

Welcome to **M**ountfitchet **C**astle and the **H**ouse on the **H**ill **T**oy **M**useum

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www.mountfitchetcastle.com

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An example itinerary of a school visit: **Mountfitchet Castle.**

Arrival

Most groups/parties arrive between 10.00am and 11.00am

Checking in and Payment

Person in charge of the group/party comes to our front desk to check in. Please have ready the actual number of children and adults that you have brought along with you on the day. Don't worry about working out the 1-15 free adult ratio – we'll do that for you. The invoice will be made out for you while you wait (or you can leave your figures with the member of staff on the gate and come back later in the day to settle up) Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'

Entering the complex

Bring the group/party through the main gate and you can gather them in the dining room to watch our 12 minute DVD on the history of the Castle or take them straight through into the picnic area to gather and organise and read out our guidelines to the group/party (enclosed). You can choose an alternative time to watch the DVD during the day which may be more convenient for you.

Lunch

Most schools/groups like to have their lunch, after an initial look around the castle, anytime between 11.30am and 1.00pm. The lunch room can only be booked upon arrival in the morning on a 'first come' basis for the younger children. The outdoor covered picnic area can accommodate up to 100 people at one sitting and can be used at anytime without booking – if it's free, go for it! We have a café which provides hot & cold beverages, freshly made sandwiches, toasted herb panini's and sandwiches with a filling of your choice, delicious home-made cakes, hot dogs, ice creams etc.

Souvenir Shop

Just before or after lunch is a popular time to souvenir shop and most school children bring about £5.00 to £10.00 to spend but we cater for all spending ranges. For the convenience of the party of large groups our advice is to come into the shop in groups of 10 – 15 children with a supervising adult.

Activity/Work Sheets

The afternoon can be spent working from our activity sheets which can be purchased for 30p per copy and are geared to KS1, 2 & 3. They are 2 full colour double sided A4 sheets.

Animal Food

Feeding of the animals is always very popular with the children and bags of animal food can be purchased from the shop for £1.00. Important – children must wash their hands thoroughly after contact with the animals and before they eat their lunches.

Time to go?

We are open till 5.00pm, but most schools tend to leave around 2.00pm to be back in school by 'home time'. All groups are welcome throughout the day but you must arrive by 3.00pm.

Combined Visit?

If you are visiting both the Castle and the Toy Museum there are several different ways in which you can organise your day, these will depend heavily upon the size of your group.

Up to 30(ish) you could stay all together and visit one attraction in the morning and the other in the afternoon. For larger groups it is recommended that you split the group up and take it in turns to visit the Toy Museum (each group must be accompanied by a supervising adult)

The Toy Museum can hold a capacity of about 35 children with accompanying adults comfortably.

NB: Dinosaurs. The dinosaurs live near the entrance to the Toy Museum and can only be visited if your group are doing a combined visit or just the Toy Museum. If you are visiting just the Castle and Norman Village then the dinosaurs are out of bounds.

An example itinerary of a school visit: Toy Museum.

Arrival

Most groups/parties arrive between 10.00am and 11.00am

Checking in and Payment

Person in charge of the group/party comes to our front desk to check in. Please have ready the actual number of children and adults that you have brought along with you on the day. Don't worry about working out the 1-15 free adult ratio – we'll do that for you. The invoice will be made out for you while you wait (or you can leave your figures with the member of staff on the gate and come back later in the day to settle up) Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'

Finding the Toy Museum entrance

Bring the group/party through the main gate and pass through the visitor centre to the doorway that takes you onto the pathway leading up to Tremble the Talking Tree then onto the Toy Museum. The dinosaurs are gathered near the entrance to the Museum, so don't worry, you won't miss them.

History of toys.

For teachers wishing to give the children an educational talk on the history of toys, including the ever popular story of how the Teddy Bear got his name, we can provide a box full of labelled toys and a laminated 'talk' to read out to the children. Upon request this talk can be emailed in advance for teachers to preview and familiarise themselves with beforehand.

