



Social Guide

Farmleigh House

And Estate

An introduction for first-time visitors, families or visitors with extra needs

Introduction

We are going to visit the beautiful Farmleigh House and Estate.

Farmleigh is next to Dublin's Phoenix Park and contains attractive walks, gardens, a historic house, art gallery, restaurant and so much more.

In this story we'll learn about how to enter and exit Farmleigh, lead you around the estate and house, meet some of the people who work there and find out what we can expect to see during our visit.

Entrance



There is only one gate to enter Farmleigh. This gate is on White's Road in the Phoenix Park. Here, there is a gate lodge where the constables are very helpful and will give us advice and directions.

If we are in a vehicle, we can go to our left; this will bring us to the car park. Otherwise, we can walk or cycle straight up the main avenue.

There is a bicycle rack not far from the Courtyard.

After our visit, we will leave Farmleigh through the same gate.

Parking



The car park at Farmleigh is free and is about a five-minute walk to the courtyard and the main reception area. The surface of the car park is suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

The pathway from the car park is on a slight slope and we can arrange beforehand for anyone who may have difficulties with this to be 'dropped off' closer to the courtyard.

The Motorhouse



The Motorhouse is in the courtyard and is the main reception and information centre for the estate, The Motorhouse is where we can buy our tickets for the tour of the house.

There is a reception desk, seating, and free lockers for our coats and bags as well as leaflets giving us information about Farmleigh and other places we might like to visit.

This can be a busy place, especially if there is a large group visiting. We may have to join a queue, but if it gets very noisy, we can move outside to the courtyard where there are picnic benches and wait there.

The Motorhouse is where we first meet the tour guides. They will sell us the tickets for the house tour as well as providing us with information about the estate and answering any questions we may have. They can also give us a complimentary map of Farmleigh.

The House Tour



When we have our tickets for the house tour, we will be directed to the main door of the house where a tour guide will be waiting to greet us. We will show her or him our tickets, then the tour can begin. We will have up to twenty-five people on our tour.

There is also a separate door for wheelchairs; a tour guide will bring anyone who needs this through that door to join the main group.

The tour will take us through some of the important areas of the house and will last about forty-five minutes.

We will be standing throughout the tour, but any of us who feels they may have to sit down can let the tour guide know beforehand and will be looked after.

Some of the areas in the house may be a little darker than we might expect. This is nothing to worry about, it has been done to protect the furnishings and artwork from being damaged by light.

Here are some examples of what we will see on our visit:

The Entrance Hall



The Dining Room



The Study



The Corridor



The Boudoir



The Library



The Nobel Room and the Blue Drawing Room



The Ballroom



The Conservatory



During the tour, it is important for us to stay together and keep quiet so we can all hear the tour guide. We can ask questions if we want to, that should be before we move on to the next room or area and at the end of the tour. We will also be asked to please do not touch anything.

The last stop on the tour is the conservatory and we will exit through the conservatory door. From here, we can return to the Motorhouse and collect our belongings from the lockers or have a look round the rest of the estate.

The Estate

There are lots of signs around the estate, so we won't get lost. The signs will direct us to the other interesting features of Farmleigh including the walks and gardens. The signs include Braille lettering and some include a large-scale map of the estate.

Dogs are allowed on the estate, as long as they are kept on a lead. Only assistance dogs and guide dogs will be allowed inside the buildings.

Farmleigh Gallery



When we enter the Farmleigh Gallery, we will meet the gallery attendant who can provide us with information and directions.

The gallery hosts various art exhibitions throughout the year and information on the current exhibition can be got from the Farmleigh website or in the Motorhouse.

Entry to all the exhibitions is free and the gallery is all on one level, providing us with full disabled access.

The Cowshed Theatre



The Cowshed operates as a venue for exhibitions and also as a theatre. Like the gallery it is accessible for wheelchair users, being on one level but it does have a slight ramp at the entrance.

One of the best times for us to visit the Cowshed is during the run up to Christmas when puppet shows and storytelling are staged here.

The Boathouse Café



The Boathouse is in a lovely spot next to the lake. This is where we can take a break with a great choice of snacks, drinks, a full meal or ice creams on a sunny day.

The Boathouse has full disabled access on one level. At busy times, there may be a queue, but the friendly staff will assist us at the tables if needed.

There is a seating area outside including a wooden platform which looks out over the lake.

The Walled Garden



In the Walled Garden, we will get to see all sorts of trees, shrubs and flowers.

It is laid out with gravel paths and with the exception of a few shallow steps, the garden is mostly reachable for wheelchairs and disabled people.

Here, we may come into contact with the gardeners who are hard at work. They may be very busy, but will always spare the time to talk, answer our questions and give advice about plants.

The Fountain Lawn



Another lovely place to relax, with mature trees, seating dotted around and the round pond with a fountain jet in the middle.

The Sunken Garden



On the other side of the Fountain Lawn, we find a short pathway to the Dutch Sunken Garden, which is an enclosed area with gravel paths, shrubs, hedges, seating and a small fountain feature in the middle.

This area has limited disabled access and the interior is not suitable for wheelchairs, due to it being on different levels and sets of steps.

The Ornamental Dairy



The dairy is next to the Fountain Lawn. It's a pleasant looking, red brick building. If we look closer at the dairy, we can see some attractive stained-glass windows showing country scenes. We can't enter the dairy, but it does sometimes open during Heritage Week in August.

Sculptures



As we explore the estate, we will come across various sculptures. In the Motorhouse, we can obtain information about the sculptures.

Livestock



When we arrive at Farmleigh, we will see a small herd of black cattle. They are Kerry Cattle, which is quite a rare breed and are native to Ireland.



In a field nearby, there are a few horses. Some of them may be retired army showjumpers or ex Garda horses.



There are also donkeys in the field next to the car park; like the horses, they are retired. They came from a donkey sanctuary in Mallow, County Cork.

The Clock Tower



On one corner of the estate, we will come to the Clock Tower, looming above us.

It's a well-known landmark in this part of Dublin.

It was built in the 1880's at the same time as a big extension to the house.

For safety reasons, the Clock Tower is not currently open to the public.

Toilet Facilities

Toilets are available in the courtyard, the gallery and in the Boathouse. All have facilities for baby changing and disabled people.

Contact/Information

Everyone is welcome at Farmleigh.

We can book tours and obtain more information on the website:

www.farmleigh.ie

or for private/group tours we can email:

farmleighguides@opw.ie

Other enquiries we can make by phone:

01 815 5914

or 00353 1 8155914 if ringing from abroad.



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