, we can provide a box full of labelled toys and a laminated 'talk' to read out to the children. Upon request this talk can be emailed in advance for teachers to preview and familiarise themselves with beforehand.

WWII & The Home Front. For teachers wishing to give the children an educational talk on the Blitz we can provide props and a laminated 'talk' to read out to the children. Upon request this talk can be emailed in advance for teachers to preview and familiarise themselves with beforehand.

Lunch. Most schools/groups like to have their lunch, after an initial look around the castle, anytime between 11.30am and 1.00pm. The lunch room and picnic area can only be booked upon arrival in the morning on a 'first come'. The outdoor covered picnic area can accommodate up to 100+ people at one sitting and can be used if you wish. We do book lunch slots when you arrive and these are on a half hourly basis as we may have a lot of schools to sit down for lunch. We have a café which provides hot & cold beverages, freshly made sandwiches, toasted herb paninis and sandwiches with a filling of your choice, delicious home-made cakes, ice creams etc.

Souvenir Shop. The Museum does not have its own souvenir shop, but the children can buy in the Castle visitor centre souvenir shop either before you leave or at intervals throughout the day. Most school children bring about £3.00 to £10.00 to spend but we cater for all spending ranges. For the convenience of the party of large groups our advice is to come into the shop in groups of 10 – 15 children with a supervising adult.

The Haunted Manor. If you have a combined visit (you are visiting both the castle and the House on the Hill Toy Museum) we have a Haunted Manor in the toy museum which is very popular for students and it adds another exciting element to their visit. It is just £1 to enter and can be paid for either at the Toy Museum in cash or added onto your school's invoice.

Student Activity booklet. We have designed a student activity booklet for the Museum aimed at KS1, KS2 & KS3 students which can be found on our website free of charge. This is available for you to print in advance of your visit. It is fully editable so that it can be adapted to suit your curriculum needs or used exactly as it is.

Time to go? We are open until 5.00pm but most schools tend to start leaving by around 2.00pm to be back in school by 'home time'. All groups are welcome throughout the day but you must arrive by 3.00pm.

Combined Visit? If you are visiting both the Castle and the Museum there are several different ways in which you can organise your day, these will depend heavily upon the size of your group.

Up to 30(ish) you could stay all together and visit one attraction in the morning and the other in the afternoon. For larger groups it is recommended that you split the group up and take it in turns to visit the Museum (each group must be accompanied by a supervising adult)

The Museum can hold a capacity of about 35 – 40 children with accompanying adults comfortably in one group.

Mountfitchet Castle & Norman Village Of 1066. Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex. CM24 8SP

RISK ASSESSMENT Prepared January 2026

1. The Castle is an outdoor site, built on a steep slope, with some areas of the ground uneven and including some rabbit holes. The palisade fence and some of the buildings are constructed of rough sawn timbers and some areas are cobbled. In wet weather, the slopes and cobbles can become slippery, as can steps leading to some exhibits and look-out towers.
2. The complex includes two fenced ponds, which are approximately 18" (45 cm) deep.
3. There are low beams in the Grand Hall and in the doorways to some of the houses.
4. Open log fires are in operation (some behind barriers and one in the open) within the complex and all visitors must refrain from climbing over all safety barriers or approaching the log fire in the outer bailey.
5. A wide variety of animals and birds roam freely throughout the site. All visitors must wash their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with them. All visitors must not go beyond any barriers containing pens or chicken houses or come into contact with any animal bedding.
6. There are some exhibits on site with moving parts (e.g. Head stocks, foot stocks, spring loaded doors and grindstones) and appropriate care must be taken with these artefacts.
7. There are some interactive exhibits on site including small catapult, crossbow, bow and arrow exhibits and a siege tower. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times and follow the operating instructions carefully.
8. Generally, the Castle and its Village is an open site covering approximately ten acres; children must be made aware of these risks by group leaders, and schools and other visiting parties are asked to bring an adequate number of accompanying adults to supervise the children in their care.
9. The village is surrounded by a fence, which is topped in some parts by sharp security wire.
10. The designated coach park is situated approximately 150 metres from the Castle entrance and the pedestrian approach is via the perimeter of a pay-and-display Car Park. We ask that the coaches park in the allocated bays before disembarking the vehicle to avoid congestion of the carpark and for the safety of passengers and public using the car park.
10. There are several photo opportunity structures and users must use these structures with due care and only for the purpose they have been built. Care must be taken whilst inserting and withdrawing your head. All children must be supervised at all times.
11. The visitor centre at Mountfitchet Castle houses a café, some of the food products on offer will contain food allergens such as nuts. Also, animal food is sold in small bags; these may also contain food allergens.
12. Within the Picnic area are two wooden play structures, a miniature castle and a part Viking boat. Children must be supervised at all times to ensure they do not try to jump off or otherwise misuse these structures.
13. The above are the risks assessed by us, but group leaders *should* make a pre-visit to the site to identify the risks for themselves and details can be obtained by ringing the Visitor Office on 01279 813237.

