



The abbey and royal palace at Dunfermline hold a key place in Scotland's history.

# INVESTIGATING DUNFERMLINE ABBEY

Information for Teachers





## Timeline

1070 Malcolm III marries Margaret at Dunfermline

1070s Margaret invites monks from Canterbury to set up Benedictine priory

1128 David I elevates priory to abbey; rebuilding

1093 Margaret dies and is buried in abbey alongside Malcolm

1250 Margaret canonised as saint; new chapel built for her relics

1303 Invasion of Edward I of England; domestic buildings destroyed

1329 Robert the Bruce buried at Dunfermline

1560 Building ransacked by Protestants

1590s Royal apartments completely remodelled for Queen Anna

1753 Great central tower collapses

1819 Remains of Robert the Bruce discovered during building of new church on site

1821 New parish church completed

The abbey and royal palace at Dunfermline hold a key place in Scotland's history. Royal burial ground, 12th-century church, towering palace, holy shrine; this varied and interesting site is an excellent source of evidence for a range of historical studies.

## Historical background

After marrying Malcolm III in an earlier church in 1070, Queen Margaret invited a group of Benedictine monks from Canterbury to set up Scotland's first Benedictine monastic community at Dunfermline. This priory was extended and developed by her son, David I as a tribute to her and became an abbey after 1128. The church was consecrated in 1150 and a century later was extended to include a shrine to the newly canonised St Margaret.

Supported financially by the Crown, the Benedictine monks at Dunfermline carried out their daily round of prayer and the works of god in peace until the arrival of Edward I's invading forces in 1303. He took over the abbey and used it as his winter base; when he left he destroyed the monks' domestic buildings though left the abbey church untouched. Rebuilding began at once, aided by Robert the Bruce. Construction work continued for another 250 years

but monastic life was already in decline by the time of the Reformation in 1560.

In the early days of the Reformation, much of the abbey was sacked. By 1570, however, work had begun to remodel the abbey church as a new parish church; it was re-roofed and the ancient church walls were shored up with massive flying buttresses.

The abbey guesthouse had long been a royal residence but in the 1590s major rebuilding work began. Queen Anna, wife of James VI was the driving force behind this; her son, Charles I was born here. From 1603, with the union of the crowns, however, the Scottish court effectively moved to England and the palace was last used by royalty in 1651 by Charles II.

In 1817 work began on a new parish church. During the building, a body was discovered which was identified as that of Robert the Bruce; this timely find was celebrated by incorporating his name in the top of the new church tower.

What can be seen today is a real mixture: elements of the original twelfth century church rub shoulders with nineteenth century additions; the refectory of the original cloister survives in part as does the south wall of the royal palace.



## Supporting learning and teaching

A visit to Dunfermline Abbey is particularly appropriate for teachers working on class study topics such as:

- **The Middle Ages – Monastic Life**
- **Robert the Bruce and the Wars of Independence**
- **St Margaret**

The **Curriculum for Excellence** aspires to motivate and challenge pupils through a wide range of varied learning experiences. Site visits have a particular role to play in joining up learning outcomes across the curriculum. A visit, and use of the supporting materials, will help to:

- **develop successful learners** by challenging pupils to consider how life has changed for people. It will help them to think critically about evidence and arrive at their own conclusions.
- **develop confident individuals.** Pupils will learn about aspects of their community's past, develop an understanding of social changes, establish some of their own values and communicate their views on different historical and social issues.
- **develop responsible citizens.** It will help to increase pupils' social and historical knowledge and understanding and encourage greater respect for their own historic and built environment.
- **develop effective contributors** by broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding through investigative, creative and critical thinking

## Before the visit

Pupils will gain more from a visit if they come prepared with some background information on the chosen area of study.

- **The Middle Ages:** look at the role of the church at this time, the organisational structure of Scotland and some key figures (e.g. Queen Margaret, David I, Robert the Bruce, Edward I) as well as general work on how people lived.
- **Robert the Bruce** and his time: look at key events of his life, the wars with England and their effects on Scotland and on society in general.
- **St Margaret:** look at the events of her life, her influence on Dunfermline and Scotland, and key religious beliefs and practices of the time.

