



DURHAM  
CATHEDRAL

# Frequently Asked Questions

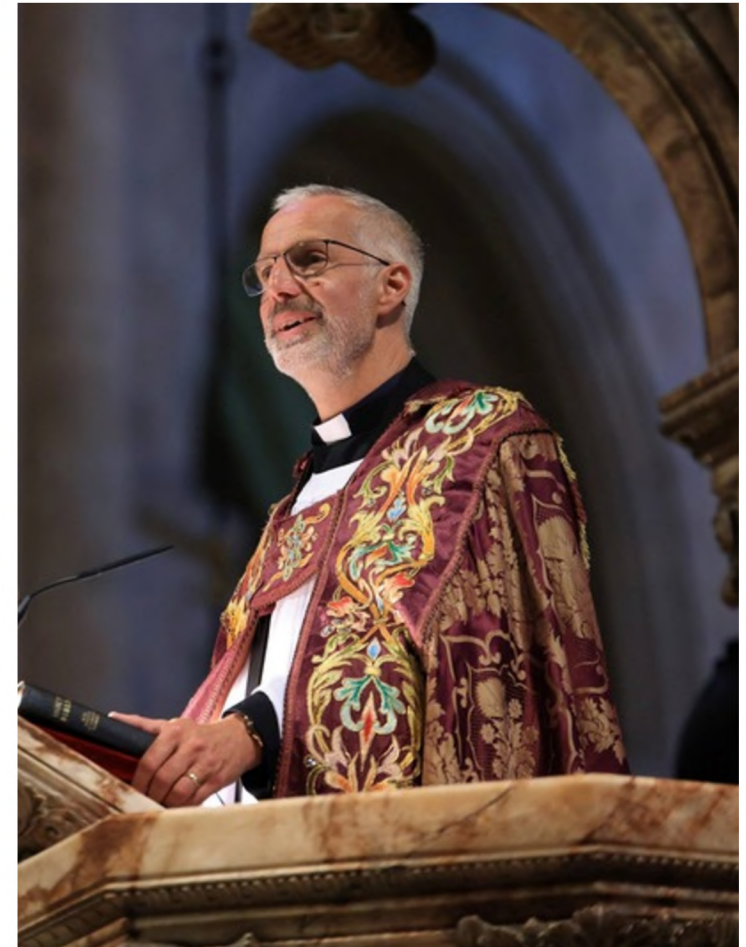
Check here for guidance on bringing a learning group to Durham Cathedral



## *Visiting a Place of Worship*

### **Durham Cathedral is still a church today. How will this impact my visit?**

- On the hour, the duty chaplain leads us in short prayers. You may join in if you would like to, but there is no expectation that you do. We ask that everyone pauses and is quiet during the prayers so that those who wish to pray can do so.
- A service of Holy Communion is held during the week at 12:30pm, and is broadcast via speakers to the rest of the church. Please let us know in advance if you would like your group to attend. If you do not wish to attend, please be mindful of others worshipping at this time.
- Please avoid taking photos of those praying or worshipping.
- Durham Cathedral is a place of burial. This needs to be considered for visitors of some faiths, including Judaism.
- Please be aware that it is common for difficult topics (e.g. death, gender politics etc.) to come up during a visit to a place of worship.
- We ask that all visitors move around the site respectfully, aware of other visitors and those using the church as a place of worship.



## Cost & Cancellation

### Do we have to pay to come to Durham Cathedral?

There is a charge for all organised groups who visit Durham Cathedral. Groups of under-18s are at a reduced rate compared to our adult group charges. Private individuals are invited to donate as they feel able.

This money goes towards our running and maintenance costs, as well as investing in our future through family and community projects. Our conservation programme for the next decade is estimated to cost around £60 million. You can find out more about how your support helps [here](#).

You can choose to be invoiced in advance of or just after the visit, or pay at the Visitor Desk by cash or card on the day of the visit.

### Is there a minimum group charge?

There is no minimum charge for self-led visits. There is a minimum group charge of £30.00 for guided groups.

### What if I need to cancel our visit?

Your booking is confirmed once we have sent your confirmation form, which includes the cost of the visit. If you have not already paid the invoice before your visit, and you have to cancel, charges after this time are:

- less than 2 weeks notice – 25% of your visit cost
- less than 24 hours notice – 50% of your visit cost

### What if I bring more young people than I booked for?

Please let us know if the number of people changes significantly as soon as possible. If more people attend than originally booked, we may not have additional guides or resources available and we might not be able to deliver your visit as planned. We will add the additional costs to your invoice or issue an additional invoice if you have already paid.

