

Risk assessment guide for teachers

This document is a guide for teachers bringing pupils on a visit to Fulham Palace. It should be used in collaboration with a pre-visit to the site.

Fulham Palace is in a dog-free enclosed garden site, most of which is traffic free. The modules are taught by professional museum educators who are usually helped by a volunteer.

Visiting the site

The Palace and the site are open to the public and various tenant companies operate out of the main building.

Risk: Stranger danger.

Arriving for a facilitated session

School parties visiting the Education Centre must walk within the chained pathway as the car park is in constant use.

Risk: Uneven and gravel surfaces; vehicles moving in car park.

Schools will be met by a museum educator and volunteer; the old buildings have steps and slopes in various places. Pupils will hang up their coats and leave their bags in the Education Centre.

Risk: Advice will be given on the structure of the session and any specific difficulties that may arise, including fire exits. There is a separate cloakroom in the education centre.

Toilets

There are toilets inside the Palace and education centre and outdoor toilets at the end of the education centre.

Risk: The toilets are of adult height, there are only two (there are accessible toilets in the Palace and education centre). Children using the outdoor toilets must walk along the chained pathway and not cut across the carpark.

Visiting the museum

The museum is small (two rooms) with some exhibits roped off.

Risk: Slippery old wood floors with the occasional splinter, sharp corners on cases, flip top interactives.

Visiting the Museum's education room

Another small room which usually contains a collection of handling objects. Pupils sit on flip-top wooden benches attached to the walls. There are two steps from the Museum to the education room

Risk: The handling collections are made of a very wide range of materials, pupils will handle articles made of many different substances possibly including nuts. Museum teachers should be informed if pupils can't touch any particular item.

Visiting the Education Centre in the Stables

The classroom in the Education Centre is entered up a gentle ramp. It usually contains a number of handling objects. Pupils sit on flip-top wooden benches attached to the walls.

Risk: The old Stable doors are held back with large hooks and wooden door wedges which protrude into the chained pathway that schools use. The handling collections are made of a very wide range of materials, pupils will handle articles made of many different substances possibly including nuts. Museum teachers should be informed if pupils can't touch any particular item. The classroom has floor and wall electrical points. The entrance lobby outside leads straight onto a pathway which is chained off from the car park.

Trying on costumes

For some school sessions, the whole class may be offered the chance to wear costume.

Risk: The costume collection is made of many different fabrics which may feel unusual or itchy to children when tried on. Museum educators should be informed if pupils can't wear any particular fabric. Real fur from second hand sources is used on a very few occasions where it is historically accurate and relates to portraits. Clothes are of different lengths and will be adapted to fit each child with a belt or tie, children should be advised to take care when walking.

Visiting the great hall

A large hall with polished wood floor.

Risk: A large polished floor. The corridor outside the hall leads straight out into the courtyard which is a public space containing a fountain.

Visiting the courtyard

An enclosed outdoor space of great age.

Risk: Uneven pavement, cobbles, a large fountain surrounded by a low wall at the centre of the courtyard, numerous doors leading off the space, large wooden doors held back by hooks.

Visiting the chapel

An atmospheric Victorian building with an aisle, pews, an organ and mosaics on the wall.

Risk: Cold building, steps, sharp wooden edges, dim lighting.

Visiting the garden and Bishops Park

Paths and garden surrounding the Palace.

Risk: Uneven surfaces, bumpy ground, trees with overhanging branches, unusual trees and shrubs, some with fruits which must never be eaten, slippery or wet grass, gravel paths, steps. There is wildlife in the garden, such as foxes and squirrels, which should not be approached or fed as they are a nuisance and there are insects normal to a garden. There are beehives in the walled garden. In the summer months, there can be infestations of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) in some of the oak trees. More information including the dangers of OPM can be found here: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/oakprocessionarymoth>. Trees and surrounding areas will be roped off and children must not be allowed to enter those areas.

Golf buggies and vans are sometimes driven through the garden at a slow speed. The garden is a public space open to all. In Bishops Park there is a children's playground, a small lake and a sandy beach for children to play in.