Whatever the topic, it would aid discussion on site if pupils had an idea of some of the key terms relating to abbey buildings and life e.g. **abbey, abbot, monk, monastery, nave, cloister, altar, relic, shrine, tomb, Mass, Reformation, refectory, palace.** These and other terms could be collated into a class dictionary, illustrated after the visit with drawings or photographs made on site.

The abbey and associated buildings have changed greatly over the years. Discuss with pupils how and why buildings change; how wind and weather can affect a building as well as deliberate changes.

Discuss and research what it would have been like to live in a monastery or convent. Investigate the everyday lives of monks and nuns.

Help pupils gain a clearer grasp of the time scale by making a timeline with them, counting back the centuries and then marking on key events. This could be added to after the visit.

## Working on site

Ideally pupils should come to the abbey with a sense of purpose, to investigate a particular aspect of the site. They should be encouraged to look for physical evidence, to 'read the stones' rather than focus on reading information panels. In addition to the points for discussion in this pack, useful starting points are:

- What materials were used to construct the abbey? Where did they come from? Why have some parts of the abbey survived and not others?
- Can you see any ways in which the abbey has changed?
- What evidence is there for daily life of the monks? Of royalty staying in the palace?

Pupils can record evidence by taking notes, sketching, taking photographs, recording impressions into a tape recorder.

On the Historic Scotland website: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/education\\_unit](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/education_unit) teachers can find additional resources to help with work on site. These include compiling an *Evidence Record and a My Impressions Record*.

## Suggestions for follow-up work

After the visit pupils can share their discoveries in groups to create a fuller picture. This could then become the basis for a range of presentation activities, e.g.:

- A poster, leaflet or guidebook for future visitors
- A slide show with commentary of their visit
- Imaginative writing based on the lives of people who lived at or visited the abbey in the past.



## Plan of Dunfermline Abbey

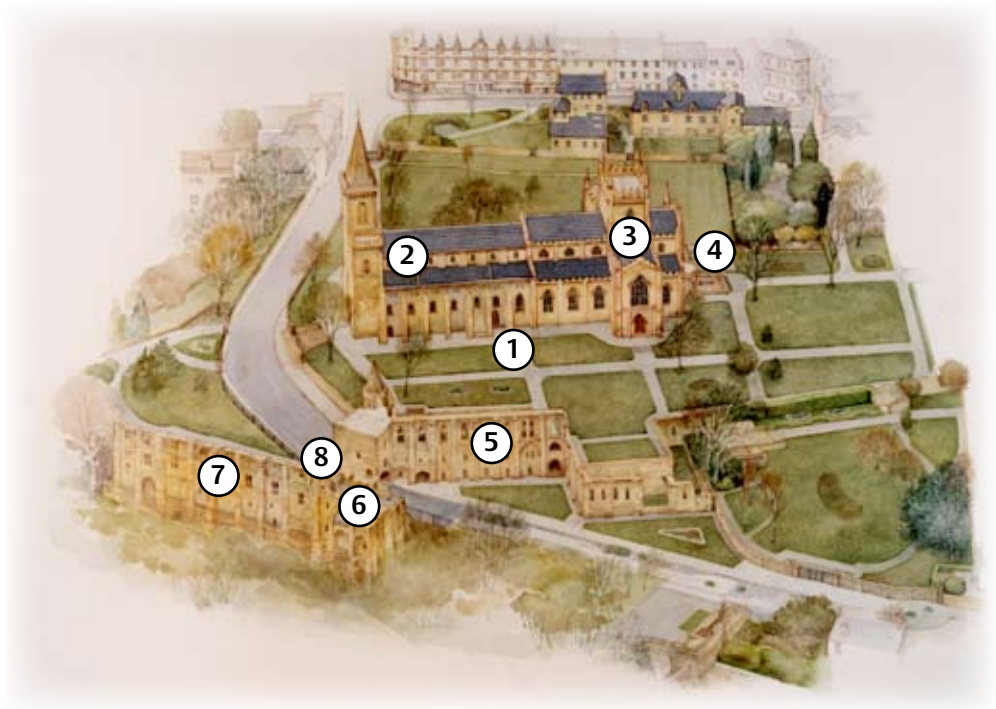
### On the trail of the Scotland's royals

Our suggested tour route focuses on features which illuminate how the abbey was used and visited by generations of Scotland's royal family. Where possible it highlights aspects of the lives of the monks of the abbey. It takes in eight locations, marked on the plan to the right:

1. Outside the Church
2. Inside the Nave
3. Bruce's Burial Place
4. St Margaret's Shrine
5. The Refectory
6. The Kitchens
7. The Royal Palace
8. The Vaults and gatehouse

Background information is given in the pack for each location. It is written in simple language and is fairly minimal so that it can be read aloud to pupils if desired. Also included are suggested questions for discussion. The focus throughout is on encouraging pupils to interpret the building and deduce what they can from the clues in the ruins of the buildings.

