

Teacher's
Guide



**Your pre-visit
need-to-knows**

National Museums NI offers a range of workshops and tours to inspire young learners and to help teachers find novel and interesting ways to make connections between the NI curriculum and our wonderful collection. This handy guide will help you prepare for your visit to the Ulster Museum by providing the information you need to ensure your group have a safe and enjoyable trip.

Planning your visit

How to book

Check out what's available for schools at www.nationalmuseumsni.org/learn and fill in the online [booking request form](#)

All school visits must be booked in advance, including self-guided visits. A minimum of 2 weeks' notice is required to allow us to process your request. Bookings are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. We encourage teachers to book early to secure their preferred date and enjoy the greatest choice of workshops and museum learning experiences. Please wait for a booking confirmation before making travel arrangements.

Payment

Self-guided visits to the Ulster Museum are FREE. Workshops are charged at £60 per class. Payment can be made in advance or on the day of your visit.

- Pay in advance: Please refer to the invoice sent during the week before your visit.
- Pay on the day: We accept payment by credit/debit card, cheque (payable to National Museums NI), or cash.
- Pay after your visit: This option is only available if you can provide a valid Purchase Order (PO) number, if your visit is funded by the Education Authority, or in other exceptional cases agreed in advance.

Cancellations

If you have to cancel your booking due to ill-health or other unforeseen circumstances, your payment will be refunded. In the unlikely event that we need to cancel your booking, we will aim to give you as much notice as possible and offer an alternative date. We'll refund your payment if a suitable alternative date cannot be found.

Preliminary visit

Teachers planning a visit with their class can be welcome to arrange a preliminary visit and request to meet a member of the team. Please email education@nationalmuseumsni.org to arrange your visit.

Pre-visit checklist

- ✓ Check your email confirmation for details of your booking and read the guidelines provided to prepare for the trip.
- ✓ Please ensure one of the following payment arrangements is in place before your visit:
 - Paid in advance
 - Paying on arrival (card, cash, or cheque payable to National Museums NI)
 - Invoice requested (details provided)
- ✓ Plan your journey to allow time for travel, parking and disembarkation in order to arrive ready for your workshop or self-guided visit.
- ✓ Use the information on risks and hazards at the end of this document to help you with your risk assessment.
- ✓ Tell us in advance of your visit if anyone in your group has any accessibility needs, special requirements or allergies.
- ✓ Ensure that there is an adequate number of supervising adults for your group, in adherence with the minimum requirements in this guide.



On the day of your visit

Getting there

The Ulster Museum is located at Botanic Gardens, Belfast, BT9 5AB and is accessible by public transport. Please note that there is no dedicated bus parking available at the Ulster Museum. Buses may stop on the Stranmillis Road to drop off your group. There is car parking available for Blue Badge Holders.

Our opening hours are: 10am – 5pm Tuesday - Sunday

For full details visit:

<https://www.ulstermuseum.org/find-us>

On arrival

Please report to reception on arrival and your group will be welcomed by a member of our team. Please ensure that you arrive at your allotted time. Late arrival may result in your booked workshop no longer being available.

Toilets

Accessible toilet facilities are available and are identified on the museum map. There is a Changing Places facility located just off the main atrium in Window on our World. There is a Gender Neutral WC located next to our Café and a Baby Changing facility at the end of the Stranmillis corridor.

Food & Drink

There are dedicated lunch spaces for use by school groups in our museum. They are available in 30-minute slots, and must be reserved at the point of booking. Please use the bins provided to dispose of any rubbish before you leave. School groups can also use the Botanic Gardens to enjoy a picnic. Please note that there is no food or drink allowed in the galleries.

Looking after our collection

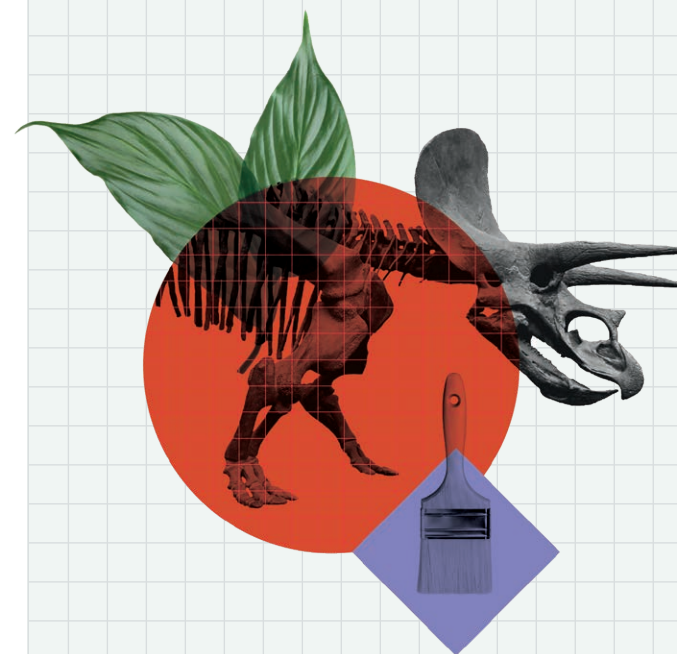
To help us keep our collection in pristine condition for everyone to enjoy, please explain to your group in advance that objects on display cannot be touched. In workshops for schools, we provide safe and supervised opportunities for children and young people to handle certain items in our collection that have been identified for this purpose. Photography is allowed but no flash or tripods please.

