

# St Michael's Mount



## Orientation notes

These notes are designed to support teachers bringing school groups to the Island. A simplified version is available as a social story.

If you need any more support to make your visit a success for every child please contact Kerry Rice, Learning Manager.

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You can see the Mount from the carpark when you arrive.



*Pre-booked coaches and mini-buses will be directed to the coach parking bays. There's an information board close to the sea wall where you can see a graphic of the mount and information about how to get across at the time you've arrived.*

*Just beyond the playpark are Council toilets – open all year round.*



When the tide is low you can walk across the causeway.



*Access to the causeway is along the beach. Sometimes there's a lot of seaweed around. The causeway is flanked by rockpools. The stone surface is uneven and gets more uneven as you approach the Island. Generally the causeway is open for around 2 hours either side of low tide – 4hrs in total.*

*There will be a member of staff at the end of the causeway.*



When the tide is high you can use a ferry boat.



*Depending on tide height, you may alight the ferries from Chapel Rock (on the beach) or, as it gets higher, Gwelva and then Top Tieb (walk through Marazion Town to access). All landings are well signposted and staff will direct you.*

*Boats take 12 passengers. On the Island there will be steps to climb as you get off the boat. The boat ride takes less than 5 minutes. There are several ferry boats that shuttle back and forth.*



On the Island there will be a place to leave your bag, have your lunch and go to the toilet.



You'll be met by a member of staff as you arrive on the Island. They will give a short introduction and orientation.

They'll show you where bags can be left.

There are two sets of toilets on the Island with 2 additional disabled access toilets.

There are several areas with picnic benches for outdoor eating.

In bad weather you may picnic in the Bargehouse on the benches or in The Learning Hub.



There's lots to see and explore outside  
and inside.



Thirteen families live on the Island.

There are large expanses of grass

Bargehouse interpretation space (with 7min video of Islanders and a bronze  
sculpture of the Mount that can be touched)

Large outdoor mural of a medieval map of the Mount and bay.

Bronze footprints from Royal Visits



You might spot the Giant's tiny stone heart on the path to the Castle.



The Cornish Legend of Comoran the Giant.

The well and the heart are signposted on route up the castle path.



It's a steep climb with lots of steps.

Handrails for part of the walk. The well and giant's heart stone are just beyond these Pilgrim Steps.



At the top there are two battlement terraces with cannons.



Look at the view!



Be mindful of steep drops.

Look back to spot your coach and the route you've taken along the beach and causeway.

St Piran's flag is on the battlements and a Union Flag on the castle.

Classes must be split for a staggered entry to the castle as interior spaces are relatively small. Do this on the battlements by St Piran's Flag.



This is the way into the Castle.

Some rooms are small.

Some rooms are bigger.

Climb the steps to access the castle from the West Door. A member of staff will always be in this space and ready to welcome you. There's a large wooden carving of a bear in here. It's a small space.

The Castle exit is adjacent. There are 2 toilets near the castle exit.



Some rooms you can walk through.



There's only one route through the castle. Visitor Service guides are stationed throughout the castle and will happily chat to you and your group.

Please explain that objects are fragile and belong to the family so please do not touch.

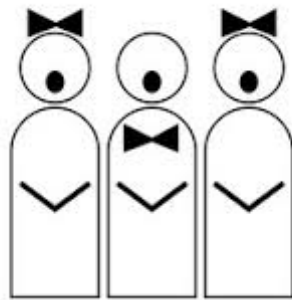
There's a range of different types of objects collected by the family for 12 generations.

There are depictions of animals in every room.

When you step out onto the terrace there are far reaching views. Lord and Lady St Levan live below this terrace. They have the best views of the garden below.



Sometimes there's music playing in the Church.



As you alight the stairs to the church look out for the peak of the 'mother rock' which has been smoothed over time. This is the topmost point of the Mount itself and is called the 'wishing stone'.

To the right of the alter is a secret door leading to an underground chamber where a mysterious 7ft skeleton and a large leather jug was found. The jug is on display in the Chevy Chase.



Some rooms you can just look into.



Some rooms can only be seen from a viewing point behind a rope. In this room there are photographs of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip when they visited in 2013.

They got to the top of the Mount in one of our Gardener's buggies and then used the lift in the East Wing.

King Charles III and Camila Queen Consort are also photographed here with the family. They visited in 2010.

This is where Queen Victoria had tea with Thomasina Simms, the housekeeper, in 1846.



## The Garden

The Garden is designed to be seen from above. There are several winding terraces that are joined with steps.

The Garden faces East and is very sheltered from the worst of the storms and winds. The granite absorbs the warmth of the sun during the day, and it radiates out at night. That's why so many exotic plants thrive here.

The family used to keep pet tortoises on the 'tortoise lawn'. There's an ornamental tortoise peaking out of the stone wall now.

Split into smaller adult-led groups at the base of the garden just beyond the pill box.



## The Steward's House Art Gallery

At the rear is a sheltered and quiet courtyard with bench seating. There will be staff inside the Steward's House.



## Paintings of people and places

The Sheila Hichens' Trust Collection of around 20 paintings depicting home, sea and land of West Penwith. These Newlyn School paintings are all figurative and include images of Mousehole, Newlyn, Penance and Marazion.



Back on the beach you could have a Mount Challenge to recreate the Island using sand, pebbles and seaweed.