

Group Booking & Risk Assessment Information

Group Booking and Risk Assessment Information

for Schools and Groups

Version: September 2024

The following information will help you prepare a **Risk Assessment** for your group to visit the Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret.

Teachers and group leaders are advised to carry out a (free) preliminary visit in advance of their class visit in order to conduct their own risk assessment, however sample risk assessments are available for [Museum visits](#) and [walking tours](#).

Responsibility for pupils on school/group visits always remains with the teachers/leaders.

1. The Museum's External Environment

- The Museum is situated on St Thomas' Street; outside the Museum's entrance is one-way access due to expanded pedestrian space during Covid-19.
- The Museum does not have any space to accommodate lunch or snack breaks. There are a few eating areas within a ten-minute walking distance of the Museum, these include:

Outside:

- Guy Street Park (entrance on Weston Street)
- Little Dorrit Gardens (entrance on Borough High Street)

Under cover:

- Hays Galleria (entrance on Tooley St)

2. The Museum's Internal Environment

2.1 Building

- The Museum is situated in the attic space of a church tower. There is only one entrance and exit (excluding a fire exit) which is via a **52-step spiral staircase**. Visitors are advised to hold the rope handrail when entering and exiting and to walk towards the outside of the staircase in a single file. The Museum is quite small, so it is not disorientating to find your way around.
- Please see our [Accessibility Guide](#) should any of your group need assistance.
- Teachers and group leaders should ensure that the historic importance of the Museum is respected and to be aware of steps and changes of floor levels.
- Pupils are not to run around in the Museum nor swing from the rails in the operating theatre.
- **No food or drink (with the exception of water)** is to be consumed on the premises.

2.2 Toilets

- There are **no toilets on site**. The closest public toilets are situated in Borough Market or at London Bridge Station.

2.3 Collection

- The Museum displays collection material relating to medicine and surgery. The Museum holds around 20 human specimens that are displayed in locked cases. The Museum complies with the Human Tissue Act 2004 regulations in exhibiting these objects and is further advised by the Gordon Museum of Pathology, Guys Hospital.
- Non-flash photography is permitted within the museum. Photography of our pathology specimens and teaching skeleton is prohibited.

3. Museum Operations

3.1 Our Sessions

- Materials to be handled as part of programmed activities (such as educational sessions) have been risk assessed.
- All medical instruments are secured in locked cases, or staff will be in control of them during a session. Visitors will not be allowed to handle any objects unless they are deemed suitable. Any public handling items are safe and unsharpened.

3.2 Insurance

- We have public liability insurance providing cover up to £10 million through Hiscox Insurance UK.

3.3 Living With Covid

- The [Government](#) ended all legal restrictions on 24th February 2022 as part of its [Living With Covid Plan](#).
- The Museum has carried out its own Risk Assessment in light of this and as such, our Covid-19 measures have been revised, see <https://oldoperatingtheatre.com/covid-19-safety-measures/>

4. Booking a Visit

Please read the information provided here and on our website for details on booking a group/school visit.

- All group visits must complete a Booking Enquiry form online here: <https://oldoperatingtheatre.com/product/group-booking/>.
- If your booking has been accepted, you will receive an email confirming your booking details, and an invoice will be sent to you the month prior to your visit.
- Each group has exclusive access to the Museum during their designated timeslot
- A 90-minute visit costs £250 and includes a talk and time to explore the Museum
- By making payment, you are acknowledging you have read and understood our Terms& Conditions for Group Bookings (i.e. this Risk Assessment Information booklet document).

5. On the Day of Your Visit - Victorian Surgery Brought to Life Museum Session

5.1 On Arrival

- The Museum is closed to the public on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, so group visits taking place on these days will have exclusive access to the space.
- The Museum entrance doors therefore, will be closed. Our team will come and meet you outside the Museum entrance on the ground floor, or call 020 7188 2679.
- All employees working on site wear identifiable lanyards, so they can be recognised by visitors.

5.2 Health and Safety

- We have a written health and safety policy, and all staff receive health and safety training.
- The teacher/group leader must remain in the room at all times, and our facilitator must not be left alone with pupils under 18 years old. When groups are exploring the museum, a teacher/group leader presence is required both in the operating theatre and on the museum floor.
- Occasionally, some people feel dizzy or lightheaded during a session, usually caused by a combination of the subject under discussion and the atmosphere of the Museum. We recommend visitors bring a bottle of water with them and to alert a member of

Museum staff if any persons feel unwell.