House On the Hill Toy Museum, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex, CM24 8SP
RISK ASSESSMENT Prepared January 2026

1. Care must be taken with the graduated steps on the approach to, and departure from, the Toy Museum – especially in inclement weather.
2. Inside the Toy Museum, the majority of exhibits are housed in display cabinets constructed of thick plate glass, and it is obviously inadvisable to lean against or otherwise mistreat these cabinets.
3. The Museum is on two floors and care must be taken with the stairs at either end of the building which lead to the first floor, as well as a couple of steps on the Ground Floor.
4. The designated Coach Park is situated approximately 200 metres from the Toy Museum entrance and the pedestrian approach is via the perimeter of a pay-and-display Car Park. However, on the majority of occasions, coach drivers can stop to allow the children to alight directly outside the entrance to the Museum.
5. There are several photo opportunity structures and users must use these structures with due care and only for the purpose they have been built. Care must be taken whilst inserting and withdrawing your head. All children must be supervised at all times.
6. The above are the risks assessed by us, but group leaders should make a pre-visit to the site to identify the risks for themselves and details can be obtained by ringing the Visitor Office on 01279 813237.

For the attention of teachers and group organisers.

Please can you ensure children are well supervised and kept under control at all times. Do not allow children to eat outside of the picnic area.

Please read this important announcement to your group.

Welcome to Mountfitchet Castle.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for visiting us and to highlight a few points about your visit.

Mountfitchet Castle is a grade two listed historical monument and an open-air museum. The castle is a unique visitor attraction and prides itself on the number of hands-on exhibits which adults and Children can enjoy. Whether it is meeting and feeding the many tame animals or climbing the watch towers or even being placed in the stocks!

Children must not forget that the castle and grounds are a living open air museum and not a playground for them to run wild.

You are asked to abide by our rules:

- No running – there are steep hills and flint paths**
- No chasing the animals**
- No dropping litter**
- No throwing stones at all – especially at the exhibits or into the ponds**
- And no going behind the safety barriers of the displays at all**

Any of the above will not be tolerated.

Always wash your hands thoroughly before you eat and again before you leave for home. Hand washing facilities are located in the Picnic area and the toilets.

The ponds are deep and dangerous and the hills are steep, but most importantly the trust and respect of the friendly animals within the castle must not be spoilt for future visitors. Please treat them with kindness.

Toilets are now located at the end of the picnic area and hand washing facilities are available in the picnic area. There are also toilets available in the toy museum if this is part of your visit.

We hope that you enjoy your visit as you travel back in time to 1066 at Mountfitchet Castle. If you have any questions regarding your visit or any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our shop staff in the visitor centre or our grounds staff.

Examples from our Activity/Worksheets

Mountfitchet Castle & Norman Village

Activity Sheet 1 – suitable for Key Stage 1 children

- Q. What do you think the Norman villagers ate?
- Q. How do you think the Norman people kept warm in the cold weather?
- Q. Did Norman children go to school?

