

Programmes for School and College Groups at Montacute House

Montacute House is an excellent example of an unspoilt late Tudor Mansion and also contains a stunning collection of Tudor and early Stuart portraits from the National Portrait Gallery. We are able to cater for all ages. Though most groups take advantage of sessions led by our Learning Volunteers we can also support group leaders who want to self-lead their group. These programmes are based on the requirements of the History National Curriculum.

Key Stage 1 Programme – Houses and Homes

This programme consists of a volunteer-led tour of the main rooms in the House and incorporates hands-on activities. Children are encouraged to use the evidence around them to find out about a home in the past and how it differs from homes today. They also spend some time engaging with a large family portrait in the Long Gallery using costume props.

Key Stage 2 Programme – Tudors

We offer a programme consisting of a volunteer-led tour of the Tudor rooms in the House, including the portraits in the Long Gallery and activities taken from the following list. The children are encouraged to question the evidence around them and come to their own conclusions about the lives of rich and poor Tudors. To enhance their visit, each child is offered a Tudor servant's tunic to wear while in the House.

Key Stage 3 & 4

A similar tour of the house and analysis of the portraits can be adapted to Key Stage 3 and 4 schemes of work. We are also able to accommodate self-led visits.

A Level and University groups

We are able to provide a flexible programme suited to your needs.

Art focussed visits

We are able to offer portrait-focussed visits and activities in the Long Gallery across all Key Stages.

Gardens and Park

There are ample opportunities to study and sketch the architectural features of the House and the gardens. A pack of sketching activity cards are available for schools to borrow. Garden Trails, a Tudor Quiz and wordsearch are also available for schools to photocopy.

National Trust Education Group Membership

Membership allows your group free entry to Montacute House, gardens and park. All group leaders who pre-book are also entitled to a free preliminary visit to help plan their day.

Charges for workshops

The charges for taught sessions (house tours and activity sessions led by National Trust staff and volunteers) are £3.00 plus VAT per child for our Tudors Programme and £5.00 per child plus VAT for our Houses & Homes Programme. You will be invoiced after your visit.

Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 activity options

Making a spice/lavender bag – Kitchen

Find out about the life of a Tudor servant. Feel, describe and guess the use of various cooking and eating items and compare them with those used today. Children will make a spice bag or lavender bag to take home.

Designing shields – Great Chamber

Sir Edward used lots of shields in the design of his house. Children will discover some of the different meanings, then design and make their own shield into a badge to wear.

Writing with quill pens – Quilling Room

Find out who would have been able to read and write in Tudor times, how they made ink and what the Tudor alphabet looked like. Children will try their hands at writing with a quill pen.

Detailed drawing of portraits – Long Gallery

Discover how important the people in the portraits were, what jobs, if any, they did and what they wanted people to think of them. Children will develop their observational skills by completing detailed drawings of the portraits focussing on status and costume.

Making miniatures - Long Gallery

Who would own miniature portraits? Why were they made? Children will discover the answers to these questions from one of the portraits and then design their own.

How portraits were made (pouncing) – Long Gallery

How and why did Tudor artists copy portraits? Why did Queen Elizabeth I want to control her image? Children will take on the role of a Tudor artist and pounce a version of the Queen.

Tudor clothing – Long Gallery

What are the differences between Tudor clothes and those of today? How did it feel to wear them? How did they affect people's behaviour? Children will use portraits to identify different items of Tudor clothing and experience wearing some of them. The group will help to dress two children as rich and poor Tudors. Suitable for Lower Key Stage 2.

Portraits and Fabrics – Long Gallery

What can we find out about Tudor costume from portraits? What kinds of fabrics did they use? Where did the fabrics come from? Children will use the portraits with fabric samples to identify the types of material used in Tudor times. This activity is suited to Upper Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 pupils.

If you would like any more information or would like to discuss or book a visit, please contact:
Learning Officer, Montacute House, Montacute. Somerset TA15 6XP
Tel: 01935 826924 Email: montacute@nationaltrust.org.uk

Planning Your Visit to Montacute House

We welcome school and college group visits to Montacute House. These notes will help you to plan your visit and ensure it runs smoothly.

- **Group Entrance:** If you have booked a taught session, a member of our Learning Team will meet you in the car park at the arrival time on your booking form. They will ask to see your Education Group Membership card and will talk you through the arrangements for your visit. If you arrive early, please wait in the car park for a member of staff.
- **Cloakroom:** Unfortunately, we do not have cloakroom facilities. Whenever possible, please leave lunches, bags and resources for any self-led activities on the coach until needed. We provide all resources for the House tour and activities.
- **Toilets:** These are situated by Reception.
- **Supervision of groups:** We ask that groups be supervised with a ratio of at least 1 to 10 in addition to any support provided for individual children. Our Learning Volunteers will conduct your visit. Please be aware that the primary duty of care for students and their behaviour management remain with the class teacher or accompanying adult throughout your visit.
- **Shop:** The shop is open daily from 17 March to 4 November except Tuesdays from 10.00am to 5.00pm. Our gift shop is small so we would be grateful if you could help us by supervising groups of up to 10 children at a time.
- **Photography:** Photographs may be taken in the House, but not of the National Portrait Gallery portraits. No flash please.
- **Footwear:** Please do not wear sharp-heeled shoes in the House as they damage the floors.
- **Picnic Areas:** There is seating outside in the Family Picnic Area and a sheltered seating area in the Stable Block that seats 60 children. We would be grateful if you could take all rubbish away with you.
- **Timing:** To enable you to get the most from your visit, please be ready to start your tour at your booked time.
- **Risk Assessment:** It is the School's responsibility to complete a risk assessment for the visit. Additional information is provided in this pack to help you with this. The Education Group Membership card also entitles you to a free pre-visit to Montacute House.
- **Useful websites**
National Trust: www.nationaltrust.org.uk
National Portrait Gallery: www.npg.org.uk



Helpful hints for a successful visit to Montacute House....

