



Castle Fraser, Garden & Estate

Teacher's information



Castle Fraser, one of the magnificent castles of Mar, was begun around 1575 by Michael Fraser, the sixth laird, and incorporates earlier building. Two great families of master masons, Bel and Leiper, took part in the work, which was completed in 1636. The armorial panel high on the wall on the north side is signed 'I Bel'. The exterior has had few additions, and provides a clear idea of what a laird's castle looked like from the outside in the seventeenth century. Above the modern entrance, an ornate heraldic shield of stone shows the arms of James VI.

The interior of the castle has undergone many changes to suit the changing needs of the Frasers and their successors. Rooms on view include an ancient kitchen, a library, and Victorian bedrooms. In the Worked Room, needlework bed-hangings, curtains and seats are on display. Artefacts on show include an early 19th-century artificial leg and a cocked hat that saved a soldier's life in battle - both are Fraser family relics from the Peninsular War.

The walled garden is laid out as it looked in Victorian times. Two way-marked trails make the 350-acre estate easily accessible.

The school programme at Castle Fraser offers activities in the castle, garden and estate, providing opportunities to engage with the Curriculum for Excellence. Pupils receive a tour of the castle that can be tailored to schools' requirements.

The National Trust for Scotland North East Ranger Service can assist schools with environmental learning projects on this estate. Please call the Ranger Service to discuss opportunities.

Resources for schools:

- An illustrated guidebook can be bought at Castle Fraser.
- You can also visit the NTS Learn website to check out information for teachers: www.ntslearning.org.uk

Planning your class visit:

- To book: please contact the Property Manager, or Ranger Service, to arrange your visit.
- We welcome schools for teacher-led visits - but please contact Castle Fraser to confirm your visit
- Book well in advance to avoid disappointment
- Maximum class size: 30, with a ratio of 1 teacher/adult to 10 pupils
- Opening hours are limited for the castle but the estate is open all year round.

For more information, visit www.ntslearning.org.uk

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Planning your class visit (continued):

- Access: Please phone to discuss any special requirements. There is also information on the Castle Fraser webpage on the NTS website: www.nts.org.uk
- Toilets: Situated in the courtyard, including facilities for people with mobility impairment.
- Refreshments: There is a tearoom at the property. Schools are welcome to eat picnics in the picnic area available by the playground. Snacks/packed lunches may also be eaten in the Great Hall – this needs to be confirmed when booking your visit.
- The site has been risk assessed. Teachers are expected to prepare their own RA for their visit.

Charges:

- There is no charge for schools with NTS educational membership. Accompanying adults are admitted free.
- Non-members are welcome but there is a charge of £2 per pupil. Accompanying adults are admitted free.
- Membership: to apply for educational membership, please go the NTS Learn website – or contact Castle Fraser.
- Class teachers are encouraged to make a free preparatory visit to the site

During your class visit:

- Teachers are responsible for their pupils, and for their behaviour.
- We regret that photos cannot be taken within the castle – but you are welcome to take as many as you like in the grounds.
- There is shop that pupils can visit under teacher supervision (small groups please).
- On arrival: for a castle tour, please report to the main desk. For a ranger activity, meet at the place agreed when booking your programme.

Getting to Castle Fraser

- Castle Fraser is off the A944, 4 miles north of Dunecht and 16 miles west of Aberdeen
- Parking is available for school buses/coaches in the car park

For more information, please contact:

The Property Manager

Castle Fraser, Garden and Estate, Sauchen, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB51 7LD

Ranger Service: please phone number below.

Telephone: (Castle) 0844 493 2164 (Ranger Service) 0844 493 2167