Activity Sheet 2 – suitable for Key Stage 2 children

- Q. Whose Army conquered this stronghold in 1066?
- Q. Parchment was the medieval equivalent of paper – what was it made from?
- Q. What foods can be found in the Kitchen?

Activity Sheet 3 – suitable for Key Stage 3 children

- Q. What material was the most important and most used around the castle?
- Q. Why did the villagers like to live inside the castle walls?
- Q. In the Brew House there were mainly two types of drink produced, what were they?
Why did people drink so little water?

The House on the Hill Museum

Activity Sheet geared to Key Stage 1

- Q. How do you think Matchbox Cars got their name?
- Q. The farmers are all very busy. How many tractors can you see?
- Q. How many spaceships are flying

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT CAN WE SEE WHILE WE'RE THERE?

Mountfitchet Castle is a Norman Motte and Bailey Castle and Village, re-constructed on its original ancient site, complete with many different buildings, siege weapons and animals roaming freely throughout the 10-acre site, providing a unique insight into community life in Domesday England. The Museum is the largest privately owned toy museum in the world, with at least 80,000 exhibits on display from late Victorian times up to the 1980's. The Museum also includes a fantastic display on the 1914-1918 and 1930-1945 World Wars, including the Blitz Years.

DO WE HAVE TO BOOK IN ADVANCE?

Yes, all parties must pre-book, initially by telephone and then by confirming in writing by confirmation form. Your booking must be confirmed at least 4 weeks before the date of your visit. We expect that all visiting parties of children be adequately supervised. Once a booking has been made as above, we expect the party to honour that booking. **IMPORTANT: All confirmed bookings are binding. Cancellation of a confirmed booking will be subject to the full amount due as spaces are limited to a maximum of 250 per day for the comfort of all visitors. Once a day has been fully booked, any further bookings will be turned away.** We do not normally ask for a booking deposit, but require a cheque, credit card or cash in full payment on the day of the visit or in advance by BACS. A VAT invoice will be issued in return. Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'

IS IT SUITABLE FOR ALL AGE GROUPS?

Yes, both attractions are suitable for all age groups, from infants upwards.

DO WE NEED A GUIDED TOUR?

No, in the Castle all exhibits are clearly signed and as you enter each building, an informative commentary is activated by sensor. In the Museum, just follow the footsteps!

DO YOU HAVE ANY EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS?

We have designed student activity booklets (with separate answer booklets) for both attractions which can be found on our website free of charge. These are available for you to print in advance of your visit. They are fully editable so that they can be adapted to suit your curriculum needs or used exactly as they are.

ARE THERE PARKING FACILITIES?

Yes, there is a large Car and Coach Park serving the Castle. This is operated by the Council, and the 2026 daily charge per coach is £6.00. Cars are charged at approximately £1.80 for a three hour stay. (Please note this is subject to change by the Council)

DO YOU HAVE A SOUVENIR SHOP?

Yes, in the visitor centre we have a souvenir shop offering a wide variety of gifts and souvenirs starting from as little as 50p. How much spending money would you advise students bring with them? It is difficult to say an amount and it is entirely up to you on how much to recommend to students. There is a gift shop which is always popular with students as they can take away memorabilia of their visit. Snacks are available if students wish to purchase these. They also might like to have £2 available for animal food and a £1 available if they are visiting the Haunted Manor (The haunted manor can be found in the museum).

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO SEE EVERYTHING?

This depends on the age of the children and whether they are completing Activity Sheets or sketching exhibits etc, but a good average time is 2 hours at the Castle and slightly less at the Museum. Many schools combine a visit to both the Castle and the Museum on the same day.

TEACHERS' PRE-VISITS.

Teachers are welcome to visit the Castle and Museum prior to their school visit. We ask you to pay in the normal way, tell the reception staff you are a teacher and they will sign your ticket on the reverse. Then, on the day of the actual school visit, re-present the ticket and your money will be refunded in full.

Booking Form

All parties must pre-book, initially by telephone and then by confirming in writing, by email or by our school confirmation link under our contact tab. You can also use this form to confirm, simply fill in the required fields and post it to us. Confirmation of your booking must be made at least 4 weeks prior to your visit.

