



Great North Museum: Hancock Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

What is this document for?

- This is not a risk assessment but aims to give you information to help you as you assess risks for your own group. We follow the advice from the [Department for Education around health and safety on educational visits](#).
- This Hazard Identification covers everyday risks that groups may incur. Please email Great North Museum: Hancock on learning@greatnorthmuseum.org.uk or telephone (0191) 208 6865 to discuss any issues which may affect your group in particular.

What should schools/groups know about our venue?

- The Great North Museum: Hancock is a public building which gives access to members of the public without checks being made on them. Schools should ensure that their children are supervised accordingly.
- As suggested by DfE, you can [search for our Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) or [find the certificate on our website](#).
- We highly recommend that group leaders conduct preliminary visits to tailor visit plans and risk assessments to your group and their needs. Please contact us if you would like to view any resources on this kind of visit and we will do our best to make them available for you
- We have on-site first aiders but groups should bring their own first aid kit and first aider if appropriate. Please ensure any inhalers, epi-pens or medications are brought on the visit and that your risk assessment covers any medical and/or access needs of group members
- Please contact us in advance of your visit to discuss any access needs in your group or to make us aware of medical or SEMH issues as appropriate. [You can also find information on our website to help you plan](#).
- We have sensory support bags available to book which can support neurodivergent visitors, but we would recommend that you bring any such support materials generally used by group members, such as ear defenders or fidget toys
- The nearest hospital with an A&E department (including a children's A&E) is the [Royal Victoria Infirmary](#).

What responsibilities do school/group leaders have when visiting?

- It is the responsibility of the group leader to supervise their group and to monitor behaviour, safety and safeguarding at all times, regardless of the ages involved.
- Group leaders should take into account the age, access needs, behavioural issues and ability of their group when compiling a risk assessment and considering the staff: student ratio required for a safe visit. Please see our website for [our recommended staff: student ratios for different age groups](#).

What are the hazard types/areas listed in this document?

Click to jump to that section: [Traffic](#), [Entrances & exits](#), [Foyer & Shop](#), [Lifts](#), [Stairways & steps](#), [Doorways](#), [Toilets](#), [Galleries](#), [Mouse House](#), [Planetarium](#), [Café](#), [Clare Learning Suite](#), [Study Garden & Grounds](#), [Workshops & Object Handling](#), [Safeguarding](#), [COVID-19](#), [Extreme weather](#).

Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

To enable you to judge risk level at a glance, we have used a traffic light coding system for hazards as follows:

Impact	Probability		
	Low	Moderate	High
	Low		
	Moderate		
	High		



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Traffic				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Hit/knocked over by cars, buses and other vehicles while using pavements and crossing the road to get to and from the museum	low	high		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Stay on the pavement at all times when not crossing the road Use Pelican Crossings on Claremont Road Be aware of bicycles and scooters as well as larger vehicles
Hit/knocked over by cars, buses and other vehicles on the museum driveway	low	high	Bollards at main entrance and at the bottom of the museum steps Speed limit in place	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Particular care to be taken when crossing between the museum steps and the front lawn – this is a vehicle access to the museum
Hit/knocked over by cars, buses and other vehicles while using the bus drop-off layby and path to the Schools Entrance	low	high	Path and steps lead directly from the bus drop-off layby to the Schools Entrance	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Be aware around other buses which may be dropping groups off



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Museum Entrances and Accesses				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls caused by: • Uneven ground • Steps • Bollards and railings • Loose stones • Hard and abrasive surfaces	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Handrails in place Signage in place Paths provided and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Visitors to use handrails where appropriate School staff to ensure children do not climb on external furniture School staff to ensure that there is no running on paths and steps and around entrances
Bumped by automatic doors opening or closing	moderate	low		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure doors stay open using automatic door buttons as groups go through
Collision with glass doors	low	low	Stickers in place on glass doors to make them more visible	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building
Finger trapping in doors	moderate	moderate	Finger guards on main doorways	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Hazard Type/Area: Foyer and Museum Shop				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks made for hazards Site staff awareness Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