Ideally divide your class into groups of about ten and allow about an hour for the suggested tour.





### Did you know...

Many of the early kings' surname was Canmore. This comes from the Gaelic 'Ceann Mhor' meaning 'big head' or 'big chief'.



The abbey church



'Bruce' lettering

## Tour notes: On the trail of Scotland's Royals

### Introduction: Outside Dunfermline Abbey

**Stand on the grass outside the ticket kiosk.**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- There has been an abbey here at Dunfermline for more than nine hundred years. The church is still in use. The abbey was started by Queen Margaret, who later became a saint. She invited monks from Canterbury in England to come and set up the first abbey of its kind in Scotland.
- Lots of members of the royal family visited here. Margaret's son, David, developed the abbey and made it bigger and grander. Many royals came to stay in the abbey guest house – in fact, it became known as a Royal Palace. Some royals visited the abbey after they had died – in their coffins! Twenty two kings and queens of Scotland were buried here. And for some royals it was the first place they ever visited – Charles I was born here.
- The abbey was even popular with royals from other countries. Edward I of England, the Hammer of the Scots, stayed at the abbey for a winter when he invaded in 1303. He wasn't a grateful guest, though – he destroyed all of the monks' buildings except the church when he left. James VI gave the abbey buildings as a present to his wife, Queen Anna of Denmark, and she spent lots of energy and money doing up the Royal Palace and making it fit for a queen.
- In the abbey church you can see a shiny plaque showing where the most famous King associated with Dunfermline was buried. But you can also see his name on the top of the church tower. The church tower and his name was added about a hundred and fifty years ago, long after he died, by builders who discovered his body when they were building the new tower.

#### Teacher prompts

Look at the top of the church tower.  
What name can you see carved in big stone letters around the top?  
Why do you think his name was added to the church?

There are three parts to the abbey – the church, the monks' buildings and the royal palace. Can you point to them all?

#### Desired pupil responses

King Robert the Bruce.

They felt proud of the connection – and they'd rediscovered his body when building the new church.

Church – obvious.  
Monks' buildings – the buildings around the ticket kiosk.  
The royal palace – behind the ticket office, to the west, a little lower down.

- As we go around, we'll look for clues which tell us more about these royals. We'll also find out more about the monks who lived at Dunfermline abbey.



### Did you know...

Queen Margaret was English but she grew up in Hungary at the royal court there. She came to Scotland with her family for safety. To begin with she lived in a very basic tower with King Malcolm – it must have been a shock for her.



Flying Buttresses



Entrance to Abbey church

## Location 1: Outside the Church

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- The church we can see now is a mixture of several different churches. Look carefully at the building.

### Teacher prompts

Can you see where two different churches meet?  
Which part do you think is older?  
Why?

### Desired pupil responses

Very obvious where the two different phases of building join.  
Part on the west (left) is much older.  
Clues for age might be that the stone is more weathered; bits missing round windows; stone rougher.

What differences can you see in the old and new parts of the church?

Style of windows is different; new windows are also bigger.  
Old part has stone arches supporting the walls.  
Colour of the stone.

What do you think the stone arches against the walls are for?  
They are called **flying buttresses**.

To support walls and stop them collapsing. They were added later.

- The oldest part of the church we can now see was built in about the year 1150 AD by King David I. The tower to the left and the colourful windows were added a bit later. It was part of an abbey set up by his mother, Queen Margaret. An abbey is where a group of monks or nuns live. They spend their time praying and worshipping god. Usually they don't ever leave the abbey. They live very simple lives and don't own anything.
- The newer part of the church is on the right. It is still quite old – it was built nearly 200 years ago in 1818. It was built on top of the ruins of part of David's church.
- There were lots of different doors into the church. Later on perhaps you can walk round the outside and count how many there are. One of the doors was for ordinary people coming to the abbey church, another was for the monks, and another was a grand door for special visitors on important days.

