

KENTS CAVERN

PREHISTORIC CAVES

UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK

Risk assessment guidance for schools and group visits

In line with statutory Health and Safety Legislation, Kents Cavern has carried out its own risk assessment to be used as guidance for schools and groups completing their own risk assessments before their visit to our site.

We strongly recommend that all teachers or group organisers take a complimentary pre-visit to Kents Cavern in order to carry out their own risk assessment. In the event that a pre-visit is not possible, this document provides a general outline of the risks and controls identified.

Group leaders are admitted free, or at a concessionary rate, on the understanding that they are responsible for the management and discipline of the group. They should therefore familiarize themselves with this document.

It is important that the children and all attending a visit understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow the rules
- Why safety precautions are in place and what standard of behavior is expected of them
- Who is responsible for the group
- That in an emergency situation e.g. first aid, a member of the Kents Cavern staff should be notified as soon as possible.

In the tables below we have set out potential hazards and how, with the assistance of group leaders, we intend to reduce those risks.

CAR PARK:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Moving Vehicles.	a) We suggest that groups wait in their vehicles until greeted by a Kents Cavern staff member who will advise where the group should gather. b) Groups will always be asked to gather in the garden or reception area and should never wait around in the car park. c) Group leaders should supervise their groups from the bus and into the designated area.	LOW

CAVE TOUR: An introductory briefing at the start of every cave tour reaffirms the most important safety advice to all groups.

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Hitting head.	Extra illumination & verbal warnings in narrower/lower passages. All incidents reported, leading to any necessary procedural review. First Aid equipment on site.	LOW
Getting lost.	All of our tours are guided and groups are told the importance of staying together at all times. Group leaders should spread themselves between the group rather than all gathering in one place.	LOW
Feeling Unwell.	Emergency telephone for escort from caves. First aid equipment on site.	LOW
Slips & Trips.	Daily cave safety check, regular maintenance, lit throughout. All groups advised to stay on the paths and added warnings are given in wet areas/on wet days.	LOW
Serious Accident.	Direct contact to emergency services. First aid equipment on site. Good	LOW

	response times by Emergency Services.	
Emergency Evacuation.	K.C. staff trained in evacuation procedure and all visitors will need to follow the guide's instructions in this situation. Time of entry & number of people in the cave recorded.	LOW
Loss of Lighting.	Automatic emergency system is in place and checked every morning. The guide will always carry a torch.	LOW
Electrical fire.	Fire extinguishers kept throughout the cave and checked on a regular basis.	LOW
Candles and Shell fires.	Only lit and extinguished by Kents Cavern staff. Visitors are advised to keep their distance from the flames. Extinguishers and water are kept nearby.	LOW
Rock-fall.	Daily safety check. Annual geological inspection.	LOW
Leaving Cave.	Pupils not to leave without adult accompaniment.	LOW

SHOP / CAFE:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Merchandise.	All goods satisfy regulatory safety standards. Group leaders asked to supervise children when in retail areas.	LOW
Hot food and drinks.	First aiders on site. Groups staying for lunch on site are given a reserved area of the café out of the way of general public.	LOW
Spillages.	Bins available for waste. Groups eating in the café must be supervised by their leaders. Kents Cavern staff on hand to clean any spillages as long as they are made aware of them.	LOW

TOILETS:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Slips & Trips.	Cleaned and maintained on a daily basis. School/Group leaders asked to supervise children using facilities. Regular checks by staff.	LOW

WOODLANDS / EXHIBITION ACTIVITIES:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Slips & Trips.	The opening of the Woodland is dictated by weather. Daily site safety inspections are recorded. Regular maintenance. Schools groups using the woodland trail are accompanied by a Kents Cavern staff member however group leaders are required to supervise children in these areas at all times.	LOW
Exhibition Area	Dig boxes and exhibitions area closed for school visits due to Covid-19 guidelines on sand play. Alternative activities put in place.	LOW

GENERAL:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Fire.	Site fully alarmed, regularly tested. Staff trained in emergency procedures. Fire Assembly Point clearly signed.	LOW
Slips & Trips.	Daily site safety inspection, recorded. Regular maintenance. Cleaning/spillage/house-keeping procedures.	LOW
Unwell children.	Appropriate cleaning materials available on site (only to be used by Kents Cavern staff). First aiders on site if needed.	LOW

Covid-19:

Hazard	Control Measures	Risk
Spread of covid-19	School groups to be kept separate to the general public that are visiting on the same day. The only area's where you might come across public are in the car park (on arrival and departure) and in the cave (ahead or behind on a separate tour).	LOW
	No more than one school group to visit on any day.	LOW
	Exhibition area including gemstone digging activity closed to groups in compliance with guidelines on sand-play.	LOW
	Schools encouraged to bring their own pencils for woodland trail and sketching activity. No chalk or charcoal to be used for cave art activity.	LOW
	'Show and tell' or 'pass-around' options for artefact handling activity depending on individual schools' policy. Deep cleaning of each object if 'pass around' option is selected and education team member to wear gloves during.	LOW
	Deep clean of site after every school visit.	LOW
	Daily health checks for all staff.	LOW