				School staff to ensure children do not climb on objects or furniture
Crowding	high	low	Queuing system in place where needed Site staff awareness	Visit the shop in small groups, accompanied by an appropriate number of adults to supervise adequately Follow advice from museum staff around use of space
Damage to shop goods	moderate	low	Queuing system in place CCTV surveillance Site staff awareness	Visit the shop in small groups, accompanied by an appropriate number of adults to supervise adequately
Theft	low	low	Queuing system in place CCTV surveillance Site staff awareness	Visit the shop in small groups, accompanied by an appropriate number of adults to supervise adequately
Hazard Type/Area: Lifts				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Finger trapping in lift doors or other moving parts	low	moderate	Instructions clearly printed on both the inside and outside of the lift	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Exceeding maximum weight	low	moderate	Maximum weight/group size stated in the lift	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Split your group up into smaller groups to use the lift
Lift breakdown	low	low	Lifts are regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

			Instructions on calling for help are displayed inside the lift Two lifts are available for public use to allow access if one is out of order	
Hazard Type/Area: All stairways and steps				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Handrails in place Signage in place during cleaning or after spillage Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Use handrails on the stairs School staff to ensure that children walk while using the stairs School staff to ensure children do not climb on rails or over balconies
Items falling from stairways and balconies	low	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff, checking they keep hold of their equipment near stairways and balconies.
Hazard Type/Area: Doorways				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Bumped by automatic doors opening or closing	moderate	low		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure doors stay open using automatic door buttons as groups go through Groups to take particular care in doorways



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Collision with glass doors	low	low	Stickers in place on glass doors to make them more visible	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building Groups to take particular care in doorways
Finger trapping in doors	moderate	moderate	Finger guards on main doorways	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Groups to take particular care in doorways
Hazard Type/Area: Toilets				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls (especially on wet floors)	moderate	moderate	Regular cleaning and inspection by museum staff Hazard signs displayed when floors are wet Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Need for assistance	low	low	Alarms fitted in accessible toilets	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Child cannot operate locks and becomes stuck in cubicle	low	low	Locks can be opened from outside by museum staff	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Other visitors also using toilets	high	high	Alternative sets of toilets available	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Museum Galleries				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Signage in place during cleaning or after spillage Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building
Collisions with glass cases and museum furniture	moderate	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building
Damage to displays/objects	low	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Climbing on plinths/display cases	moderate	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building School staff to ensure children do not climb on objects or furniture
Items falling from first floor balconies	low	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Moving parts on interactives and display drawers – finger/hand trapping	low	moderate	All interactives individually designed to mitigate risk Equipment maintained by museum staff	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Electrical contacts on interactives and screens	low	high	Regular checks for electrical safety	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Walking into open drawers	moderate	moderate	Regular gallery checks	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Bumps on low shelving	moderate	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Low light levels – trips and bumps	moderate	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Take particular care in low light galleries School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building School staff to ensure children do not climb on objects or furniture

Hazard Type/Area: Mouse House

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Moving parts and size of components on interactives - finger/hand trapping	moderate	moderate	All interactives individually designed to mitigate risk Equipment maintained by museum staff	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Electrocution from power sockets	low	high	Socket covers not used Regular electrical safety inspections and maintenance	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Working height for interactives – trapping	low	low	All interactives individually designed aimed at target age group to mitigate risk	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff

Hazard Type/Area: Planetarium

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
------	------------	----------	--	--



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Signage in place during cleaning or after spillage Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building
Low lighting	moderate	moderate	Lights put up while audience arrive or leave	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Please contact us in advance if your group is likely to have any particular issues around this
Loud sounds and bright lights during shows may disorientate and/or be an issue for visitors with additional needs	moderate	moderate	Staff running planetarium shows are able to alter sound and light levels if required	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Sensory support bags can be booked including ear defenders and other material Please contact us in advance if your group is likely to have any particular issues around this
Crowding	moderate	low	Limit to group size	Please do not attempt to exceed the group size you have been allocated