**Go to the door more or less in the middle of the church on the south side, just to the left of where the old and new churches join.**



### Did you know...

David I gave all kinds of gifts to the abbey – including the rights to a tenth of wild horses caught in Fife and any seals caught off the Fife coast! The monks also had the rights to coal mining.

- This doorway was the one that the monks used. Their dormitory used to be very close to the church, so it was handy when they came to the church services in the middle of the night. It is about 900 years old.

#### Teacher prompts

What different patterns can you see around the doorway?

Look up above. The carving higher up the church is much more worn. Why do you think the carving round the door is still quite clear?

#### Desired pupil responses

Zig zags, flowers, spirals.

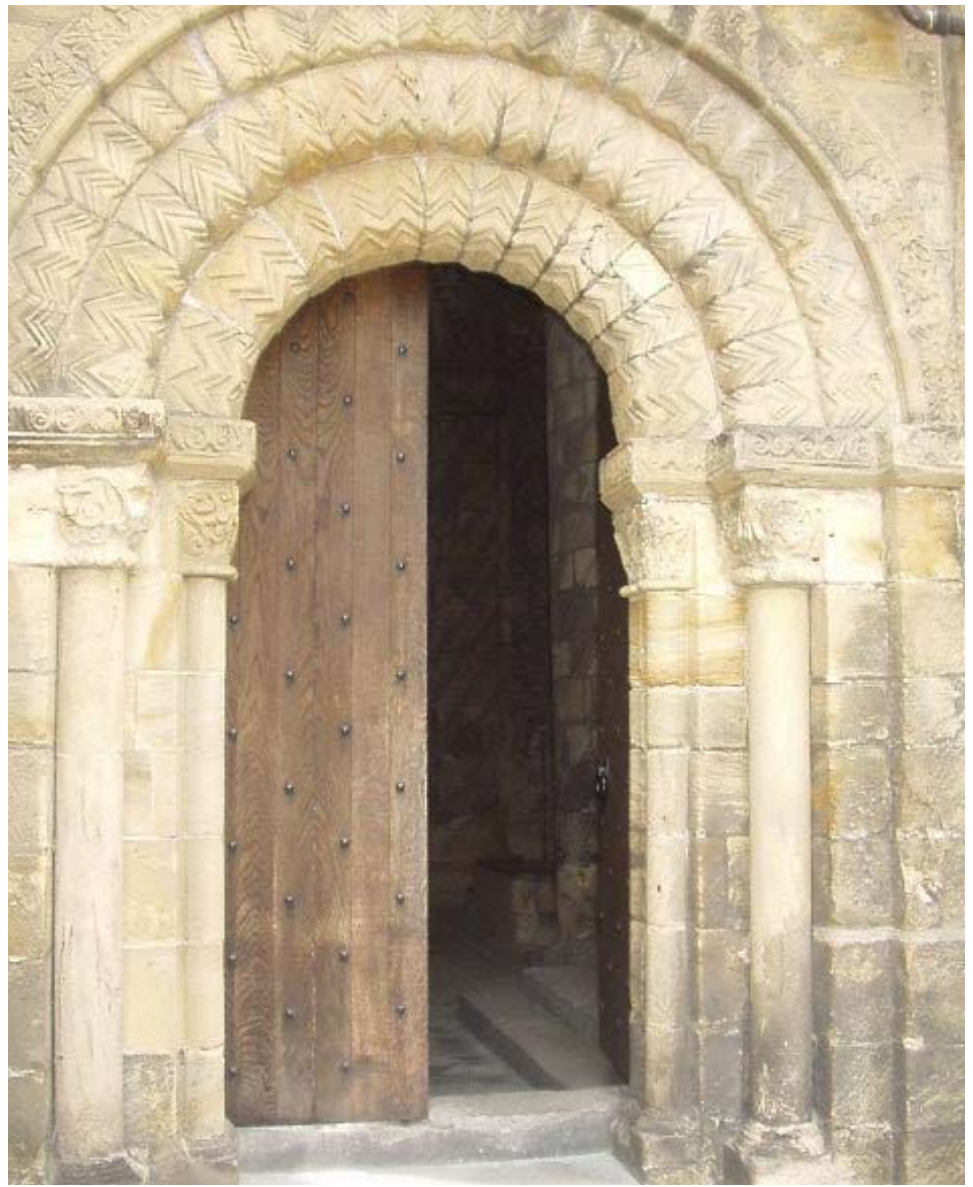
It used to be sheltered from wind and rain by a porch.