Mountfitchet Castle
Stansted
Essex
CM24 8SP
England
Tel: 01279 813237

Alternatively, you can send an email with the relevant information on to :- info@mountfitchetcastle.com or under the **contact tab** on our website, you will find a school **confirmation tab** – fill this in and it will be sent directly into the office.

Once your confirmation has been received, we will send a filled-in booking form and other important information back to you by email or letter for you to keep.

Booking For:	Castle		Museum		Both	
Children (State Number)		@ £8.00		@ £7.00		@ £9.50
Adults (State Number)		@ £9.50		@ £8.00		@ £11.50
OAP's / Students (State Number)		@ £9.00		@ £7.50		@ £10.50

Please State the Age or Year of the Children

Contact	
School/Organisation	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email	
Date of Visit	
Time of Arrival	

Coach/Car Parking

The Coach and car park are on a 'Pay & Display' basis run by Uttlesford District Council.
The 2026 charge is £6.00 per day for coaches.

Mountfitchet Castle prides itself on its impeccable record in health and safety during the 30 years it has been open. We strive to make every group trip here as safe and easy and hassle free as we possibly can.

Our animals have a wonderful life with in the castle grounds and have become very tame and trusting of humans and like nothing more than being hand fed their favourite food available from the gift shop.

For health and safety reasons everybody must wash their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with any of the animals **so please use our hand washing facilities and wash your hands thoroughly in warm water and soap.** There are two locations for hand washing facilities – one in the toilet block and another located in the picnic area. Please see map below. Please do not allow food or picnics to be consumed in any other area outside of the picnic area.



Hand washing facilities

We strive to keep our hygiene facilities full at all times but occasionally at peak times with high volume of visitors we can run low. If you do notice that we have run out of either paper hand towels or antibacterial hand gel we would really appreciate it if you could inform a member of staff so they can rectify it immediately.

Mountfitchet Castle & Norman Village
E.COLI 0157 – GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
TEACHERS AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS

Welcome to Mountfitchet Castle. Obviously, one of the highlights of a visit here is for children to meet the animals, so we would like to take this opportunity of pointing out some basic advice for you and the children to make your visit healthy and enjoyable:

1. Before you come into the castle grounds, check that all cuts and grazes are covered with waterproof dressing.
2. Do not allow anyone to kiss the animals.
3. Always wash hands thoroughly before eating after any contact with animals, and again before leaving the site. Hand washing facilities are located in the Picnic area and toilet block.
4. Eat only in the designated picnic area and do not eat food which has fallen to the ground.
5. Do not allow anyone to suck their fingers or put hands, pens or pencils into their mouths.
6. Approach all animals quietly and do not chase or frighten them.
7. Do make good use of the hand washing facilities that are available.

Please remember:

- The children are the responsibility of the accompanying adults throughout the visit.
- You must supervise the children throughout the visit and, in particular, during hand washing.

If anyone shows signs of illness after a visit (e.g., sickness or diarrhoea), advise them or their parent/guardian to visit their doctor and explain that they have had recent contact with animals.

After your visit to the castle grounds please check footwear and wheels on buggies, wheelchairs etc for any animal residue that may be present, carefully remove and dispose of and thoroughly wash your hands afterwards – this is important.

We hope you enjoy your visit.

Your Visit to Mountfitchet Castle & House on The Hill Toy Museum

Do we have to book?

Yes, you do have to book. A provisional booking can be made by telephone 01279 813 237, or by email info@mountfitchetcastle.com. Once the provisional booking has been made, you can confirm the visit via our school and group confirmation form under the menu tab on our website www.mountfitchetcastle.com. Once the booking has been confirmed, we will then send you the booking confirmation, invoice and a risk assessment. Please note that once the booking has been confirmed, the booking then becomes binding. Cancellation of the booking once confirmed, will result in the monies being due. We may ask for a deposit for groups over 150 children upon confirming the visit.

Do we need to book coach parking?