Hazard Type/Area: Café

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Signage in place during cleaning or after spillage Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building
Spillages	moderate	low	Café staff on hand to deal with any spillages and accidents	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Clore Learning Suite				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks Signage in place during cleaning or after spillage Floors regularly inspected and maintained	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to ensure that there is no running in the building School staff to clear up after any lunch-time spillages
Electrocution from power sockets	low	high	Floor power sockets covered Room setup used to protect floor power sockets which are in use (eg always under a table or taped off) Regular electrical safety inspections and maintenance	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Folding tables – danger of collapse/ trapped fingers	moderate	moderate	Tables regularly inspected	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Trailing electrical cables – trips	low	moderate	Cables used under tables or in close proximity to equipment such as computers Any long cables taped down to the floor	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Burns from hot water taps	low	moderate	Sinks are behind blinds/doors which are kept closed during workshops School staff made aware of the area for lunchtime use	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Strangulation or tangling - blinds cords	low	high	Cords fixed to the wall	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Cuts from craft materials such as scissors	moderate	low	Blunt end scissors provided	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Poisoning from craft materials such as paint	low	high	Non-toxic paints and materials used	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Hazard Type/Area: Study Garden and Museum Grounds				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Slips, trips and falls	moderate	moderate	Daily checks made for hazards Paths regularly inspected and maintained School staff made aware of hazards on the day if the study garden is to be used	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to supervise running and play School staff to ensure children do not climb on walls, fences, gates, furniture such as seating or objects such as statues or artefacts
Study garden flexible seating (wooden boxes) - trips, falls, splinters	moderate	moderate	Warnings given about this being designed as a seating area not a play area on day of visit	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff School staff to supervise running and play School staff to ensure children do not treat the flexible seating as a play area Care to be taken around wooden surfaces to avoid splinters
Study Garden doors from Clore suite – risk of injury from slamming in the wind	moderate	moderate		Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Study Garden pond – risk of drowning	low	high	Pond is walled and has shallow water School staff made aware of the pond if they are to use the garden	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Study Garden pond – risk of waterborne disease	low	high	School staff made aware of the pond if they are to use the garden	Thorough hand-washing after contact
Plant and pollen allergies	moderate	moderate		Ensure all allergies are noted in advance of the visit Advise pupils of dangers of contact with unknown plants Ensure any epi-pens, medication or inhalers are brought on the visit in line with DfE Allergy Safety In Schools Statutory Guidance Ensure that school staff on the visit are trained in allergy and anaphylaxis in line with DfE Statutory Guidance
Insect stings and allergies	moderate	high		Ensure all allergies are noted in advance of the visit Ensure any epi-pens, medication or inhalers are brought on the visit in line with DfE Allergy Safety In Schools Statutory Guidance Ensure that school staff on the visit are trained in allergy and anaphylaxis in line with DfE Statutory Guidance
Poisoning or disease contracted from plants, plant-borne or soil-borne pathogens	low	high		Advise pupils of dangers of contact with unknown plants Thorough hand-washing after contact with plants or soil



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Workshops and Object Handling				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Allergies to fur or feathers when handling taxidermy, Or using a space that has had fur or feathers present with another group.	moderate	high	Cotton or vinyl gloves available to use. Adaptations to workshops can be made to remove or limit exposure to specific allergens when notified in advance of a visit.	Ensure all allergies are noted in advance of the visit Ensure any epi-pens, medication or inhalers are brought on the visit in line with DfE Allergy Safety In Schools Statutory Guidance Ensure that school staff on the visit are trained in allergy and anaphylaxis in line with DfE Statutory Guidance Please contact us in advance if you know of any allergies of this kind in your group – or any other allergies we should be aware of
Food allergies	moderate	high	The museum does not usually provide food for school groups and will plan in co-ordination with the school if this should happen	Ensure all allergies are noted in advance of the visit Ensure any epi-pens, medication or inhalers are brought on the visit in line with DfE Allergy Safety In Schools Statutory Guidance Ensure that school staff on the visit are trained in allergy and anaphylaxis in line with DfE Statutory Guidance Be aware that other groups may be using the packed lunch space before or after yours (or very occasionally that you may be asked to share a space with another group). Please contact us in advance if allergies may make this a problem



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

				Please follow your school policy around individual packed lunches. Please contact us in advance if you need to discuss any issues around allergies
Nervous reactions or emotional triggers to objects or subject matter	low	moderate	Warnings given around potentially triggering content at the time of booking	Consider the content of any workshop you have booked and contact us in advance if you need more detail or change in topic
Irritant in eyes (eg sand)	moderate	moderate	Session leader will demonstrate correct use of sand trays or other sources of particulates	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff
Choking hazard	low	moderate	Younger and SEND groups warned by museum staff not to put objects in their mouths Objects in workshops for younger and SEND children selected to be of an appropriately large size	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff All objects to be handled in line with the instructions given by the museum staff Please contact us in advance if you feel that this will be an issue with children in your group so that we can select objects for the workshop appropriately
Cuts, puncture wounds, trapped fingers	low	moderate	Warnings given around sharp objects Instructions given on handling techniques All breakages immediately dealt with	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff All objects to be handled in line with the instructions given by the museum staff Inform the museum staff immediately about any breakage
Crush injuries from heavy objects	low	moderate	Warnings given around heavy objects Instructions given on handling techniques	All objects to be handled in line with the instructions given by the museum staff



