



Welcome to The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Our office number is: 01328 824205

Our mobile phone is: 07747 152288

Thank you for booking one of our school visit programmes. We look forward to welcoming you all to the Shrine.

This booklet aims to offer you advice and information to aid your planning and for the visit itself. We would appreciate it if you could take the time to read it carefully, in conjunction with the Risk Assessment advice.

Before your visit

We would be grateful if you could take the time to cover the basic outline story of Lady Richeldis and her visions, before you come on your visit. We can then re-cap the story at the start of the visit. A sheet will be sent to you with the maps, etc.

Vocabulary

It would be useful to discuss/familiarise children with vocabulary that is likely to come up during their visit. Such as:-

Words associated with worship and church furnishings/lay out of the church.
Special people/names associated with the topic area they are covering
i.e.: denominations; Anglican; Church of England; Orthodox; Clergy; Priest; Monk; Nun; Altar; Nave; Mass; Holy Communion; Eucharist; Vestments.
A glossary of words and their meaning is available on request if you require it.

It might be useful to brief your classes about what will be expected of them during the day:-

- They will be expected to engage in discussion
- They will be asked to observe, question, think carefully about things they see and experience
- They may be given activity sheets to complete during the visit and these will be brought back to school for follow up
- They will be moving around the site/village during the visit so they need to move quickly, sensibly and respectfully
- They will be expected to behave like they do in school e.g. 'hands up no calling out', listening and being courteous to others
- Reminder about not dropping litter/tidying up their mess after lunch etc.

Please explain to your pupils/students in advance of their visit that the Shrine is a peaceful place of prayer and worship, so quiet, respectful behaviour would be appreciated. There will often be Pilgrims and other members of the public at the Shrine.

Likewise, this is important when they are visiting other places of worship and the Abbey grounds.

Smaller working groups during activities

During your visit, depending on the size of your group we will often split the children up into smaller working groups. These groups will then rotate around activities/venues. You will be notified about this in advance of the visit when we plan the programme with you.

Each group will be led by one of our staff team but we do need at least one school member of staff/adult helper in each group to assist with overall discipline.

Please ensure you plan this in advance i.e. helpers to supervise each group. Please also ensure the children know which group they are in so that the division of the group on the day is carried out quickly.

Adult Helpers

Please ensure that you bring the appropriate ratio of helpers to children. We suggest that you consult your County Council guidelines for information on this.

Group registers Please ensure that group leaders have register lists of pupils in their groups and know how many there are in total.

Risk Assessments

Enclosed with this booklet is our *Risk Assessment Advice Booklet*. I hope this will assist you in compiling your own Risk Assessment. If you would like to visit the site in advance of your visit, please telephone us to arrange a date and time. We will happily walk you around all the venues/areas you will be visiting on the day.

Respecting the environment

They are welcome to enjoy the gardens during their free time, but we would appreciate it if you would ask them not to run around or play ball games. There is a recreation ground a short walk away in Wells Road should you have spare time and would like to let them 'let off steam' a little.

Information about your arrival etc.

You will have received a map giving instructions about where to ask your coach/mini bus driver to drop you off. Please read this carefully and ask to disembark outside the Shrine in Knight Street. The coach can park adjacent to the pavement so children can safely disembark onto the Shrine forecourt.

If you have any concerns or queries about this do call us for advice.

As advised on your letter of confirmation_ *it helps us greatly if you can call us on your mobile phone when you are about five minutes away from Walsingham, so that our staff can then be outside to meet you on arrival.*

Schools Department Visit Fee

The school will be invoiced for the visit fee you have been quoted after the visit. Please tell us in advance, if possible, if your group numbers change and please confirm numbers on the day itself. This will help us to invoice you accurately. The invoice will have instructions regarding who to make cheques payable to and where to send them.



On the day

Packed lunches, other equipment, coats etc.

Please bring lunches and other items into the classroom with you when you arrive. These can be left in the room, which will be locked when not in use. At lunch time you will be invited to eat in your classroom or to picnic in the gardens. Plastic rubbish sacks will be provided for your 'leftovers'/ wrappers/ bottles etc. We would also be grateful if helpers could ensure the floor/tables are clean and tidy after you have eaten.

First Aid

There are kits in the classrooms but you are strongly advised to bring your own. Although some of our staff here have attended First Aid at work courses we can never guarantee their presence at all times on site. We therefore strongly advise that there is a teacher and helper trained in first aid in attendance on school visits in case an incident should occur.

Telephones are accessible at all times either in our accommodation reception, in the Milner Wing or in the Schools Department Office in Mileham House in Common Place. There is a Doctors surgery in Walsingham (limited opening times) and in Fakenham. The nearest A&E dept is at Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, King's Lynn.

Supervision and Discipline

Your visit will be led by one or more of our schools team here.

You and your helpers are responsible for ensuring that pupils/students behave in an acceptable manner. Our staff will issue instructions as they lead activities. Please ensure that children line up when required to do so and are quiet and respectful around the Shrine site, classrooms and eating areas.