- 👍 You will find it helpful to make a pre-visit to plan your day. Please take the opportunity of a free visit with your Education Group Membership. Montacute House is a large site and a pre-visit will ensure that you can find your way around quickly and easily. A member of staff will be happy to meet you to plan your visit. Please ring to make an appointment.
- 👍 Please use the enclosed Additional Information sheet to help inform your risk assessment.
- 👍 Please ensure that arrival and departure times are agreed with your coach company in advance as we are unable to change booked session times on the day.
- 👍 Please note that each tour lasts an hour, followed by a half hour activity. Each small group will take part in only **one** activity.
- 👍 Unfortunately, we do not have a room available indoors for groups to use in wet weather. However, the Stable Block is undercover and available without booking.
- 👍 We will meet you in the car park at the arrival time on your booking form. Please stay with your bus until a staff member joins you.
- 👍 Staff and parent helpers are now welcome to take photos (without flash) in all rooms of the House, but not of the National Portrait Gallery portraits in the Long Gallery.

Adult Helper Guidelines For groups visiting Montacute House

Thank you for accompanying this class on their visit. The children will be focussing on the ways in which Montacute House can bring to life Tudor times. With your help, your group will get the most out of their visit. Here are some tips to assist you during the guided tour and when working independently.

The beauty of Montacute House is that we have freedom of access to most areas. Visitors are able to walk freely about the house, which is unusual for an historic house, where rooms are often roped off. This offers a great opportunity to teach children about conservation and how they are responsible for the care and protection of our heritage. We ask that before you arrive, you discuss with the children the importance of not touching objects, as they may easily be damaged, and of being cautious as they move about the house, both for their own safety and for the care of fragile areas.

Visiting Montacute House also gives the children the chance to be reminded of the importance of the awareness of others in public environments. To facilitate this we ask that you remind children to keep their voices low and to remain within their groups in consideration for other visitors. We also recommend the use of clipboards based on the floor, and pencils in place of any other writing materials when doing activity sheets.

If you find there are areas of knowledge in regards to Montacute House that you are unfamiliar with, there are room guides in each room who will be more than happy to help with any enquiries. As you are aware children have a wonderful capacity to interpret information. A simple re-wording of the question and subtle prompts can help them towards answering questions.

We look forward to welcoming you to Montacute and hope you enjoy your visit.



Additional information

Welcome to Montacute House. We hope that your group enjoys its visit to this magnificent Elizabethan House and is able to help the National Trust to care for and look after this unique place.

We know that writing risk assessments without background knowledge of the site is difficult, so we hope this information will help you plan for your trip.

Please note that school group leaders are entitled to a free planning visit with their school's Education Group Membership card. Staff will be happy to meet you to plan your visit. Please contact us in advance to arrange an appointment.

General Considerations

Wildlife

The gardens and park have a range of plants (including some that are poisonous) and wildlife. Please also be aware that trees can sometimes drop branches.

Traffic

Please be particularly aware of traffic in the coach and car park and when walking to and from the Stable Block.

Ponds

There are two ponds on the estate; one at the top of Cedar Lawn and one in the North Garden (this is very deep). North Garden also has unfenced drops of 2 metres.

Climate

We do not have an indoor Learning Centre on site. The Stable Block picnic area is covered and available for lunch. Please ensure your students are dressed appropriately during their time in the gardens and even in the House during cold weather.

Montacute House, Gardens & Park

Conservation

Light levels in the House are often low and the floors, paths and steps uneven throughout the estate. Please advise students of this.

Stable Block (lunch area)

No food or drink may be taken into the House. All packed lunches should be left on your coach or minibus. If this is not possible, please ensure all food is securely wrapped for storage in crates in the Stable Block picnic area. Please take all food and rubbish away with you. Please advise at the time of booking if your coach will not be remaining on site during your visit.

Activities

All our activities are hands-on and led by a Learning Volunteer. Children will use pencils in the House. Please advise us of any allergies your pupils may have. Please note that we use dried spices during the Kitchen activity. Eyewash is provided for use by school staff on request.

Your school is responsible for:

- **Completing your own risk assessments**
- **Ensuring an adequate ratio of staff to students (at least 1 to 10 please)**
- **Ensuring a first aider is present in your group**
- **Having £5,000,000 public liability insurance**

Emergency Contacts:

Learning Officer 01935 826924
Montacute House Main Office 01935 823289

Follow-up activities after your visit

Find all these webquests on www.npg.org.uk/webquests

Just type in the Key Stage and Curriculum Area and then click on the Webquest Name

NPG Webquests

Key Stage	Main Curriculum Area(s)	Webquest Name
KS1	History, Art	Children and Families
KS2	History	Henry VIII's Next Wife?
KS2	History	Painting Elizabeth I
KS2	Art	Portrait Prize
KS2	Art	Painting in Style
KS2	Art, History	Tudor Artist's Apprentice
KS3	History	Elizabeth I's New Portrait
KS3	History	Cavaliers and Roundheads
KS3	Art	Beyond Portraits
KS3	Art	Talking Techniques
KS4	History	History of Hair and Beauty

V&A and Tate Webquests (access as above)

KS2	History	Tudor Film Set (about grand Tudor houses)
KS3	Art	Pop Art Portraits