Shop

No school trip would be complete without a trip to the shop! If you plan to visit our shop, please leave plenty of time as it is best to stagger your visit in groups of 10 or less.

If you have booked a workshop, please either visit the shop afterwards, or ensure all pupils' purchases are put away to avoid distraction.

If you require any further advice or information to help plan your visit, email us at:
education@nationalmuseumsni.org



Health and safety

Supervision

Teachers and accompanying adults must remain with their groups at all times to ensure compliance with our health and safety guidelines, our safeguarding policy, and to accompany them in case of evacuation. Groups must adhere to the minimum adult to pupil ratio outlined in this document.

If the behaviour of any group seriously adversely affects the safety or enjoyment of other visitors, or causes damage to exhibits, they will be asked to leave, accompanied by a teacher.

In the event that a member/s of the group becoming lost, please contact a member of staff in the first instance.

Supervising adult/pupil ratios

Age	Teacher/Pupil Ratios
Nursery	1:6
Foundation Stage (P1/P2)	1:10
Key Stages 1 and 2 (P3-P7)	1:15
Key Stages 3 and 4 (Yr. 8-12)	1:20
Post-16 (Yr. 13/Yr. 14)	1:20

First aid

During public opening hours, there are trained first-aiders and first aid appointed persons available in the museum, including women. If you or anyone in your group requires first aid treatment while in the museum, you should ask any member of staff for assistance.

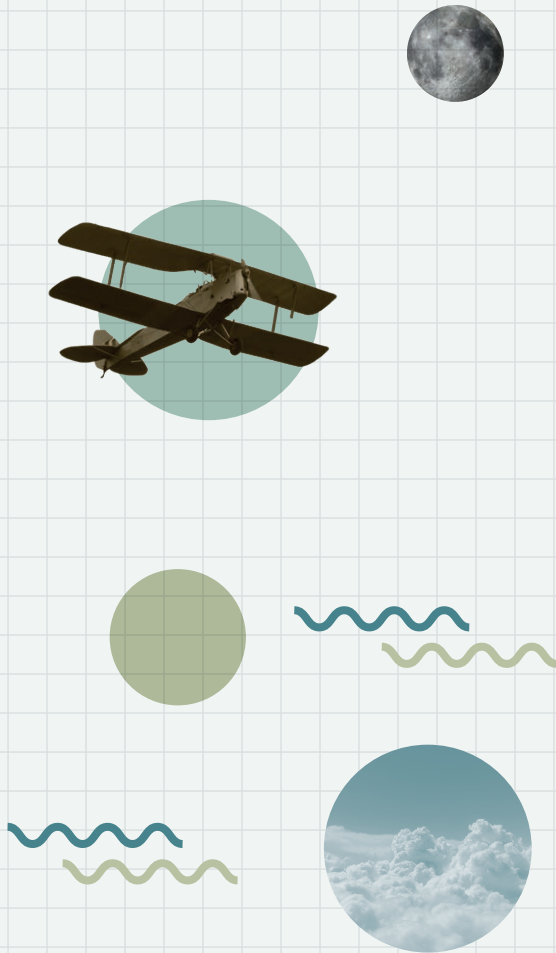
Accident reporting & investigation

A museum first-aider attending to a casualty must complete an Accident / Incident Report detailing the circumstances of the incident and any injuries sustained. The Senior or Duty Visitor Services Manager is responsible for investigating any accident involving visitors. Where appropriate, accidents will be reported to the relevant authority.

In the event of fire

When any fire alarm sounds:

- Lead your group quickly and quietly to the nearest fire exit. Staff will direct you.
- Do not stop to collect bags and coats.
- Lead your group to the assembly points indicated by staff.
- Do not re-enter the museum until you are told it is safe to do so by museum staff.
- At the assembly point teachers and group leaders should complete their own register and report any missing persons to museum staff.
- Teachers and group leaders should brief their groups, pupils and accompanying adults about the evacuation procedure.



Safeguarding

National Museums NI has a Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy which is operated by all staff. A copy can be provided at the time of booking and we would ask that you comply with our Policy by providing the required level of supervision, and informing your group of the need to report any incident that occurs to museum staff.

Staff working with pupils in galleries or delivering educational events have relevant experience and/or training to ensure competent and professional interaction with visitors. Museum staff who are employed in a 'regulated' position are vetted by Access NI.

