



Planning a Visit?

Information for Teachers and Other Educators

September 2021

Access and Contact Details

- You should allow about 60-90 minutes for your children to look round the museum.
- We would recommend bringing no more than 75 children on one day.
- Our staff and sessions are flexible – but to avoid any disappointment groups **must book in advance**.

Opening times

These are the public opening times:

April to September: 10am – 4pm

October to March: 11am – 3.30pm

Closed on Mondays (except bank holidays), and on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Schools are welcome to make visits by appointment on any day except Mondays.

Admission Charges

- School visits are **FREE!**
- Accompanying teachers and adults are **FREE.**
- Teachers on preliminary visits are **FREE.**

Contact us for bookings or any other enquiries:

Sarah Gouldsbrough, Learning and Access Officer

**Head of Steam - Darlington Railway Museum,
North Road Station, Darlington, DL3 6ST**

Tel: 01325 405541

Email: sarah.gouldsbrough@darlington.gov.uk

Where to find us

The Museum is situated just off the A167 North Road in the north of Darlington.

Transport

Head of Steam - Darlington Railway Museum is a 5 minute walk from North Road Railway Station. We are a 5 minute bus ride from the town centre. For information about public transport, please call Traveline – Tel: 0871 200 22 33. There is free coach and car parking on site.

Access

Most of the museum is accessible for people with physical disabilities. The learning facilities, toilets, and shop are all accessible. If your group has any special requirements that we should take into account, please contact us to discuss them. Learning activities can be tailored to suit the needs of your group and we particularly welcome visits from children with special needs.

A typical session at the museum could include:

- Object handling and exploring the museum with quiz sheets –please ask for master copies when you book your visit. The sheets are also available to download from the museum website. We have clipboards you can borrow.
- We can work with you to create bespoke activities, please don't hesitate to contact the Learning and Access Officer to discuss your requirements.

Top Ten Tips for getting the most out of your visit.

- 1. Come on a preliminary visit:** Admission is **FREE** for teachers on planning visits. Come and see what we have to offer. Ensure our facilities are suitable for your group.
- 2. Use our Hazard Identification Sheet** (in this pack) to help you write your **Risk Assessment**.
- 3. Toilets**, including accessible toilets, are situated within the museum - to avoid long queues and crossed legs (!) please take your class in small groups.
Lunch arrangements: You are welcome to picnic in our grounds, but please ensure that your group leaves no litter behind. In wet or cold weather we do have our Northern Rail Activity Room available indoors, but this must be booked in advance.
Refreshments: Hot and cold drinks, biscuits and crisps are available from reception.
Shop: The museum shop has a range of pocket money items as well as various gifts. Please split your class into groups of no more than ten children, plus an adult, to visit our shop. We can prepare **goody bags** for a given price with a range of pencils, pens, rubbers rulers etc – these must be booked in advance.
- 4. Group size and number of adult helpers: Adult to Student Ratios**
We suggest the following minimum ratios of adults brought by the school to students (taken from the recommendations made by the DfE)
 - Key Stage One: 1 adult to 6 students
 - Key Stage Two: 1 adult to 10 – 15 students
 - Key Stages Three and Four: 1 adult to 15 - 20 students.**Note:** The museum staff and /or volunteers do not count in these ratios and we are not able to lead an activity session without an adult brought by the school being present.
- 5. Discipline: You and your adult helpers are responsible for your group's behaviour at all times** on the site. Our staff and volunteers are not responsible for disciplining the group. They are entitled to insist on appropriate behaviour and will cut short a session if a group continues to behave poorly or is acting in a dangerous manner.
- 6. Length of visit:** We recommend that you allow around two hours for your visit. Workshop activities may last longer – you would be advised on this when booking.
- 7. Suitable clothing:** You don't need special clothing to come to the museum, but we are a hands-on museum in an old station building.
- 8. Please respect our exhibits:** Many of our exhibits are old, fragile, heavy or oily. Please bring clipboards if you wish your class to use worksheets – as display cases and exhibits are not suitable to rest on! We do have some clipboards available, if you need to borrow them – please tell us in advance.
- 9. Photography:** You are welcome to take photographs in the museum. Don't forget to charge up your batteries or bring spares and spare discs, memory cards or film if you need them (our shop doesn't sell film or batteries unfortunately).
- 10. HAVE FUN!**

A copy of our Safeguarding Policy is available on request.

Head of Steam - Darlington Railway Museum

Hazard Identification Sheet

Please note: This is NOT a Risk Assessment. Teachers should follow DfCSF guidelines and write their own.

Hazard Identified	Risk and to whom	Existing Control Measures	Further Action by School (column left blank for notes by teacher)
Cars/ buses in the car parks	Could be bumped or knocked over. All visitors and staff	Children should be supervised by school staff.	
Stairs over footbridge.	Slip, fall, injury All visitors and staff	Stairs have handrails.	
Glass cases in various locations around the museum.	Could move too close to exhibit, not see glass case and injure self. All visitors and staff	All glass within the museum is safety glass to British Standards. Children are encouraged NOT to run indoors by venue staff, and school staff.	
Platform edges – indoors and outdoors	Could slip off edge and fall into gap between platform and engine – cuts, bruises, knocks or more serious injury. All visitors and staff	There is a white line marked on the edge of the indoors platform edges. In most places there is some form of barrier – a railing or luggage, or other exhibits. The platforms outdoors do not have lines or barriers.	
Some of the paving outdoors is uneven in places. Steps at front entrance can be uneven.	Trips, falls – cuts, bruises, and related injuries. All staff and visitors.	Be aware of the age of the building, and remind children to walk round and take care. There is an alternative ramp route at the entrance if anyone wishes to use it.	

Cont...

Hazard Identified	Risk and to whom	Existing Control Measures	Further Action by School (column left blank for notes by teacher)
Exhibits and cases – corners of and machinery parts that may stick out.	Knocks, trips. All staff and visitors.	Children are encouraged not to run, and to take care within the museum environment.	
Some objects in handling collection may be heavy and occasionally some have sharp edges.	Trap fingers, drop onto feet, cuts, rips to clothing. All visitors and staff	Site staff give verbal warning about nature of handling collection. Its condition is monitored closely by site staff.	
Victorian toilets display area has uneven tiled floor.	Trips and falls. All staff and visitors	Fine with ordinary care.	

Please note that it is the schools responsibility to bring the required number of adults to children.

We suggest the following minimum ratios of adults to students (taken from the recommendations made by the DfE)

- Key Stage One: 1 adult to 6 students
- Key Stage Two: 1 adult to 10 - 15 students
- Key Stages Three and Four: 1 adult to 15 - 20 students.

You are, of course, welcome to bring more adults than this, depending on the needs of your class.

Note: The museum staff and /or volunteers do not count in these ratios and we are not able to lead an activity session without an adult brought by the school being present.

Young people with special educational or medical needs may require additional adult support with some of our activities.

Special Notes for Local History Walk:

We will be walking alongside a busy road (Northgate / A167), and crossing side roads.

It would be useful if the children had hi-viz vests.

There should be a minimum of 3 or 4 adults from school, to supervise the children when walking and when crossing roads etc.