

# Planning a Visit to MoSI

Essential information for teachers  
and group leaders

## Risk Assessment

The Museum is a low risk environment and injuries to visitors are very rare. However, teachers or group leaders will need to undertake a risk assessment specifically for their group in line with school and LEA policies and DfES guidelines.

Site specific hazards that you will need to consider are:

- moving machinery you may want to explain to pupils the health and safety reasons for the barriers surrounding the Museum's industrial exhibits,
- uneven surfaces the Museum's yards are cobbled and have railway tracks set into them, however, a network of smooth paths allows visitors to move around the site,
- car parking the yards are used for car parking so visitors will need to exercise care when moving between buildings,
- ramp to lower yard the ramp is for vehicles and should not be used by pedestrians,
- zebra crossing you will need to use the zebra crossing on Lower Byrom Street to move between the Air and Space Hall and the rest of the Museum's site.

Most of the risk assessments teachers and group leaders will have to make at the Museum will either be generic to the activity (for instance leading a group up or down stairs) or ongoing (for instance regularly checking that the entire group is present). Teachers and group leaders can minimise risk by ensuring that their group is supervised in line with the appropriate professional standards.

## Supervision

The Museum's policy is that an adult must accompany children under the age of 16 and that the following adult to child ratios are appropriate:

- 1:4 for children aged under 7 years
- 1:7 for children aged 8 years and older.

You will also need to check your school and LEA policies on the level of supervision you require.

The Museum reserves the right to refuse entry to groups where the level of adult to child/young person supervision is less than 1:15.

Remote supervision (where the supervisor is present although not near or in sight) is generally not appropriate on the Museum site. Unaccompanied children will be asked to return to their supervising adult. Unaccompanied

young people may be asked for identification stating proof of age. If the young person cannot provide this, entry may be refused.

### **Unsuitable behaviour**

The vast majority of children and young people visiting the Museum as part of an organised group behave impeccably. However, a small minority of groups can spoil the enjoyment of other visitors (and sometimes cause more serious problems) by behaving poorly. Experience has shown that poor behaviour invariably arises when children and young people are inadequately supervised by their group leaders.

Museum staff will intervene when poor behaviour:

- places the safety of visitors and staff at risk
- involves threatening or abusive language, or disruptive behaviour, in the vicinity of visitors or staff
- could cause damage to the Museum's exhibits, galleries or buildings.

### **Preliminary Visits**

Entry to the Museum's permanent galleries is free but a charge is made for admission to Special Exhibitions. Teachers who wish to preview a special exhibition before a school visit will be allowed free admission on production of appropriate identification.

### **Planning your visit**

In addition to planning for the health and safety of your group, you will need to consider the following points.

- Have a clear idea of the objectives for your visit.
- Make sure you are familiar with the galleries and exhibitions you will use and plan how you intend to use these. Focus on what is unique to learning at the Museum. Experience with and discussion about objects, 'interactives' and interpretative displays will provide more meaningful and memorable learning than an emphasis exclusively on text panels or worksheets.
- How long will your visit last?
- Be selective. You and your pupils won't have time or energy to see and take in everything. Generally speaking two or three main activities, time for lunch, toilets, a visit to the shop and some browsing will be more than sufficient to fill a day.

The Museum site covers 7½ acres so please bear in mind that you will need to allow time in your timetable for moving a class or group from one location to another. There is extensive signage around the Museum and staff will also be willing to give you directions.

### **Group entrance**

Groups arriving during the morning can use the Group Reception Gate on Lower Byrom Street.

## **Registration**

All groups must register on arrival at the Information Desk in the Orientation Area on the ground floor of the Main Building. Staff will be there to advise you and deal with any payments.

## **Payments**

Payment can be made with cash, cheque, credit card or invoice from the Museum.

## **School's Cloakroom**

Storage space for coats, bags and packed lunches is on the first floor of the Main Building. The Museum cannot take any responsibility for items left there.

## **Lunch areas**

These are located in the Main Building (Lunch Areas 1 and 2), the Air and Space Hall and the Station Building (outside). Lunch will be allotted to groups for a designated period (normally 30 minutes) subject to availability.

Please make sure that, if required, you request a lunch space when you complete a booking form. Check your booking confirmation to make sure you have been allocated a lunch area for your group. Please note that in order to make best use of capacity and due to timing of shows and sessions we may, on occasion, have to allocate you a lunch area that will be shared with another group/class.

## **Wheelchair Access**

The Museum site is fully accessible to wheelchair users with the exception of parts of the Electricity Gallery and the Wasted! Gallery. A network of smooth paths links the five buildings to make access across the cobbled site easier. Toilets for wheelchair users are in the Main Building; the 1830 Warehouse; and the Air and Space Hall.

## **Parking**

There is no coach parking on site. Please ask your driver to drop your group off at the main entrance to the Museum on Lower Byrom Street. The nearest coach parks at the Lowry Centre or Piccadilly Station. Minibuses (16 seats or less) may use the Museum car park. The current charge is £5.00 per vehicle. (£3.00 for visitors arriving after 3.00pm.)

## **Fire Safety**

In case of a fire alarm activation, lead your group out of the building by the nearest safest exit. Museum staff will direct you to use the appropriate exit and assembly points. Do not use lifts or the ramp in the Main Building as exit routes. Wheelchair users will be directed to the nearest refuge areas.

Smoking is not permitted inside any of the Museum's buildings for fire safety reasons.

## **First Aid**

Museum staff will arrange for a trained first aider to attend to any sick or injured members of your group. The supervisor of the group must be present where first aid is administered.

**Accidents and Hazards**

Please report any problems to Museum staff who will arrange for the appropriate action to be taken.

**Staff**

All staff wear Museum badges. Visitor Service staff wear black tops and black trousers. Presenters wear turquoise tops and black trousers and staff the Textiles Gallery, Xperiment and the Power Hall.

**School Holidays**

The Museum is a popular 'family friendly' destination and consequently can be very busy during school holidays. As holidays (particularly half-term breaks) can vary between different schools and LEAs you may want to check with the Learning Centre if your visit is scheduled for a busy holiday period.

**Museum opening times**

The Museum is open from 10am to 5pm. The Museum is open every day except Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

**Xperiment**

In order to comply with health and safety regulations and to ensure that all groups have the opportunity to visit the gallery, groups will be allocated a 30-minute session in Xperiment. Please note that the gallery is not closed to other Museum visitors during these periods.

**Shop**

The Museum shop sells a range of souvenirs and gifts but can get very busy with school visitors