Lunch

Most schools/groups like to have their lunch, after an initial look around the museum, anytime between 11.30am and 1.00pm. The lunch room can accommodate up to 30 at one sitting and can only be booked upon arrival in the morning on a 'first come' basis if there are more than one group visiting the museum on that day. We have a café located in the visitor centre which provides hot & cold beverages, freshly made sandwiches, toasted herb panini's and sandwiches with a filling of your choice, delicious home-made cakes, hot dogs, ice creams etc.

Souvenir Shop

The Toy Museum does not have its own souvenir shop, but the children can buy in the Castle visitor centre souvenir shop either before you leave or at intervals through out the day. Most school children bring about £5.00 to £10.00 to spend but we cater for all spending ranges. For the convenience of the party of large groups our advice is to come into the shop in groups of 10 – 15 children with a supervising adult.

Activity/Work Sheets

The afternoon can be spent working from our activity sheets which can be purchased for 30p per copy and are geared to KS1. These are a good way to help keep the children focused.

Time to go?

We are open till 5.00pm but most schools tend to leave around 2.00pm to be back in school by 'home time'. All groups are welcome throughout the day but you must arrive by 3.00pm.

Combined Visit?

If you are visiting both the Castle and the Toy Museum there are several different ways in which you can organise your day, these will depend heavily upon the size of your group.

Up to 30(ish) you could stay all together and visit one attraction in the morning and the other in the afternoon. For larger groups it is recommended that you split the group up and take it in turns to visit the Toy Museum (each group must be accompanied by a supervising adult)

The Toy Museum can hold a capacity of about 35 children with accompanying adults comfortably in one group.

**MOUNTFITCHET CASTLE & NORMAN VILLAGE OF 1066
STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET, ESSEX
RISK ASSESSMENT**

1. The Castle is an outdoor site, built on a steep slope, with some areas of the ground uneven and including some rabbit holes. The palisade fence and some of the buildings are constructed of rough sawn timbers and some areas are cobbled. In wet weather, the slopes and cobbles can become slippery, as can steps leading to some exhibits and look-out towers.
2. The complex includes two unfenced ponds, which are approximately 18" (45 cm) deep.
3. There are low beams in the Grand Hall and in the doorways to some of the houses.
4. Open log fires are in operation (behind barriers) within the complex and all visitors must refrain from climbing over all safety barriers.
5. A wide variety of animals and birds roam freely throughout the site. All visitors must wash their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with them. All visitors must not go beyond any barriers containing pens or come into contact with any animal bedding.
6. There are some exhibits on site with moving parts (e.g. head stocks, foot stocks and grindstones) and appropriate care must be taken with these artefacts.
7. Generally, the Castle and its Village is an open site covering approximately ten acres; children must be made aware of these risks by group leaders, and schools and other visiting parties are asked to bring an adequate number of accompanying adults to supervise the children in their care.
8. The village is surrounded by a fence, which is topped in some parts by sharp security wire.
9. The designated coach park is situated approximately 150 metres from the Castle entrance and the pedestrian approach is via the perimeter of a pay-and-display Car Park. However, on the majority of occasions, coach drivers can stop to allow the children to alight directly outside the Castle.
10. The above are the risks assessed by us, but group leaders *should* make a pre-visit to the site to identify the risks for themselves and details can be obtained by ringing the Visitor Office on 01279 813237.

**HOUSE ON THE HILL TOY MUSEUM, STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET, ESSEX
RISK ASSESSMENT**

1. Care must be taken with the graduated steps on the approach to, and departure from, the Toy Museum – especially in inclement weather.
2. Inside the Toy Museum, the majority of exhibits are housed in display cabinets constructed of thick plate glass, and it is obviously inadvisable to lean against or otherwise mistreat these cabinets.
3. The Museum is on two floors and care must be taken with the stairs at either end of the building which lead to the first floor, as well as a couple of steps on the Ground Floor.
4. The designated Coach Park is situated approximately 200 metres from the Toy Museum entrance and the pedestrian approach is via the perimeter of a pay-and-display Car Park. However, on the majority of occasions, coach drivers can stop to allow the children to alight directly outside the entrance to the Museum.
5. The above are the risks assessed by us, but group leaders *should* make a pre-visit to the site to identify the risks for themselves and details can be obtained by ringing the Visitor Office on 01279 813237.