Although unlikely, our staff have the right to suspend a visit / ask school staff to remove a child if he/she is behaving inappropriately.

We do want them to explore/comment/question and enjoy themselves, but we aim to keep noise levels to a minimum in the Shrine, gardens and other churches.

Outdoor Altar area

Please ask your group to avoid the outdoor Altar area. This is easy to recognise – it is the large white tent like structure in the gardens.

Chewing/eating

Please ask children not to drink/eat sweets and other food in places of worship and during activities in classrooms and please no chewing gum.

No Smoking

The Shrine operates a No Smoking policy throughout the site

Illegal Substances and Alcohol

These will not be tolerated on our premises. Under age drinking of alcohol is also not permitted

Mobile Phones

We would be grateful if staff and students switch these off whilst in places of worship and to refrain from using them during activity sessions in classrooms – unless, in the case of staff, an emergency situation arises.

Photography

This is allowed in our grounds and in places of worship but please use cameras with sensitivity i.e. do not photograph people who are praying. Photography for Commercial purposes is not allowed and prior permission must be obtained.



Facilities in the Shrine Grounds

Lavatories are situated in next to the main Reception area and next to the Norton Café, on the ground floor. There are disabled facilities in both places. Please supervise their use at all times.

Lunches, Packed Lunches and cold drinks are only provided when pre-booked as part of a visit programme. These are served in the classroom areas. In good weather picnicking is permitted in the gardens and bins/refuse bags are provided for litter.

Café – Also on the ground floor of the Refectory complex there is the *Norton Café*. Light meals / sandwiches and refreshments may be purchased. We would ask however, that you contact us in advance if a large number of students/pupils wish to purchase food during the lunch break, so as to avoid long queues.

Allergies

Please check well in advance of your visit if any of your pupils/students are allergic to anything. For example: stings, bites, nuts, asthma and ensure that medication is brought with you.

Special Needs

Please inform us *in advance of your visit* if you have children in wheelchairs or any other disabilities or behavioural issues. We will then ensure that appropriate resources/access routes etc are tailored to their needs.

The Shrine site and Abbey Grounds are accessible for wheelchairs, with assistance. There are a few steps to tackle at the Methodist and Orthodox churches.

Please also inform us in advance of any special dietary needs if you are booking meals here

Shrine Shop

The Shrine Shop is in Common Place almost opposite the entrance to the Abbey grounds. All profits from the shop are ploughed back into the running

of the Shrine, which is a registered charity. It is generally open during the day and school groups are welcome to visit. We do ask that only 8 pupils, with at least one teacher, go into the shop at a time because of its size and so that staff are not overwhelmed by customers. (Please also only allow the same ratio for other shops in the village).

School Staff and Helper Involvement in the Visit

Our teachers/Shrine staff will lead your visit and to some extent you can step back, enjoy and let us get on with it!

We welcome thousands of school children each year and most groups respond brilliantly.

Problems and Issues during your Visit

If at any stage you are worried/concerned about something, or if an incident should occur, please inform the Schools and Young Pilgrims Officer on the day. If she is not present please inform the teacher leading your visit. You may also wish to leave a written account of it for us to follow up.

Safeguarding Issues

Any concerns of this nature should be reported verbally straight away and recorded in writing as soon as possible. We will contact our named person, Venetia Davies, who will follow Diocese of Norwich procedures via your Head Teacher/Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. If the Schools Administrator is not available please ask a member of staff in the main Reception to contact Venetia Davies directly.



All our teaching staff and clergy who work with young people have undergone DBS enhanced clearance checks.

THE SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT 'S COMMITMENT TO YOU

Our team will endeavour to:-

Present information in an interesting, engaging and friendly manner suitably adapted for each individual age group.

Behave courteously towards visiting staff and pupils.

We will issue instructions as appropriate for the various activities that are offered during visits. Assistance from school staff/helpers will be requested as and when necessary.

Ensure that the children have suitable materials and equipment to undertake activities during their visit.

Advise you on safe access to venues both on and off site, particularly with regard to safe walking routes in the village.

Advise you on the locations of fire safety information.

Provide:

- Basic First Aid kits
- Access to a telephone and assistance with locating local Doctors and emergency services.
- A suitable room away from the rest of the group should an accident occur or in the case of illness.
- Offer advice and guidance on the most productive way for your children to explore and experience the Shrine and other churches / outdoor areas / Historical sites and village

Tell us what you think ...

With your invoice, after the visit, you will be issued with an evaluation form. We would be most grateful if you would kindly take the time to complete it and return it to the department. We welcome your feedback on all aspects of the visit. This helps us develop our services and facilities. Do share any ideas you may have about how things might be improved or any ideas about new visit content.

Many thanks.

We hope you enjoy your visit and look forward to seeing you!

Caroline Ward
Schools and Young Pilgrims Officer