

This information will help you write a risk assessment for your school visit to The Postal Museum.

Planning visits

We strongly recommend that you make a planning visit to risk assess potential hazards in the museum and on your journey. To book your visit email

schools@postalmuseum.org

Supervision

Teachers and adult helpers are responsible for the health and safety of their group and should supervise students at all times.

It is important to meet our minimum ratios to provide adequate supervision on the Mail Rail ride and in Sorted! (if relevant).

Minimum adult: student ratios (not including additional SEND support):

EYFS Nursery	1:3
EYFS Reception	1:4
KS1	1:4
KS2	1:6
KS3	1:10
KS4+	1:15

Groups and group leaders

Split your class into equal-sized groups. Assign adult helpers to a group with a group leader. Write the groups on your itinerary. Classes should stay in these small groups throughout the visit.

Lost students

Tell our staff immediately if any students become separated from their group and you are unable to find them. We have procedures to deal with these situations efficiently.

Museum staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers have undergone a standard police check. Learning Facilitators delivering interactive sessions have undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

First aid

There is a first aid room for minor injuries and illness. Tell our staff immediately if one of your group requires assistance.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Any changes or hazards that arise on the day of your visit will be included in your Welcome briefing.

The Postal Museum – general risks

The Postal Museum is split over two buildings. The Postal Museum is on one side of the road, and Mail Rail is on the other. The road has a temporary pedestrian crossing.

Put your class into groups before you set off. Schools should arrive at the entrance point indicated on your itinerary.

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Arrival on Phoenix Place	Moving vehicles Building works	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School groups to use zebra crossingStudents led by teachers when crossing the roadStudents divided into small groups with an adult group leaderSchools to arrange coach drop-off and collection in a safe location	Moderate
Museum spaces	Students getting lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teachers bring register and take regular head countsAll adults have a printed Itinerary and Museum mapMuseum staff and volunteers to guide and help school groups	Low
	Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fire and evacuation covered in Welcome briefingFire hydrants throughout museum siteFire exits clearly markedFire alarm system in place and regularly checkedMuseum staff to lead fire evacuation	Low
The Postal Museum Courtyard and entrance	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Courtyard cleaned every day and has non-slip flooringHandrail and slope for wheelchair access	Low
The Postal Museum Welcome Space	Slips, trips and falls Retail units and café tables Students getting lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School groups supervised by museum staff and volunteers	Low

The Postal Museum toilets (ground floor)	Slips, trips and falls Students getting stuck in toilets Flood caused by leaving the tap running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students visit toilets in small groups with an adult leader Teachers remind students about taps and check cubicles Toilets checked regularly 	Low
The Postal Museum lifts	Students getting stuck in the lift or ending up on the wrong floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with access requirements to use the lift with adult supervision 	Low
The Postal Museum shop	Stock falling on students Freestanding units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shop is not open (Tuesdays). Schools that wish to should visit the shop in small groups 	Low
The Postal Museum stairs between floors	Slips, trips and falls Spillages Overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use stairs in single file with adult supervision Stairs and handrails regularly checked 	Low

The Postal Museum Exhibition Space – specific risks

The exhibition space is monitored by museum staff and volunteers. Schools should circulate the exhibition space in small groups to avoid overcrowding.

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
The Postal Museum exhibition entrance	Automatic closing doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students enter exhibitions in small groups with an adult leader Museum staff to monitor entrance 	Low
Freestanding objects and displays (including vehicles and pillar boxes on support stands)	Slips, trips and falls Bumping into objects Objects moving from support stands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students told about appropriate behaviour and not to run in the galleries Students reminded not to touch museum objects 	Low
Partition walls between exhibition zones	Students getting stuck between gaps in partition walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students told not to squeeze between gaps in the walls Adult group leaders supervise groups 	Low
Viewing displays at high level	Displays falling from height Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays maintained regularly 	Low
Interactive feely boxes, and handling boxes (Zone 1)	Bumps and collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult group leaders supervise groups. 	Low
Interactive phone boxes (Zone 2 and Zone 5)	Trips when entering kiosk Telephone cable could get wrapped around a child's neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult group leaders supervise groups Students use kiosk one at a time 	Low
Interactive pneumatic tube (Zone 5 and Zone 5)	Fingers jammed in the tubes Loose parts (pencils and paper)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult group leaders supervise groups Students use interactives in small groups. 	Low
Interactive touch screens and digital games (Zones 1, 2, 3 and 5)	Bumps and collisions Static, electric shocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low
Interactive dressing up (Zone 2)	Slips, trips and falls Entanglement in clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum staff and volunteers keep dressing up tidy 	Low