- All the Museum's public areas have been designed and are maintained to ensure that they are safe for schools and other visitors. These spaces are continuously checked daily to remove or minimise hazards.
- Everyday hazards such as slipping, tripping or falling on stairs, trapping fingers in doors and cuts and bruises are inherent in all environments.

5.3 Fire, Evacuation and First Aid

- We have fully tested evacuation procedures in place in case of fire or other emergencies. In the case of an evacuation, groups will be escorted to a muster point by our staff who will work with group leaders to ensure that all pupils are present and safe.
- Our buildings are fitted with alarm systems and emergency exits are clearly marked.
 - Museum staff are qualified to provide basic first aid and offer support in the event of illness or accident, although first aid provision is ultimately the responsibility of the person leading the group.
 - Any such incidences must be reported to a member of Museum staff for the purpose of recording it in the Accident Book.

5.4 Supervision

- Please note that group leaders, teachers and accompanying adults are responsible for the health and safety of their group and should remain with pupils/group members at all times while in our building and during any emergency evacuations.
- We require the following staff to pupil ratios:
 - Foundation stage 1:3
 - Key stage 1 1:6
 - Key stage 2 1:6
 - Key stage 3 1:10
 - Key stage 4 1:15
 - Post-16/AS/A2 1:15
 - SEND 1:5
- If the behaviour of any person(s) in the group adversely affects the safety of others, Museum staff or causes damage to the collection, then this person may be asked to leave the premises.

5.5 Security

- The foyer and Museum are covered by a network of CCTV cameras. Images are monitored and recorded to help ensure the safety of our visitors and collection. If you see anything suspicious, please report it to a member of Museum staff immediately.

6. On the Day of Your Visit - Public Health Walking Tour

6.1 On Arrival

- Please gather outside the front doors of the Museum, 9a St Thomas Street, London, SE1 9RY. Walking tours **do not include entrance to the museum.** Our team will come and meet you outside the Museum entrance on the ground floor.
- Participants must listen very carefully to all instructions. The Learning Facilitators have the right to terminate the walk if group's behaviour is dangerous.
- Tour route may change depending on external factors such as weather, events, roadworks, age of group.
- All employees working on site wear identifiable lanyards, so they can be recognised by visitors.

6.2 Health and Safety

- We have a written health and safety policy, and all staff receive health and safety training.
- The teacher/group leader must remain with the group at all times, and our facilitator must not be left alone with pupils under 18 years old.
- We recommend dressing appropriately for the weather and for walking, including sensible footwear.
- Everyday hazards of walking round a busy city, such as slipping, tripping or falling on stairs, busy roads, pickpockets, and cuts and bruises are inherent in all environments.
- If the behaviour of any person(s) in the group adversely affects the safety of themselves or others, the walking tour will be cancelled without refund.

6.3 Fire, Evacuation and First Aid

- In the event of a fire or major incident in the area, the walk will be terminated and the group leader will be responsible for the safety and evacuation of the group.

6.4 Supervision

- Please note that group leaders, teachers and accompanying adults are responsible for the health and safety of their group and should remain with pupils/group members at all times during the walk and during any emergency evacuations.
- We require the following staff to pupil ratios:
 - Foundation stage 1:3
 - Key stage 1 1:6
 - Key stage 2 1:6
 - Key stage 3 1:10
 - Key stage 4 1:15
 - Post-16/AS/A2 1:15
 - SEND 1:5
- If the behaviour of any person(s) in the group adversely affects the safety of themselves or others, the walking tour will be cancelled without refund.

7. Cancellation Policy

If for some reasons you have to cancel your group visit, you can do this by emailing education@oldoperatingtheatre.com. Please note, we do not accept phone calls or voicemails as a valid means of cancellation.

Bookings made from 1st November 2023:

- 4 weeks – If you notify us at least 4 weeks before the date of your visit we are happy to offer you a full refund.
- 3 weeks – There will be a 25% charge on your full booking amount
- 2 weeks – 50% charge on your full booking amount
- 1 week – 75% charge on your full booking amount
- On the day cancellations or no-shows will still be charged at the full amount.

Further advice If you need more information to help you prepare your risk assessment, or would like to speak to a member of Museum staff when you make a planning visit, please email: education@oldoperatingtheatre.com.