For the attention of teachers and group organisers.

Please can you ensure children are well supervised and kept under control at all times.

Please read this important announcement to your group.

Welcome to Mountfitchet Castle.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for visiting us and to highlight a few points about your visit.

Mountfitchet Castle is a grade two listed historical monument and an open air museum. The castle is a unique visitor attraction and prides itself on the amount of hands-on exhibits which adults and children can enjoy. Whether it is meeting and feeding the many tame animals or climbing the watch towers or even being placed in the stocks!

Children must not forget that the castle and grounds are a living open air museum and not a playground for them to run wild.

You are asked to abide by our rules:

No running – there are steep hills and flint paths

No chasing the animals

No dropping litter

No throwing stones at all – especially at the exhibits or into the ponds

And no going behind the safety barriers of the displays at all

Any of the above will not be tolerated.

The ponds are deep and dangerous and the hills are steep, but most importantly the trust and respect of the friendly animals within the castle must not be spoilt for future visitors. Please treat them with kindness.

Please can you all help us to make Mountfitchet Castle a greener place to visit by making good use of our recycling facilities available in the picnic area.

Toilets are now located at the end of the picnic area and hand washing facilities are available in the picnic area.

We hope that you enjoy your visit as you travel back in time to 1066 at Mountfitchet Castle. If you have any questions regarding your visit or any of the above points please do not hesitate to contact a member of our shop staff in the visitor centre or our grounds staff.



Examples from our Activity/Worksheets

Mountfitchet Castle & Norman Village

Activity Sheet 1 – suitable for Key Stage 1 children

- Q. What do you think the Norman villagers ate?
- Q. How do you think the Norman people kept warm in the cold weather?
- Q. Did Norman children go to school?

Activity Sheet 2 – suitable for Key Stage 2 children

- Q. Whose Army conquered this stronghold in 1066?
- Q. Parchment was the medieval equivalent of paper – what was it made from?
- Q. What foods can be found in the Kitchen?

Activity Sheet 3 – suitable for Key Stage 3 children

- Q. What material was the most important and most used around the castle?
- Q. Why did the villagers like to live inside the castle walls?
- Q. In the Brew House there were mainly two types of drink produced, what were they?
Why did people drink so little water?

The House on the Hill Toy Museum

Activity Sheet geared to Key Stage 1

- Q. How do you think Matchbox Cars got their name?
- Q. The farmers are all very busy. How many tractors can you see?
- Q. How many spaceships are flying?

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT CAN WE SEE WHILE WE'RE THERE?

Mountfitchet Castle is a Norman Motte and Bailey Castle and Village, re-constructed on its original ancient site, complete with many different buildings, siege weapons and animals roaming freely throughout the 10 acre site, providing a unique insight into community life in Domesday England. The Toy Museum is the largest privately owned toy museum in the world, with at least 80,000 exhibits on display from late Victorian times up to the 1980's.

DO WE HAVE TO BOOK IN ADVANCE?

Yes, all parties must pre-book, initially by telephone and then by confirming in writing or by email. We expect that all visiting parties of children be adequately supervised. Once a booking has been made as above, we expect the party to honour that booking. **IMPORTANT: All confirmed bookings are binding. Cancellation of a confirmed booking will be subject to the full amount due as spaces are limited to a maximum of 250 per day for the comfort of all visitors. Once a day has been fully booked, any further bookings will be turned away.** We do not normally ask for a booking deposit, but require a cheque, credit card or cash in full payment on the day of the visit. A VAT invoice will be issued in return. Please make cheques payable to 'Mountfitchet Castle'

IS IT SUITABLE FOR ALL AGE GROUPS?

Yes, both attractions are suitable for all age groups, from infants upwards.