The patterns around the doorway used to be painted in bright colours.

**Go in through this door to stand in the nave of the old church.**



Carvings on door



Monks' entrance



**Did you know...**

The monks spent a lot of time in church – they came to eight services a day! Sometimes they would fall asleep during the night time services. Then one of the officials would come and wave a lantern in the sleeping monk’s face to try and wake him up!



The Nave



Painted ceiling

**Location 2: Inside the Nave**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- The part of the church where we are standing is called the nave. It was the only part where the ordinary people of Dunfermline were allowed to come and worship. The rest of the church was reserved for the monks.
- In the old days this would have looked even more impressive. The ceiling and walls would have been painted, there would have been silver and gold objects sparkling in the candlelight and there would have been the sound of the monks singing and bells ringing. In those days people’s houses were small and very simply built, so they would have been very impressed by a church like this.
- The very first church, the one built by the first group of monks, was smaller than this. Archaeologists have worked out where it used to be, and have marked it out with very narrow metal strips on the floor. **Can you find these?** They show the shape of the first church.
- This is perhaps where some members of the Scottish royal family were buried. As you look around the church, you might see some of the old stone coffins! Some of them might have been buried under the present floor. You can look down through hatches in the floor.
- Between the two end columns, you can see a big block of stone on the floor. This is all that’s left of a big wooden screen called the rood screen. A rood is a word which means a cross; the **rood screen** always showed a picture of Jesus on the cross. It used to separate the monks from the ordinary people. It was beautifully carved and painted.

<b>Teacher prompts</b>	<b>Desired pupil responses</b>
Look at the columns. How many different kinds of carved patterns can you find? Are the columns the same thickness all the way up?	Two; (pattern spiralling around column, and big zig zag). No – some of them are thicker in the middle and taper at top and bottom.
Why do you think that some of the columns are plain?	Maybe money ran out to pay masons; maybe the mason who carved the columns moved away; maybe they wanted the end of the nave to look very special.
Opposite the door you came in, look up at the ceiling. Can you find St Andrew with his cross? Who else can you see?	Cross clearly visible – though St Andrew’s face is not. Also visible are St Peter and St Paul (you can read their names).
How many stages high is the church here?	Three levels of opening are visible.
Look at the stained glass windows. Can you find a window showing Queen Margaret standing with King Malcolm? Who else is with them?	At west end of church.  William Wallace and Robert the Bruce.



**Did you know...**

Robert the Bruce gave the monks in Melrose abbey a special present – money so they could eat rice pudding every day! It was known as the King’s Dish in his honour.



Brass Plaque showing Bruce’s burial place



Bruce’s skull

**Location 3: Bruce’s Burial Place**

Note: This church is marked as the parish church in the Historic Scotland guidebook. It is possible to visit the parish church only between the months of April and September. Remind pupils that this church is still in use and is a special place for Christians. Discuss appropriate behaviour.

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils**

- When this part of the church was being built in 1818, the builders discovered the remains of a body buried here. They knew it was likely to be one of the kings or queens of Scotland, but at first they didn’t know who. Then they discovered that the body had marks across its chest, and then they realised it must be Robert the Bruce: after he had died, Bruce’s heart was cut out of his body and taken on a pilgrimage to Spain. It was later buried at Melrose Abbey. They reburied the body, and marked it with a brass plaque, underneath the pulpit. **Can you find it?**

Teacher prompts	Desired pupil responses
What is he wearing? Why do you think they showed him with these things?	Clothes for fighting – sword, shield, chain mail, crown. To show he was a famous fighter.
Can you see any symbols of Scotland on the brass plaque?	St Andrew’s Cross and Lion Rampant above his head.
Look at the brass plaque. Find this number in Roman numerals: MDCCCXVIII. What number is it?	Date: 1818.
Why is it here?	Date of discovery of body.

- When they were examining the body, they made a copy of the skull in plaster of Paris. You can see this skull here, if you go through the blue curtains to the left of the plaque.