	Loose items (buttons)		
Interactive handling table (Zone 4)	Bumps and collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height of table is adjustable for younger children and wheelchair users 	Low
GPO film interactive (Zone 4)	Electric shocks from faulty equipment or exposed cables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular maintenance and security checks 	Low
Make a stamp interactive (Zone 5)	Stool seating AV screen Use of Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students told about appropriate use of interactive Regular maintenance and security checks 	Low
Write a postcard interactive (Zone 5)	Moveable seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult group leaders supervise groups. 	Low
Folding stools hanging on walls (Zone 5)	Stools falling on the floor Finger traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stool fixings are safety checked every month 	Low

Learning Space A – Interactive sessions

Teachers and adult helpers must attend interactive sessions. We encourage adults to take an active part in the learning, as instructed by the session facilitator.

Mobile phones must be on silent. Photography is welcome but we politely ask schools not to film sessions on phones or tablets.

AREA/ACTIVITY	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Tables, chairs and benches (including stacked furniture)	Slips, trips and falls Bumps and collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tables, chairs and benches set up in advance Stacked chairs on trolley 	Low
Windows	Falling from open windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students told not to sit on window ledges 	Low
Electrical sockets	Electric shock from fingers in socket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All sockets have child-safety cover Regular maintenance and checks 	Low
Flooring	Slips, trips and falls Spillages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooring cleaned regularly No food/drink allowed 	Low
Sink area and overhead cupboards	Water Risk of flooding from leaving tap on Bumps to head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to use the sink with adult supervision Adults check taps are off and wet paper towels are put in the bin Cupboards have child-safety locks 	Low
Wall cupboards	Finger traps Falling objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sink area covered by a shutter when not in use Teachers to remain vigilant and remind students not to touch 	Low
AV screen and stand	Electric shock from screen Loose cables Stand running over feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum staff to position screen safely Brakes applied to the stand Students supervised by adult leaders 	Low
Sliding partition wall between Learning Space A and B	Trapped fingers Cuts and bruises Bumps and collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partition will either be open or closed. This will be prepared in advance by museum staff Students supervised by adult leaders 	Low
Movement in the Learning Space	Slips, trips and falls Collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to follow instructions from session facilitator Teachers to remain vigilant and intervene if needed 	Low

Students with physical disabilities (e.g. wheelchairs)	Injury to students with special educational needs or physical disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to be supervised by an adult on a one-to-one basis • Tables adjustable for wheelchairs • Disabilities identified on booking form. Activities can be adapted in advance 	Low
AV presentations, sounds and music	Electric shocks from AV screen Loud noises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AV screen set up in advance by museum staff • Students who are sensitive to noise to be identified on booking form • Students to wear glasses to view screen as needed 	Low
Tables and chairs set up for lunch	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students to sit in small groups with adult supervision 	Low
Food and drink	Spillages Allergies Scalds and burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults alert museum staff about spillages • Food waste put into bins provided • Teachers responsible for students with allergies and bring appropriate medication • No hot drinks in the Mail Rail depot 	Low

Interactive sessions – specific risks

Interactive sessions take place in Learning Space A on Level 1 of The Postal Museum. Learning Space A is accessible by stairs or a lift.