DO WE NEED A GUIDED TOUR?

No, in the Castle all exhibits are clearly signed and as you enter each building, an informative commentary is activated by sensor. In the Toy Museum, just follow the footsteps!

DO YOU HAVE ANY EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS?

Updated activity sheets are available at both attractions, tailored to suit different age groups at a price of 30p per copy.

FILM PRESENTATION ON THE CASTLE'S HISTORY

Available for all visiting schools and groups will be a presentation film that will be located in the lecture/dining room. The film is approximately 12 minutes long and will give the viewers an insight into all aspects of the Castle's history - from its simple, humble beginnings during the Iron Age, through the hundreds of years of occupancy, destruction and desolation to its modern, historically correct reconstruction of today. Being the *only* wooden Motte and Bailey castle to be reconstructed on its original site in the world, the film will show everyone just how unique a visit to Mountfitchet Castle and Norman Village really is. The film inspires children to use their imagination and travel back in time and experience the wealth of history that lies behind the castle walls. Copies of an extended DVD is available in the gift shop in the Castle's Visitor Centre for £4.95 plus p&p. It contains both the Castle History and the History of Toys and is a great addition for extension material for children and teachers alike. These can be ordered prior to your visit by telephoning the office and placing an order.

ARE THERE PARKING FACILITIES?

Yes, there is a large Car and Coach Park serving the Castle. This is operated by the Council, and the 2010 daily charge per coach was £6.00. Cars are charged £1.00 for a three hour stay.

DO YOU HAVE A SOUVENIR SHOP?

Yes, in the visitor centre we have a souvenir shop offering a wide variety of gifts and souvenirs starting from as little as 50p.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO SEE EVERYTHING?

This depends on the age of the children and whether they are completing Activity Sheets or sketching exhibits etc, but a good average time is 2 hours at the Castle and slightly less at the Toy Museum. Many schools combine a visit to both the Castle and the Toy Museum on the same day.

TEACHERS' PRE-VISITS

Teachers are welcome to visit the Castle and Toy Museum prior to their school visit. We ask you to pay in the normal way, tell the reception staff you are a teacher and they will sign your ticket on the reverse. Then, on the day of the actual school visit, re-present the ticket and your money will be refunded in full.

Booking Form

All parties must pre-book, initially by telephone and then by confirming in writing or by email. You can use this form to confirm, simply fill in the required fields and either post or fax it to us.

Mountfitchet Castle
 Stansted
 Essex
 CM24 8SP
 England
 Tel: 01279 813237
Fax: 01279 816391

Alternatively you can send an email with the relevant information on to:-

info@mountfitchetcastle.com

Once your confirmation has been received, we will send a filled-in booking form and other important information back to you by email or letter for you to keep.

Booking For:	Castle		Toy Museum		Both	
Children (State Number)		@ £5.00		@ £4.00		@ £7.00
Adults (State Number)		@ £6.50		@ £5.00		@ £9.00
OAP's (State Number)		@ £6.00		@ £4.50		@ £8.50

Please State The Age or Year of The Children

Contact	
School/Organisation	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email	
Date of Visit	
Time of Arrival	