## Cost & Cancellation

### What happens if I need to significantly reduce the number of young people attending the visit?

We understand that participant numbers can change. Please let us know as soon as possible if your numbers increase or decrease.

When your visit is confirmed, we allocate guides and prepare resources specifically for your group. Late reductions mean we are unlikely to be able to reallocate staffing at short notice and, more importantly, we aren't able to host other groups who want to come.

To make this fair for everyone, reducing the number of young people at short notice is reflected in the final invoice.

If you reduce the number of young people visiting with less than 2 weeks notice, you will be charged the cost of the young people attending, plus 50% of the difference to the cost of the visit as stated in the confirmation form.

If you reduce the number of young people visiting with less than 24 hours notice, you will be charged the full cost of the visit as stated in the confirmation form.

### Examples of cost implications when a group reduces in size

Number of pupils	Notice given to us	Cost of visit
87 (original number)	visit goes ahead as planned	<b>£696.00</b> <i>87 young people x £8.00</i>
60 (27 fewer than original number)	more than 14 days	<b>£480.00</b> <i>60 young people x £8.00</i>
60 (27 fewer than original number)	between 14 days and 24 hours	<b>£588.00</b> <i>60 x £8.00 = £480.00, plus 27 x £4.00 = £108.00</i>
60 (27 fewer than original number)	less than 24 hours	<b>£696.00</b> <i>full charge</i>

## Transport

### Can the coach drop us off at Durham Cathedral?

Due to the historic nature of Durham city, the roads in the city centre are too narrow for modern coaches. **Please speak to your coach company about where they plan to drop you off, and allow enough time to walk between the drop off point and the Cathedral at both the start and the end of your day. We can only reserve on-site parking (car or minibus) for badge holders.**

Palace Green, at the front of the cathedral, is owned and managed by Durham University. If you wish to organise being dropped off at Palace Green in a minibus or smaller vehicle, please contact Durham University's security team: [security@durham.ac.uk](mailto:security@durham.ac.uk)

## Supervision & Safeguarding

### Why have you asked us to bring a specific minimum number of adults?

**No child should be left unsupervised in the Cathedral.** We are committed to following Church of England guidelines for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. As such we adhere to the supervision ratios set out by the NSPCC, as shown in the table, with an expectation of a minimum of 2 adults for any group. Remember that Durham Cathedral is open to the general public during your visit.

You will be asked to complete a safeguarding pledge before your visit to show you understand and agree to this.

**It is your responsibility to ensure your under-18s are supervised at all times whilst you are on site. If you arrive without adequate adult supervision, your group may be asked to leave.**

*Supervision ratios required by Durham Cathedral*

Age in years	Ratio required	British school years
under 2s	1 adult to 3 children	EYFS
2-3 years	1 adult to 4 children	EYFS
4-8 years	1 adult to 6 children	Reception to Year 4
9-12 years	1 adult to 8 children	Year 5 to Year 8
13-18 years	1 adult to 10 children	Year 9 to Year 13

# *Risk Assessment*

Please can you send us your risk assessment?

## **What we can send you:**

- A risk assessment guidance and advice pack which includes example hazards, likelihood and severity factors, and suggested mitigations. This means you can adjust and format information based on your organisation's risk rating system.
- Our risk assessments for any guided sessions that you have booked.

Some more general hazards may not appear on a risk assessment compiled by the Learning & Engagement team because they are covered by other risk assessments held by our organisation, some of which are not possible to share for security reasons.

All learning activities at the Cathedral are risk-assessed to protect our employees, volunteers, contractors and members of the public. We have a continuous programme of review for these risk assessments.

**Please let us know if you think anything specific to your group might increase the risk level of an activity.**

What kind of resources do you use in your sessions?

When we plan our sessions, we look for opportunities to use resources that are engaging but also appropriate to the age group they are aimed at and typical of organisations providing learning outside the classroom.

On the next page, you can find a short list of the more unusual props and materials we use. If any of these cause concern because of known allergies or aversions, contact us and to discuss alternatives. Our equipment is visually checked before use in sessions.

# Risk Assessment

## Materials and activities we use in our workshops

Below is a non-exhaustive list of materials we use in our workshops. We also use commonly used stationery materials similar to a school setting, such as pencils, felt tip pens, paper, booklets, clipboards, laminated sheets and stickers, particularly for our Explore sessions.