MAIL RAIL SCIENCE SHOW			
Pneumatic tube demo	Finger traps Cuts and bruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students follow facilitator's instructions Equipment has regular safety checks Student volunteer will sit on floor to use leaf blower safely. 	Low
Circuit demo	Object handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment has regular safety checks 	Low
Toolbox demo	Object handling Finger traps Cuts and bruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator to hand out equipment and supervise demo 	Low
ENGINEERS GOOD IDEAS!			
Toolbox investigation	Object handling Standing at tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and group leaders hand out equipment and supervise use 	Low
THE JOLLY POSTMAN – ONCE UPON A BICYCLE			
Magic spoons activity	Object handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers hand out and collect spoons 	Low
Growing into a beanstalk	Physical participation Standing up and sitting down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students sit in small groups on bench seating Benches safety locks are checked regularly 	Low
JOLLY CHRISTMAS POSTMAN			
Christmas hats	Dressing up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers hand out and collect hats 	Low
Physical interaction	Physical participation Standing up and down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students sit in small groups on bench seating Benches safety locks are checked regularly 	Low
SORTING OFFICE MATHS CHALLENGE			
Sorting parcels	Object handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator and teacher hand out parcels. Students take turns. 	Low
Handling weighted parcels	Object handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator to provide clear instructions and supervise use. 	Low
Building street and posting letters	Physical participation. Standing up. Object handling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator and teacher to supervise students. Facilitator and teacher to hand out doors and letters. 	Low

Mail Rail building – Specific risks

Mail Rail exhibition and ride are in the original car depot. All due care has been taken to make the former working environment safe while maintaining the authenticity of the original industrial heritage.

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Mail Rail Welcome Space (ground floor)	Slips, trips, falls Retail units Students getting lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum staff or volunteer to greet group and provide briefing 	Low
Mail Rail shop	Freestanding retail units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shop is not open (Tuesdays). Schools that wish to should visit the shop in small groups 	Low
Mail Rail lift to depot (ride and exhibitions)	Students getting stuck in the lift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with access requirements to use the lift with adult supervision 	Low
Mail Rail stairs between floors	Slips, trips and falls Spillages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to use stairs in single file with adult supervision 	Low
Industrial heritage features (walls, floors and ceiling)	Slips, trips and falls Rough edges Cuts and bruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools told about industrial heritage in briefing and teachers remain vigilant 	Low
Tables and chairs set up for lunch	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to sit in small groups with adult supervision 	Low
Food and drink	Spillages Allergies Scalds and burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults alert museum staff about spillages Food waste put into bins provided Teachers responsible for students with allergies and bring appropriate medication. No hot drinks in the Mail Rail depot 	Low

Mail Rail Exhibition

Classes should explore the exhibition space in small groups to avoid overcrowding. The exhibition space is monitored by Visitor Hosts and volunteers.

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Freestanding objects and displays	Slips, trips and falls Bumping into objects Objects moving from support stands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large objects have a clear space of 1.4m around them Students reminded about behaviour and told not to run in the exhibition space 	Low
Interactive (Timeline/city scape)	Bumps and collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students take turns to use interactive 	Low
Interactive (Locker stories)	Bumps and collisions Rough edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students take turns with adult supervision 	Low
Interactive (Climb on battery loco)	Slips, trips and falls Finger traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students take turns with adult supervision 	Low
Interactive (pneumatics)	Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students reminded to play respectfully (despite competitive element) Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low
Interactive (freestanding people panels)	Cable from audio cup could get wrapped around a child's neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students take turns with adult supervision 	Low
Interactive (Travelling Post Office TPO carriage)	Slips, trips and falls on moving floor Loose parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to visit TPO carriage in small groups with an adult leader Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low
Interactive (switch frame operator)	Static or electric shock from AV screen Slips, trips and falls from box Loose parts Levers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low
Interactive (electric trains)	Bumps and collisions Peering into transparent box Loose parts Levers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults to remain vigilant for students peering through the transparent box Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low
Mail Rail Network Explorer digital screen	Static or electric shock from AV screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low

Interactive (time telescope)	Bumps to head Static or electric shock from AV screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjustable height for wheelchairs Regular maintenance and safety checks 	Low

Mail Rail ride

Mail Rail is an immersive experience with sights, sounds and lights that some students may find overwhelming. Schools must consider this at the point of booking.