Teacher prompts	Desired pupil responses
Why do you think that they made a model of Robert the Bruce’s skull?	Curiosity; to have something to look at; to try and see what he looked like.
Part of Robert the Bruce’s face is missing – what is it?	He’s missing his front teeth.
How do you think this happened?	Maybe he lost them in battle?

**Go out of the door by the abbey church shop. Turn right. Follow the church around until you arrive at St Margaret’s Shrine, against the end wall of the church.**



### Did you know...

We still remember Queen Margaret's ferry for pilgrims today – in the names of the towns of North and South Queensferry. Do you think she would like the Forth bridges?



St Margaret's Shrine



Washing place

## Location 4: St Margaret's Shrine

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- Queen Margaret was a very religious woman. She set up the abbey here and she also paid for a ferry to cross the Firth of Forth so that pilgrims could come and visit the important cathedral at St Andrews. Pilgrims are people who want to make a special journey to a place that they think is holy. About a hundred years after she died, the Pope decided that she should be made into a saint.
- Her body was dug up from the church where it had been buried. A chapel for her body was built, called a shrine. Now pilgrims would come and visit her chapel too. They hoped that their sins would be forgiven if they came here, or if they had an illness, they hoped that God might cure them if they visited a shrine. It was useful for the abbey because the pilgrims made lots of donations of money.
- The shrine looked very beautiful. Her coffin was made of precious materials, decorated with jewels. It had a special wooden cover which was only lifted on important days or for important pilgrims.
- In 1560 the religion of Scotland changed from Catholic to Protestant. Protestants thought that people shouldn't worship saints and should only worship God. A lot of the beautiful things in the church were destroyed, and so was the shrine. When the shrine was destroyed, the head of St Margaret was given to Mary Queen of Scots.

### Teacher prompts

Look at the picture by the side of the shrine. What parts of the shrine are still here?

Why do you think they were not taken away or destroyed?

Look very carefully for a shallow stone dip in the stones around the outside. These were used for washing the silver plates which were used in services in the shrine.

What do you think the hole in the bottom was for?

### Desired pupil responses

Stone platform for St Margaret's coffin.

Remains of some of the stone pillars for the arches.

Too big and heavy.

For the water to drain away.

***In the graveyard you can see a plaque by the north entrance (on the wall to the left of the entrance by the Abbot's House) commemorating the mother of William Wallace, who was buried here.***

- Now we're going to look at the two parts of the monks' buildings which were not destroyed.

***Keep on walking round the church until you are back to where you started. Stand on the wooden balcony just before the ticket kiosk, go up a short flight of wooden steps, through a door and then down a spiral staircase to arrive in the Refectory.***



**Did you know...**

The monks spent a lot of time in silence. At meal times they were not allowed to eat at all. Some monks developed a kind of sign language so that they could communicate during meals. To ask for bread you had to draw a circle in the air with the thumbs and first two fingers of both hands.



The Refectory



Mason's mark

**Location 5: The Refectory**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- When the monks lived at the abbey, the grassy area between the church and here was where they had buildings for living and working. They lived around a square garden known as a **cloister**. They grew flowers and herbs in the garden, and around the sides of it there were covered walkways. The monks used the walkways to think about god, to sit and study in and to move between all the different parts of the abbey without getting wet in poor weather.
- Some of their buildings were destroyed after Edward I invaded Scotland. The rest gradually collapsed after the monks stopped using the abbey in the late 1500s. But some parts have survived.
- This building used to be where the monks ate a vegetarian meal twice a day. It was called their **refectory**.
- We are now standing in the old basement of the refectory block. This was where they kept supplies of food. All the local churches had to pay rent to the abbey. They paid with food instead of money.
- Up above us is where the monks used to eat. They were not allowed to speak during the meal. Instead they listened while one of the monks read from a religious book. In the far corner, **can you see a little alcove in the wall?** It has railings across it. That was where the person reading used to stand.

Teacher prompts	Desired pupil responses
How many floors did the refectory used to have?	Three.
Look at the grand window to the west. Why do you think it was so big?	For light. Also would have looked very beautiful and impressive, especially if it had stained glass.
Do you like it?	
On the walls in the vaults look for scratched marks on the stones. These were made by the people who cut and shaped the stones. They were called stone masons. They got paid for every stone they made, so each mason had his own special mark.	
How many can you find?	There are lots once you start looking!
Can you find any which are the same?	Several sets of ones which are the same.
Why do you think all the marks are made up from straight lines? (Look at the information panel if you're having trouble finding the marks).	Easier to carve.