Photography

Photography is allowed but no flash or tripods please. Photography may not be allowed in certain areas – there will be notices advising you of this. In line with our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, visitors are not permitted to photograph children from any other group visiting the museum.

Risk assessments & hazard identification

Museum public areas have been designed and are maintained as safe spaces for all our visitors. Exhibitions and activities are designed with full consideration for effective risk control. Assessments are completed for new works and activities. Hazards are identified in daily museum monitoring programmes. Any hazards identified are isolated or rectified as soon as possible.

While those in charge of groups visiting the museum take ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of their groups, we recognise our legal obligations to provide a healthy and safe environment for all visitors whether in public galleries, classrooms, lunchrooms or other spaces.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Order 1978 and subordinate legislation we are continually striving to make our museums safe places to visit. (List of applicable legislation is available within our Safety Policy). The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2000 (amended) imposes an obligation on us to make suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to health and safety in Ulster Museum workplaces and visitor areas.

The risk assessment sample at the end of this document identifies hazards and control measures and allows you to complete the assessment by detailing any specific controls relating to your visit.

We hope you and your class have an exciting and enjoyable day!

www.ulstermuseum.org/learn



Location of Possible Hazards	Hazards Identified by National Museums NI Groups (students, teachers, leaders and accompanying adults)	Existing Control Measures	Further action by School or Group (add your own comments)
Entry to the Ulster Museum	Slips, trips, falls Slips, trips, falls on steps Proximity to busy carparks Child becomes lost/separated from group	The Museum is regularly inspected Emergency exits are clearly signed from all public areas. Procedures are in place to deal with emergencies.	Example:- - students / groups supervised by school staff /leaders at all times - head counts carried out by at regular intervals - lost child procedure in place and known to students/ group and adults
Galleries and Exhibitions	Slips, trips, falls Slips, trips, falls on steps Child becomes lost/separated from group	First aiders on-site Visitor Service staff on duty in all public spaces Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children All galleries clearly identified Access lifts to galleries available Pupils are not to run onsite and should follow staff instructions when moving around the museum	
Lifts	Child becomes lost/separated from group on different floor level Group unsure which floor level to access to join main group Child or adult uncomfortable/able to use lift Slips, trips, falls	Visitor Service staff in all public spaces Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children Floor levels clearly marked in lift Floor guide available in lift No access to non-public/behind the scenes lifts for visitors Help button available in lift All public lifts marked on museum map Stairs available for all levels Handrail in lift	
All stairways and doorways	Slips, trips, falls Slips, trips, falls on stepped area Child becomes lost/separated from group	Handrails on stairs First aiders on-site Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children Most public doors kept open Closed doors fitted with obvious handles and all manually operated Lifts available to by-pass stairs	
Museum Shop	Slips, trips, falls Child becomes lost/separated from group	First aiders on-site Staff on duty in all shop areas Low level display and clear lines of sight for visitors Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children	
Schools and Group Lunches	Slips, trips, falls Child becomes lost/separated from group Striking against tables, chairs, coat racks Allergic reactions	First aiders on-site Visitor Services staff always on duty Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children Rooms regularly cleaned during day Tables, benches and chairs have rounded corners Cleaning equipment available to mop up minor spills: staff available to deal with major problems Deep clean can be booked if serious allergy is communicated during booking process	
Toilets	Slips, trips, falls Child becomes lost/separated from group	First aiders on-site Visitor Services staff always on duty in nearby public areas Museum safeguarding procedures for lost children Cleaning in progress signs used by cleaning staff Accessible toilets available throughout museum, including Changing Places facility	
Sessions taught by Museum Staff	Slips, trips, falls Student taken ill Child becomes lost/separated from group	Session leader always able to contact first-aider Students / groups with accompanying adult able to exit taught session space at any point Session staff available in teaching spaces to direct use of an unfamiliar space Lifts available to by-pass stairs	
Workshops and Handling Sessions	Slips, trips, falls Student taken ill Child becomes lost/separated from group Dropping heavy objects Allergic reaction to animal specimens Allergic reaction to supplementary resources Injury caused by object handling Injury caused by craft activity Noise levels	Teachers asked to provide details of allergies at time of booking and update if there are any changes in advance of their visit In advance of workshop, Education staff will refer to details provided by teacher and take necessary precautions (e.g. enhanced cleaning) Group leaders should ensure that pupils follow the handling directions given from staff members to ensure objects are handled with care and respect and to avoid injury Session leader always able to contact first- aider Quiet space (if available) may be offered Students / groups with accompanying adult able to leave session space at any point Please note: some of our workshops may not be suitable if a pupil has an allergy to an object used during the workshop so choosing an alternative workshop may be necessary.	
Fire	Smoke inhalation Burns	Fire risk assessments are completed and reviewed Fire exits are clearly marked. Fire detection and alarm systems are inspected, maintained and regularly tested Staff will direct visitors to safe Assembly Point	