The coach parking you do not need to book. The car park is a council owned car park and has coach bays. It is on a first come first serve basis. Some coaches drop off the schools and then return at departure time from the visit to pick the school groups up again.

Do the coaches have to pay?

Yes, the car parking is council run and the coaches are £6.00 for the day. This will need to be provided to the coaches by the school. If you, or the drivers, require change for the machine please ask at the main entrance. Please note that the price of the parking is subject to change by the council.

Can we have a copy of the Castle and Museum risk assessment?

A copy of the risk assessment is sent out by email with your booking confirmation, we do have a hard copy in the shop which can be collected if you wish, alternatively we have one on our teacher's pack which is on our website under the schools and groups information section.

Can we do a pre visit for our school risk assessment?

You can indeed. Teachers are welcome to visit the Castle and Museum prior to their school visit. We ask you to pay in the normal way, tell the reception staff you are a teacher and they will sign your ticket on the reverse. Then, on the day of the actual school visit, re-present the ticket (which will be required to be signed once again at the gate) and your money will be refunded in full.

Will other schools be booked in on the day of our visit?

There is a strong possibility that other schools may be booked in on the day of your visit. You may be the only school booked in, in which case you would have the entire castle and or museum to your selves. But there may be other schools booked in. Please note that we are still open to public during the week.

Can we visit the Castle and Museum on the same day?

Yes, you can. We have many schools who visit both the castle and museum on the same day. Some schools visit the castle in the morning and museum after lunch. Or if you're in a larger school group then we advise to visit the museum in smaller groups throughout your visit, so the museum doesn't get too congested.

Is there a time limit we can stay for our visit?

Most schools generally start arriving from 10am when we open and then start to depart from approx. 2pm depending how long it may take to get back to your school in time for home time. For schools who visit in the afternoon our last admission is at 3.00pm and we close at 5pm.

What do we do if it is due to rain on the day of our visit?

Don't worry, we have undercover eating areas in the picnic area as well as an indoor dining room. We also have the museum which is all undercover, as well as all the little houses within the castle and Norman village which are undercover too. Also, sensible footwear i.e., wellies and waterproof jackets would be ideal.

What do we do when we arrive?

Schools generally start to arrive from when we open at 10am. Firstly, you check in with the lady at the main gate and you give figures of how many children and adults are visiting on the day, as numbers may have changed from when you originally made the booking.

We then ask you what time you would like to have lunch (½ hour time slots, and first come first serve basis) and if you would like to eat inside the dining room or outside in the picnic area, weather depending. Please note that there may be other schools will be visiting on the same day and there is a possibility that there will be a smaller size group eating at the same time as you and eating in the same hall / picnic area as your school (depending on the weather). We allow a half hour slot for lunch, due to the number of children that we need to sit down to eat.

What do we do if our numbers change on the day?

Don't worry if your numbers of pupils or adults change on the day. We always take exact numbers on the morning of the visit when you arrive (please make sure that you have the numbers of children and adults handy when you arrive). Should the numbers differ, we can write you a new invoice to take with you. Invoices are to be paid up to 14 days after the visit, and please note that altered numbers can affect the free adult to child ratio.

Where do we leave our lunches?

You can leave your lunch boxes on the shelves in the picnic area which are undercover. These will then be easily accessible for when you come down for lunch.

Where are the toilets?

The toilets are situated at the far end of the picnic area before you head to the castle. There is a male, female and 1 disabled / baby change toilet. Or if you are coming back through the shop to go up to the museum, there are also 2 toilets available in the museum.

Do we have a tour guide for the visit?

The visit to the castle and museum is self-guided by the accompanying teachers. There are overhead speakers in all the houses in the castle and also lots of information boards. In the museum there are lots of information signs inside the display cabinets.

Where can I find worksheets for the classes?

You can either design your own question worksheets for the castle and museum or we do have them available to download from our website. These can be found under the schools & groups information under the menu button. Alternatively, these can be purchased on the day of your visit from the main desk. (Please note that these must be requested before your visit, subject to availability, and are chargeable)

What footwear should be worn?