Coach/Car Parking

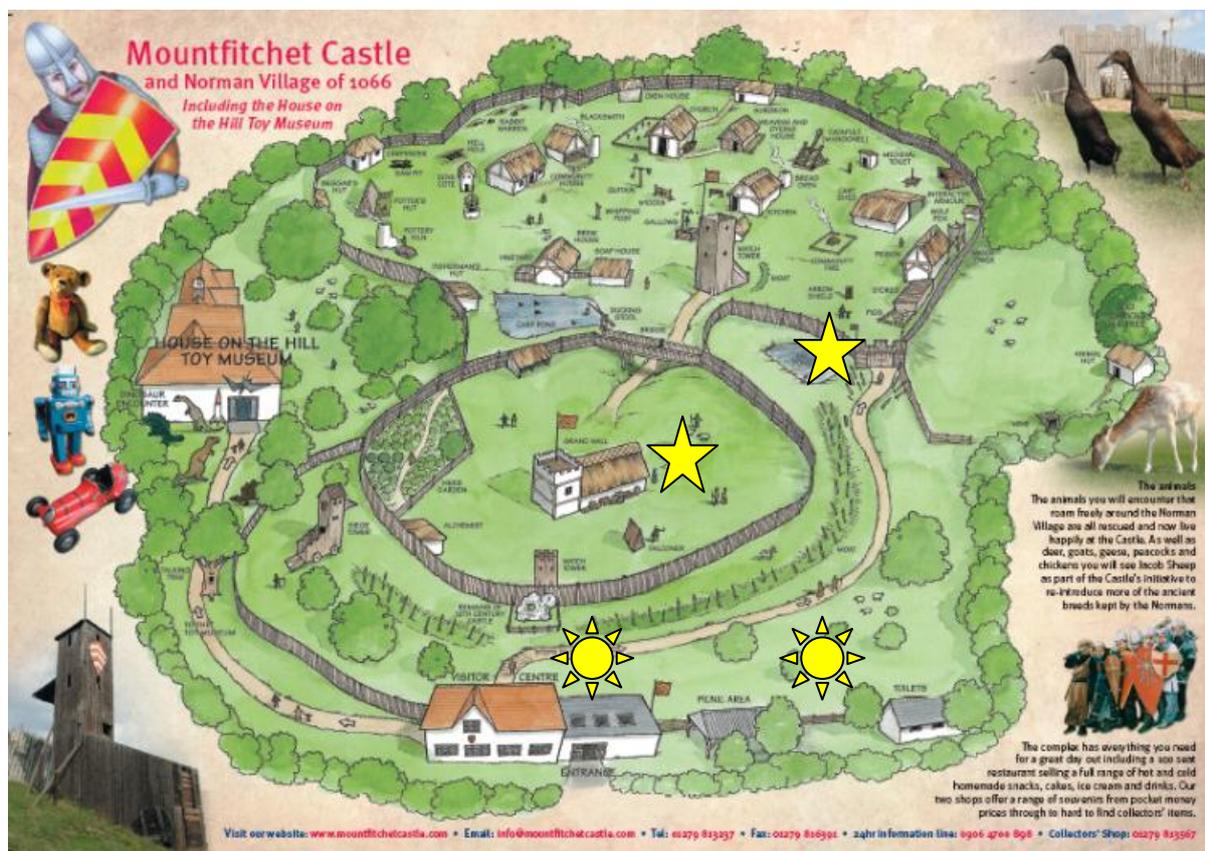
The Coach and car park are on a 'Pay & Display' basis run by Uttlesford District Council.
 The 2010 charge was £6.00 per day for coaches.

No of Worksheets	Castle	Toy Museum
Worksheet 1		30p Per Copy
Worksheet 2		
Worksheet 3		

Mountfitchet Castle prides itself on its impeccable record in health and safety during the 26 years it has been open. We strive to make every groups trip here as safe and easy and hassle free as we possibly can.

Our animals have a wonderful life with in the castle grounds and have become very tame and trusting of humans and like nothing more than being fed their favourite food available from the gift shop.

For health and safety reasons everybody must wash their hands thoroughly after coming into contact with any of the animals. There are two anti-bacterial hand gel dispensers located inside the castle walls – one in the Grand Hall in the inner Bailey and the second located by the Main Gate. Please do make good use of these on your **way out** of the castle. *We would like to point out that these gels are 99% effective in killing all known germs so to be completely sure please also use our hand washing facilities and wash your hands thoroughly in warm water and soap.* There are two locations for hand washing facilities – one in the toilet block and another located in the picnic area. Please see map below.



Hand washing facilities



Antibacterial Hand Gel Dispensers

We strive to keep our hygiene facilities full at all times but occasionally at peak times with high volume of visitors we can run low. If you do notice that we have run out of either paper hand towels or antibacterial hand gel we would really appreciate it if you could inform a member of staff so they can rectify it immediately.