

Schools in Parliament: Information to help you plan a safe visit

Your safety when visiting Parliament is very important to us. The following information will help you prepare for your visit, and with the preparation of your risk assessment paperwork.

Visiting with children and vulnerable adults

All staff in Parliament's Education Service have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

On the day of your visit, please ensure that you have the minimum mandatory adult-to-child ratio required for group visits to Parliament:

1:15 for Key Stages 2-5

1:7 for Key Stage 1

We specify this ratio to support the safe management of groups in and around the Palace of Westminster. Please be aware that we may have to adapt or cancel the visit if you are not able to provide a suitable number of accompanying adults on the day.

All tours are led by a representative of Parliament's Education Service at a ratio of 1 member of PES staff to every 16 – 25 visitors.

Please be advised that the supervision of children is the responsibility of adult group leaders. Parliament's Education Service reserves the right to remove from the Parliament estate any groups whose behaviour compromises the safety of other visitors and Parliamentary staff, or the ability of other visitors to enjoy their visit.

On-site security measures upon arrival on site

Your group may be subject to an airport-style security search as you enter the building; be aware that knives, sharp items (save for medical purposes), paint sprays, and items that make noise, such as whistles, are not allowed on the Parliamentary Estate.

You will be provided with a briefing at the beginning of your visit about how your visit will proceed, expected behaviour and health & safety procedures.

Other than in Westminster Hall, photography is not permitted on the Parliamentary Estate.

Illness and Emergency

Parliament has staff trained in first-aid throughout the site who can provide assistance during Tours and workshops. All incidents and accidents are recorded.

The nearest hospital is St Thomas's Hospital, approximately 500m from Parliament.

On the day of your visit you may be on your feet for up to an hour and a half. For your safety please ensure that you and your group all wear footwear appropriate for walking on hard surfaces for extended periods of time, avoid wearing excessively loose clothes with trailing elements, and avoid bringing non-essential items to carry.

In an emergency situation, the Metropolitan Police would take control, and all Members and staff are requested to comply with their instructions. Information on any incident which had occurred would be communicated widely to all Members and staff by the fastest possible means, including, where practicable, the annunciators and the voice alarm system.

Please make sure that you and your students eat/drink something prior to your visit. You may also want to plan where and when you will eat your lunch - we do not currently have the facilities for students to eat their packed lunches on the premises.

Access and Egress

Avoiding Accidents

As both a working environment and an historical building, the Palace of Westminster has different types of floor surface, heavy/and or revolving doors, double doors, automatic doors, and busy public areas congested with staff and visitors. There is an ongoing programme of essential maintenance, restoration and renovation work.

All tours and workshops are closely supervised by Parliament's Education Service staff – competent in the management of visitor groups.

Housekeeping checks are carried out every morning by both the Parliament's Education Service team and the Estate Facilities team to check for any potential hazards. All issues are dealt with as a matter of urgency.