Footwear is very much dependent on the weather on the day of your visit. If it is raining, we would suggest wellies or waterproof walking shoes for the kids and adults. If the weather is nice, we would suggest maybe trainers or school shoes. Sensible shoes are key!

Where can we buy hot or cold drinks or food?

During your visit if you would like to purchase any hot or cold drinks or food (or the odd cheeky slice of cake) you can purchase these from the café in the visitor center which is next to the gift shop. We have takeaway cups available for your hot drinks or if you prefer to use your own flask you are more than welcome to use that. We accept cash or card for these.

Can we spend in the gift shop?

Of course, we have a wide variety of “pocket money” items in our gift shop with a few items starting from 50p. The pocket money items are mainly located underneath the counter. Schools generally bring anything from £2.00 - £5.00+, sometimes depending on the year of class which is attending. We advise if your school is a larger group that you visit the gift shop in smaller groups so the shop doesn't get too busy.

Do you provide a goodie bag?

We can make up goodie bags for the children instead of them buying in the shop if this would be easier for you. If you give us a set amount you would like for each child and we can then advise on what we have at the price ranges. We can make up the goodie bags prior to the visit, however we will need notice to do this.

Can we eat in the museum if we are visiting there?

I'm afraid not. Schools visiting the museum will come down to the dining room or picnic area in the castle to eat lunch. Please note that no food, drink or animal food is allowed in the museum, this must all be left with your bags.

Where can we put our rubbish after eating?

There are several rubbish bins dotted around the dining room, café area and picnic areas. If they are full and you need an extra black sack, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff for one. Please make sure rubbish is placed in the bins as the animals sometimes wander around and look for food that has been left, and we don't want them eating any plastic, foil or clingfilm etc.

Where are the boxes located for the class talks in the museum if needed?

They are located behind the counter, if you require the boxes to talk to your class, just ask the lady at the museum reception area and she will hand it over to you. There will also be a laminated talk sheet in the box, this can also be sent out by email prior to your visit should you wish to have a read over beforehand.

Can we feed the animals?

Yes, you can. We have animal feed to purchase in the gift shop and at the main gate, this costs £2.00 per bag. This can be purchased by cash or card, or it can be added to your school invoice. (Please remember to wash your hands after feeding the animals)

Are the animals friendly?

Yes, our animals are all friendly, some of them will let you stroke them.... especially as they are looking for food. All of our animals are rescue animals. They have been rescued from road traffic accidents, battery farms or from people who can no longer look after them. But just please note that they are still wild animals so they do have a mind of their own.

Is there a first aider on site?

Yes, we do have first aiders on site, however schools usually have an accompanying adult who is also first aid trained.

Are there any interactive exhibitions in the castle?

Yes, we have 4 main interactive exhibitions in the castle, we have a catapult, a cross bow and archery (not using a bow and arrow, but firing tennis balls instead) and lastly a siege tower exhibit which opened in the last few seasons. These are all hands on and interactive, also not to mention a whole lot of fun! But children must be accompanied by adults at all times while using these. We also have helmets to try, a wooden jousting horse, a mill stone, stocks and much more.

Where is the hand washing facilities?

There are hand washing facilities down at the toilets at the end of the picnic area, as well as in the museum.

What time do we depart?

Most schools start to depart from around 2pm, depending on how long it takes for the coach to make their way back to your school.

What do we need to do before we leave?

Before you leave, first and most importantly of all, make sure you have all of your school party. (Anyone left behind will be put in the stocks overnight, Hehe!) Secondly if you have water bottles, lunchboxes, coats etc, please make sure all children have their property with them. Then come to see us at the main gate to advise us that your school is now departing. We shall then give you the invoice, a certificate for the class and little cards for the children for being so well behaved. Please ensure the invoice is handed to your finance department on arrival back to school.

Paying for the visit

You can either pre pay for your visit, you can pay on the day, or you have 14 days to make payment once the visit has happened.

Payment can be made by BACs, cheque, cash or card.