Topic	Discover session	Challenge session
Meet St Cuthbert	Costumes including prop walking sticks, long robes and prop axes	Skin safe mineral oil (baby oil), wet wipes
Durham Cathedral as a place of worship	Handling objects including Bibles, robes, communion wafer, cross, incense, chalice, plate	Air drying clay, clay tools, wet wipes
St Cuthbert's life and legacy	Outdoor option only: blindfolds, balancing, long tubes, balls, wooden planks, onions	Pipe cleaners, 6mm craft beads
Why do people come to Durham Cathedral?	Costumes, wooden sword, coins, biscuit tin	Non-toxic paint sticks, wet wipes
How to build a cathedral	Foam blocks, wooden blocks, wooden frames, cushions, paper cups	Soap bars, wooden soap carving tool
Music at Durham Cathedral	Robes	Hand bells
Why is Durham Cathedral Significant?	Bibles	Magnets, magnetic whiteboard, voice recording equipment, battery powered switchboard, foam blocks, wooden frames
Monk Life: Normans to the Reformation	Costumes: Robes, prop medieval knives, scissors and leatherware	Feather quill, permanent ink, wet wipes
Christianity at Durham Cathedral	Bibles	[session based on debate]
Norman England and Durham Cathedral	Costumes: Robes, blunt replica medieval knives, scissors and leatherware	[session based on outdoor walk]

**If any of these items is a cause for concern, it's worth arranging a discussion with us in person, or by phone.**

Contact [learning@durhamcathedral.co.uk](mailto:learning@durhamcathedral.co.uk)

## *Practicalities on the day*

### **What are the toilets like?**

The toilets at the cathedral are public facilities. We have two wheelchair accessible toilets.

We are not able to supervise your pupils in the toilet block. Please make sure that you have considered this in your risk assessment and be sensitive to the comfort and safety of all our visitors using these shared facilities.

### **Can we go to the shop?**

If you wish to visit the shop, please let us know in advance so we can plan your time and our staffing accordingly.

Please ensure your young people enter the shop in groups of 10 or under, and are closely supervised in the shop.

### **Can we go to the cafe?**

If you wish to go to the cafe, please let us know in advance so we can plan your time and our staffing accordingly. Typically there is not enough time in a guided visit to go to the cafe and most groups choose to bring a packed lunch.

### **Where can we put our bags?**

For guided groups, we provide space in our Learning Centre for bags (subject to availability). We are unable to take responsibility for damage or loss of belongings stored in the Learning Centre.

For self-led visits, please plan to keep your belongings with you.

Please note that suitcases larger than aircraft cabin baggage are not permitted in the Durham Cathedral. If you have large luggage with you, please make arrangements to leave it at your accommodation.

## Practicalities on the day

### Where can we eat lunch?

Only food bought in the cafe can be eaten in the cafe **12**.

Packed lunches can be eaten in the cloister **8** and the Monk's Garden **13**. These spaces are offered on a first-come first-served basis.

We have a very limited amount of indoor lunch space. Guided groups are given priority for these spaces.

