INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL AND YOUTH GROUPS

If you would like to book a group visit to The Museum of English Rural Life please read the following guidelines before completing an enquiry form and emailing it to mailto:merlevents@reading.ac.uk.

OPENING TIMES

Museum & Garden
- Monday: closed
- Tuesday-Friday: 9am-5pm
- Last Thursday of the month: 9am-9pm*
- Saturday & Sunday: 10am-5pm

*dates may vary, please always check our website

Please be aware that we host a busy toddler group on Friday mornings until approximately 12pm. Groups which require an evening visit can attend during a scheduled, late opening. These are offered on the last Thursday of the month and on selected weeks during the year. For full details of our opening times, please visit: https://merl.reading.ac.uk/visit-us/opening-times/

MUSEUM FACILITIES AND ACCESS

The MERL is accessible to a wide range of visitors and we always strive to meet the access needs of everyone who visits us. Full information is available on our website: https://merl.reading.ac.uk/visit-us/facilities-access/

HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the event of an emergency, please use the nearest fire exit and follow instructions from our Visitor Services Assistants. We recommend that you complete your own risk assessment, on your preliminary visit to the museum.
OBJECT HANDLING
Subject to availability, we can arrange volunteer-led object handling within the galleries during your visit. Depending on the size of your group, you may need to split into smaller groups of 5 or so for these sessions, to allow careful handling of the objects. We may be able to tailor the objects used for this session if your group has a specific interest. Please make note of this on the enquiry form.

Are there guidelines on supervision ratios?
The behaviour of students at the Museum is the responsibility of teachers and adult supervisors. Please ensure your group meets the minimum adult to pupil ratio for your Key Stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key stage</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Stage</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>1:4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Stage 2</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>1:8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Stage 3</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>1:10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Stage 4</td>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>1:10</td>
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<td>Post-16</td>
<td>1 adult per booking</td>
<td>1:30</td>
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PARKING
Parking is always limited, but we can reserve space for a small minibus and two cars in our car park, subject to availability. If we are told in advance, we can reserve spaces for buses and coaches at Whiteknights University campus. This allows the group to be dropped off and collected (if the driver is not part of the group).

For full details on how to get to The MERL, please visit: https://merl.reading.ac.uk/visit-us/getting-here/

Where do we go when we arrive with our group?
Before entering the building, it would be helpful if the group leader could report to the front desk and find out where the rest of the group can gather, to avoid congestion in the shop area of the museum.

On entering the galleries, we would strongly suggest that you divide your members or students up into smaller groups and provide them with different starting points to ensure the galleries do not become overcrowded.

Is there a cloakroom or meeting room that we can use?
If we have reserved the Learning Studio for your use, you are welcome to leave all coats and bags in this room, which can be locked during your visit. You may also use this room as a meeting room and discussion space and are permitted to eat and drink in here.
Can we eat and drink in the galleries?
Eating and drinking is not permitted in the galleries (the spaces beyond the Welcome space, café and shop). Please ask a member of staff if you are not sure where this is. We ask that the group leader takes responsibility for ensuring their members or students group do not take food or drink into the galleries. Please note, we also have a large garden where picnics are welcome.

Can we wear backpacks or carry bags in the museum?
We would prefer it if you could leave all large bags in the designated space (the Learning Studio)

Can we take photographs in the galleries?
Photography is permitted throughout the galleries unless there is signage to say otherwise. Some of our collections are subject to copyright legislation, and this is indicated clearly.

Can we draw in the galleries?
Drawing is permitted in the galleries, using non-permanent materials (pencils) only. Please take care not to block walking routes for other visitors or leave bags and other items in the way.