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Safeguarding – please see our safeguarding policy.				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Lost children – danger of separation from the group in the museum spaces	low	moderate	Lost child policy in place Staff receive training in lost child procedures Children left unattended by an adult with their group will be regarded as lost children	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Ensure that your staff: pupil ratios allow you to supervise children adequately, including for toilet visits and if a child needs to be taken out of the main group for any reason. Please see our website for our recommended staff: student ratios for different age groups. Inform museum staff immediately if a member of your group is missing Conduct regular headcounts Ensure all children know who their contact adult is and who else is in their group Ensure adults in charge of smaller groups are aware of who is in their group
Child leaves the museum by themselves	low	high	Site staff awareness CCTV in place Doors at the front of the museum are overlooked by shop staff Doors at the rear of the museum are generally locked except during fire alarms. Museum staff will make schools aware if they know of contractor use which could lead to their being open	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Ensure that your staff: pupil ratios allow you to supervise children adequately, including for toilet visits and if a child needs to be taken out of the main group for any reason Take extra care when leading group near doors, particularly in the butterfly corridor, where doors are sometimes used for contractor access and movement of objects.



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

				Inform the museum in advance of your visit if you consider any of your children to be a particular flight risk
Stranger danger – the museum is a public space and anyone can come in	low	high	Staff receive training in procedures CCTV in place Galleries are regularly patrolled by museum staff	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Ensure that your staff: pupil ratios allow you to supervise children adequately, including for toilet visits and if a child needs to be taken out of the main group for any reason Ensure that there are school staff present in any area of the museum which you pupils are using Ensure that children are aware that this is a public space before the visit and assist them with what that means for behaviour in line with your school/group safeguarding policy Inform museum staff immediately if other visitors are acting suspiciously or in an unsafe manner
Working with non-school staff	low	high	Museum learning team members and volunteers receive enhanced DBS checks as laid out in the DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2026 Statutory Guidance Children are not left in the care of museum staff without a member of school staff also present	Pupils to be supervised at all times by school staff Ensure that your staff: pupil ratios allow you to supervise children adequately, including for toilet visits and if a child needs to be taken out of the main group for any reason



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Covid-19 Infection during a visit – we are accredited by the ‘We’re Good To Go’ Industry Standard				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Infection from airborne particles	moderate	moderate	Government guidelines followed at all times Use of facemasks is encouraged in line with government advice Areas of the museum with poor airflow have been identified and can be closed during peak outbreak times Windows can be opened for ventilation in learning spaces	Use of facemasks, especially for anyone with lowered immunity
Infection from contaminated surfaces	moderate	moderate	Government guidelines followed at all times Handwashing can take place in toilets around the building Surfaces receive regular cleaning Anti-bac spray is available for use during lunches Object handling will be reduced during peak outbreak times	Frequent hand washing and sanitizing is encouraged
Working outside a designated bubble	moderate	moderate	Visitor numbers will be restricted during peak outbreak times in line with government guidelines	Groups asked to stay in their working bubbles during peak outbreak times



Hazard Identification Form - Academic Year 2026/27

Hazard Type/Area: Extreme Weather				
Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Existing Control Measures Put in Place by Museum	Recommended Mitigating Measures by Group
Ice and snow – slips	low	moderate	Paths are cleared and salted	Consider whether to travel if it is very ice or snowy – we will endeavour to rearrange sessions if you have to cancel Encourage children to wear appropriate clothing Please follow your school policy. Contact us if you need to discuss any aspects of the visit
Extreme heat	low	moderate	Drinking water top-ups are available from the café The museum building itself is cool inside Teaching rooms can be ventilated	Consider whether to travel if you have a long journey in extreme heat - we will endeavour to rearrange sessions if you have to cancel Encourage children to wear sunscreen and hats Do not use the outdoor spaces of the museum if it is extremely hot Please follow your school policy. Contact us if you need to discuss any aspects of the visit