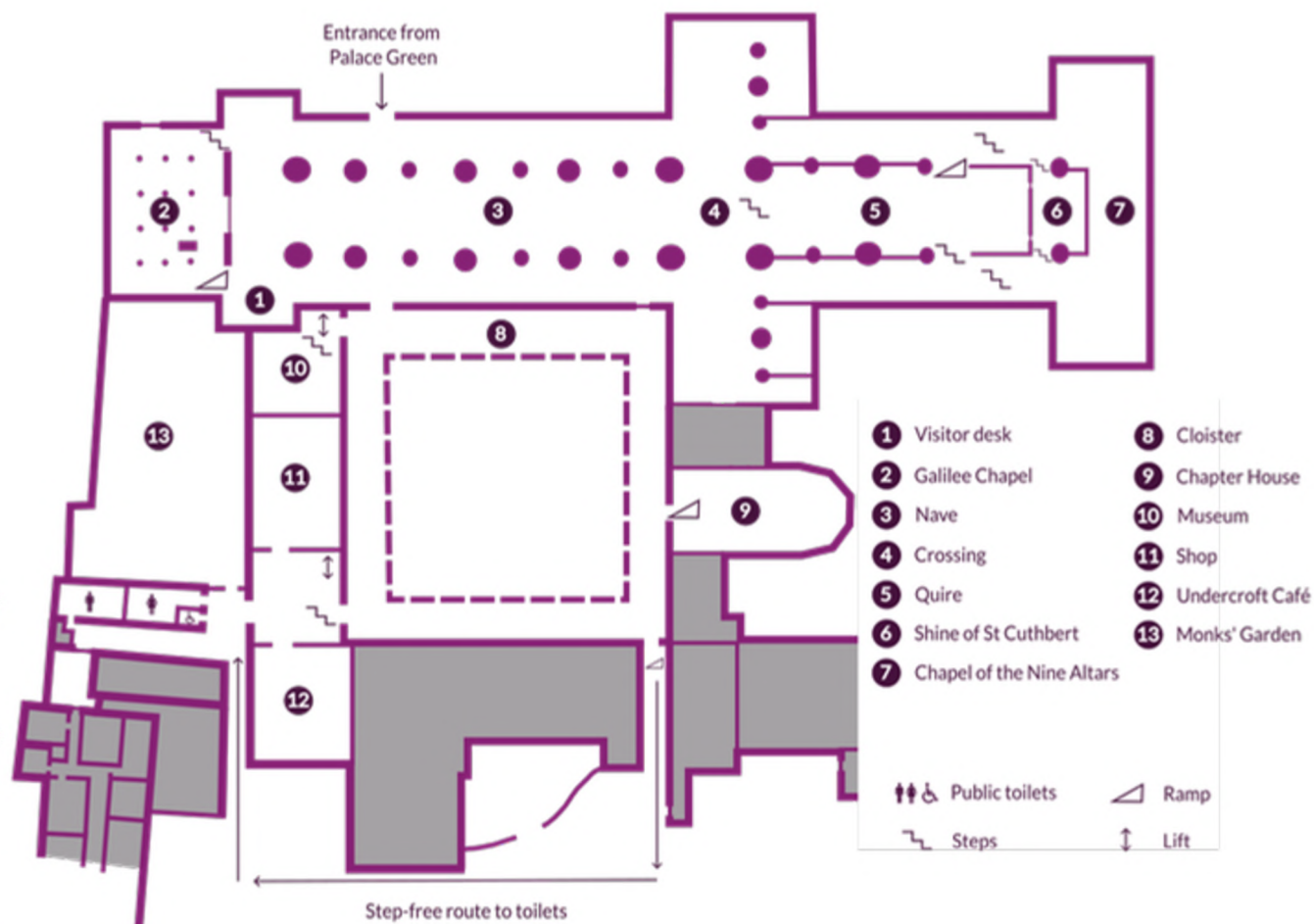
### Is it lunchtime yet?

Our lunchtime for guided groups is 12:30pm. If your group is timetabled for a mid-morning break, we recommend you pack some snacks separately for this, and keep drinks somewhere easily accessible.

Eating, drinking and chewing gum are not permitted in the Cathedral Church or Durham Cathedral Museum.

### Is the site wheelchair accessible?

Due to the historic nature of the site, not all areas are currently wheelchair accessible. Please see the map for more details, and let us know via your enquiry form if you need any more information.



## *Practicalities on the day*

### Will there be other schools at the cathedral?

It is very possible that other schools will be visiting us on the same day as you, as there are a limited number of term-time slots available. Please count your young people regularly, and remind all adults and young children of the importance of staying together. We recommend wearing uniform and/or high visibility items if you have them.

### What should we wear?

Please wear weather appropriate clothing and sensible shoes. School uniform with warm, waterproof coats are usually suitable. High-heels and open-toed shoes are discouraged due to the uneven surfaces at the Cathedral. High visibility items are useful to keep track of your group quickly.

### What about photography?

If you or those in your group choose to take photos during your visit:

- please turn off the flash
- please avoid photographing under-18s who are not in your group
- please avoid photographing people who are worshipping

Please be aware that Durham Cathedral is a popular tourist destination, and it is possible your children will be caught in a photo. If you believe someone is taking pictures of your young people, always let a member of Cathedral staff know.

### Can we climb the tower?

It is best to book this in advance rather than try to book on the day. Children under the age of 8 are not permitted to climb the Central Tower. For health and safety reasons, there is a maximum of 35 people (adults and young people combined) allowed up the tower at any time. Under-18s must be accompanied on a 1:5 adult:child ratio. This means that the maximum group size for young people is effectively 29 per slot.

**There is an additional agreement for groups who wish to climb the tower** which we send to you after you submit your enquiry form. For exclusive use, there is a flat **£150 surplus fee** per hour slot for your group to climb the tower.