

Doncaster Museum Education Service

Cusworth Hall Museum and Park

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR A SUCCESSFUL GROUP VISIT

*Group leaders may wish to know that a number of strategies are employed by Museum staff to make group visits and activity sessions as enjoyable and safe as possible. These guidelines have been devised to safeguard the Health and Safety of visiting children, and the guidelines have been written as a result of our **Risk Assessment** procedures.*

Activities and equipment for younger children

The Museum provides safety scissors at these activities. Sometimes we use staplers but they are placed out of reach of young children and are only used by adults. We use elastic thread rather than string. We give careful consideration to the selection of objects used, to prevent choking or injury. We make alternative activities, e.g. Museum trails, available elsewhere on the site.

Wearing costume and accessories

Adults always supervise young visitors when trying on clothes and accessories. The Education Officer gives advice about the danger of tripping up when wearing long clothes. We carry out regular checks for discomfort, with rapid removal of the offending items if the child becomes distressed.

Victorian classroom equipment

Whilst every precaution is taken to ensure our equipment meets safety standards, care has to be taken to avoid injury. PLEASE ISSUE VERBAL REMINDERS when lifting the heavy desk lids, and in the drill activity i.e. children should be told not to stand too close to one another. Care must be taken when the large blackboard is swivelled over, to ensure there are no children in the way, as they could be harmed.

Laundry activity

The laundry equipment is regularly checked for sharp edges and splinters. The mangle will be demonstrated by the Education Officer and thereafter supervised by an adult at all times. Children with known allergies such as eczema are advised not to use the soap. Hot water is mixed with the cold to ensure the water is a safe temperature to use. Care is to be taken that the floors are mopped between sessions to avoid slipping. The Education Officer makes sure that the tubs are filled on arrival and emptied after use by Museum staff.

Victorian housework activity

The Education Officer is present at this activity to ensure that all equipment and materials are used safely. Regular checks of equipment are carried out to make sure there are no sharp edges or splinters. Cleaning substances are applied by the Education Officer, in advance. Verbal reminders will be given by the Education Officer when children are carrying out certain cleaning tasks, such as beating the carpet and sweeping the floor, so that children do not stand too close as to sustain injury from broom handles etc. Hand washing is **essential** after this activity.

Object handling session

Objects for handling are regularly checked for sharp edges and splinters, to avoid injury. Objects must not be carried around the room. If they are to be lifted make sure that both hands are used and the object is above a table. Although every care is taken to choose objects that are safe to handle there are moving parts on some objects SO ADULT SUPERVISION IS NEEDED AT ALL TIMES.

Toys and games

All toys used for hands-on sessions are safe replicas. All other toys are demonstrated by the Education Officer. Care is to be taken that small toys are not left on the floor, to avoid tripping or skidding on them. The Museum advises a limited number of children play the more energetic games at one time. We regret that the large rocking horse cannot be used as it does not comply with present Health and Safety standards.

Wartime Children session

Gas masks are among the handling objects in this session. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE GAS MASKS BE TRIED ON, OR HANDLED UNNECESSARILY. A verbal reminder will be issued at the start of the session by the Education Officer. They also carry warning labels.

Electricity

We have protective socket covers fitted to power points. Our electrical equipment is tested regularly, to comply with legislation. To avoid trailing cables, we route extension leads and tape them down.

Accommodation

The Museum Education Officer advises group leaders of optimum numbers in advance. If larger numbers arrive than expected, we may invite some adults to look around other parts of the Museum with group members, for the comfort and safety of all.

Movement around the Museum

We encourage groups to be considerate of other visitors when they move around - assigning small groups to an accompanying adult seems to work well.

Visitor groups need to approach staircases carefully, with a warning to climb or descend in an orderly fashion. If the visitors are wearing costume that is long and liable to trip them up, they are advised to lift their costume so they can walk up or down the stairs safely. People who use wheelchairs can fully access the Museum. There are toilets with wheelchair access on the ground floor near the lift door in the kitchen yard and near the Tea Room.

Emergencies and security

The Museum has alarms in all activity areas and we have procedures to deal with emergencies. There are clearly signed escape exits from the classroom area. First Aid equipment is available, and certain staff have received basic First Aid training, although we can not guarantee that those staff will be available during your visit. We advise group members to keep money and valuables about their person.

Mobile phones

Please make sure mobiles are switched **OFF**. They should not be used around the museum or displays.

Shop purchases

For ease and speed of operation, we ask groups to approach the counter in small numbers at a time, preferably with the right money ready. Alternatively there is an advance "Goodie Bag Service". Goodie Bags can be made up to order and paid for on the day. For more details on this service ring Cusworth reception on 01302 782342.

Toilets

There are both boys and girls toilets in the Education Suite which are not accessible to the general public. These toilets are checked after morning and afternoon sessions to assess any damage or misuse. There are toilets on site which are in use by the general public, so your adult supervision is important here. Please make sure that the public toilets are used by small numbers at any one time, for the comfort and safety of everyone.

Lunches on site

After an activity we may advise group members to wash hands before lunch. We expect group leaders to supervise during the lunch break.

For any further clarification on these guidelines contact:

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