Teachers' notes and a visual story to help students prepare for the Mail Rail ride is on our website postalmuseum.org/schools

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES	RISK LEVEL
Embarkation platform (queuing for the train)	Slips and trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools queue for train in small groups at allocated time with adult group leaders. Museum staff and volunteers on hand to support groups 	Low
Lockers (coat and bag storage)	Finger traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use lockers with adult supervision 	Low
Boarding the train	Slips and trips in the carriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum staff to guide students into the train Teachers and adult helpers to sit throughout the train Clear instructions to remain seated in the train 	Moderate
Closing the train canopy overhead	Bumps to head Finger traps Cuts and abrasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum staff to close the canopy Students instructed to keep arms clear of closing canopy Teachers and adult helpers to sit throughout the train 	Moderate
Train in motion	Slipping in the carriage Impact on canopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students supervised by adults and remain seated throughout the ride 	Moderate
Emergency assistance buttons	Pressing button and causing emergency alarm to sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students supervised by adults and reminded not to press the button 	Low
Leaning on the doors	Train may make an emergency stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students supervised by adults and reminded not to lean on the doors 	Low
Low oxygen levels in tunnel	Breathing problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checks carried out by engineers 	Low

Dust in tunnel	Breathing problems Dust in eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checks carried out by engineers 	Low
Disembarking from the train	Slips, trips and falls Impact and collision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students supervised by adults Museum staff to open the canopy and provide assistance 	Moderate
Evacuation of train ride	Fire or incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train will stop and museum staff will lead group from the train to a safe muster point 	Low

Sorted! Specific risks

Teachers and adult helpers are responsible for supervising students in Sorted!

SEND students may need to be supported by an adult on a one-to-one basis and some areas (e.g. the Sorting Office upper level) may not be accessible by children with disabilities.

ACTIVITY/AREA	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES
Entrance to Sorted! (street level)	Slips, trips and falls Finger traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students divided into small groups with an adult leader Museum staff to greet group and provide briefing Hinge guards on front door
Toilets	Students getting stuck in toilets Flood caused by leaving the tap running Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children visit toilets in small groups with an adult leader Teachers to remind students about taps and check cubicles after use Toilets checked and cleaned regularly
Students moving around Sorted!	Slips, trips and falls Collisions Bruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students move around Sorted! in small groups with an adult leader Students reminded to play safely and respectfully Daily inspections by Visitor Hosts Annual inspections of all safety equipment (e.g. RoSPA)
Loose items e.g. magnets, building blocks, wooden shapes, letters, parcels, hats, tabards and books	Physical injury, cuts and bruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loose items checked daily and damaged items removed Teachers and adults to monitor use of loose items Hats, tabards and vests to be washed regularly
Heat	Overheating due to overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults to stay vigilant and encourage students to slow down and have a drink of water
Electrical supply	Electric shock, burns, fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical sockets safely located. All sockets have child-safety covers. Regular PAT testing
Floors	Slips, trips and falls Spillages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic edging on ventilation grills in floor Students supervised by adults and told not to run Water to be drunk in seating area

Sorted! Specific risks

AREA/ACTIVITY	HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES
RISKS IN SPECIFIC AREAS		
Seating area	Bench seating Spillages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to be supervised by adults Drinks and snacks to be consumed with adult supervision
MINI NEIGHBOURHOOD		
Climbing on Royal Mail van	Falls, impact injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult supervision to monitor use of van and stop students climbing on top
Doors on houses	Finger traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult supervision to stop students slamming doors
SORTING OFFICE		
Slide	Friction burns, falls, collisions, abrasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft mat at bottom of slide and netting Vinyl surface to be inspected daily Students to use slide one at a time with adult supervision
Parcel chute and conveyor belt	Entrapment, sharp edges, falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use conveyor belt in groups with adult supervision Rubber trim on metal blades
Pulley	Climbing on rope Throwing letters and parcels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to use pulley in small groups with adult supervision Students encouraged to share and take turns
THE POST OFFICE		
Post Office counter	Weights and measures Tabards and caps Overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision Students encouraged to share and take turns
Sorting frame	Loose letters Overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision Students encouraged to share and take turns
BOOK CORNER		
Books	Paper cuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision
Cushions	Slips and trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision
UNDER 3'S AREA		
Mini Post Office	Loose letters and parcels Overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision
Magnet wall and toy town	Loose items Risk of choking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use area in small groups with adult supervision