

Planning a visit to the Crystal

Self guided visits, education tours and workshops must be booked in advance – please email education@thecrystal.org to discuss your options.

The Crystal 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:

- The exhibition spans two floors, access to the mezzanine is via stairs or lift
- Interactive water exhibits within the Water is Life zone

Most of the risk assessments teachers and group leaders will have to make at the Crystal 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 Crystal'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
- 1:10 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 Crystal reserves the right to refuse entry to groups with more than 15 children per adult supervisor.

Remote supervision (where the supervisor is present although not near or in sight) is generally not appropriate on the Crystal 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 Crystal 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.

Crystal 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/staff
- could cause damage to the Crystal's exhibits or buildings.

Preliminary Visits

Entry to the Crystal's permanent exhibition is free but a charge is made for guided tours. Teachers who wish to preview the 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 exhibitions you will use and plan how you intend to use these. Focus on what is unique to learning at the Crystal. 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?

Registration

All groups must register on arrival at the reception desk on the ground floor of the main building. Staff will be there to advise you and deal with any payments.

Payments for workshop and guided tours

Payment can be made by cash, debit or credit card on the day, or by card in advance over the phone on 02070556400.