**Go back up the stairs and go through the shop in the ticket kiosk. Go out the wooden door, across a stone bridge and then down very narrow winding stone stair to arrive in the Kitchens.**



**Did you know...**

The monks were vegetarian and they only had two meals a day!



Remains of Fireplace in kitchen



Refectory from kitchen

**Location 6 : The Kitchens**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- This used to be the abbey kitchen. The abbey cooks would prepare the meals for the monks in the refectory, and would also prepare much grander meals for any guests who were staying at the abbey guesthouse nearby. These guests were often royalty.
- The gateway on to the road was where food could be delivered.
- There used to be a passage from the kitchen leading directly into the refectory for servants to carry food through.

**Teacher prompts**

Why was this a good place for a kitchen?

**Desired pupil responses**

Between dining room and guest house.  
Close to road for deliveries.  
Far from abbey church so reducing risk of fire.

The monks would use a huge fireplace to cook the food. Can you find where the fireplace used to be?

Remains of two giant fireplaces against north wall.

You get a really good view of the outside of the refectory from here.

Why do you think there is a gate from the road leading into the ground floor of the refectory area?

So that stores and food could be loaded in and out of the storage vaults easily and into the kitchens.



Drawing of the kitchens and dining areas c. 1400 from guidebook

**Leave the kitchen through the other doorway, at ground level. Go out on to a metal walkway, looking at the picture of the Guest House as you pass. Go and stand by the information board opposite the Royal Palace.**



**Did you know...**

It was tough being a monk in Scotland. In 1243 the Pope gave the monks at Dunfermline the right to wear caps or bonnets, considering how cold the weather at Dunfermline was.



Royal Palace



Palace peacock

**Location 7: The Royal Palace**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- Abbeys always had guest houses for important guests as well as places for pilgrims to stay. Because of connections with the royal family, the abbey at Dunfermline was a popular place for the royals to stay. They stayed at the guest house so often that it was also known as a Royal Palace.
- James VI gave the palace to his wife, Queen Anna of Denmark after the monks had left Dunfermline. She spent a lot of money in the 1590s rebuilding the palace and making it grander. Some of their children, including the future Charles I were born here. But, in 1603 James became king of England too, so the royal family moved south. After that the palace wasn't used so much.
- There used to be other buildings as part of the palace too. There was a special house for the Queen, a block with two halls, a dining room and even a tennis court where the monks' cloister used to be. Now most of the palace has fallen down, but you can still see one of the walls. In the days of the royals, the walls would have been plastered or covered with wooden panelling, and then decorated with beautiful tapestries. When the royals arrived, they would bring their own furniture and silver plates with them.
- These days it's a popular place with the abbey peacocks!

<b>Teacher prompts</b>	<b>Desired pupil responses</b>
Look at the picture to get an idea of what the palace looked like.	
Can you see where the windows have been altered?	Marks of arches to sides of big windows.
Why do you think they did this?	Maybe to let in more light, or to change where the rooms were.
Look for a clue as to how the royals in the palace kept warm.	Fireplaces visible – on ground floor and on top floor up to right.

**Go down the steps into the palace.**

<b>Teacher prompts</b>	<b>Desired pupil responses</b>
Look at the alcove in the end wall on the ground. You can see a drain leading down outside. What do you think this was?	One of the royal toilets.

**Walk right through the palace until you enter the vaults at the far end.**

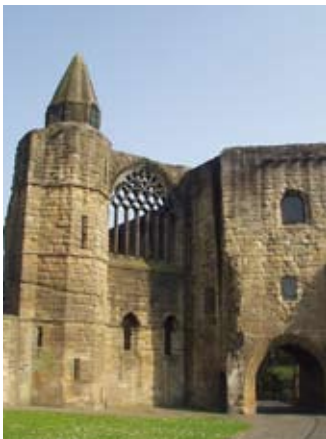


**Did you know...**

When a monk died, for thirty days afterwards a cross was laid on the table at the place where he used to eat. Full meals were also served at his plate which were then collected and given to the poor.



Monk's head in vaults



Gatehouse

**Location 8: Vaults beside the Royal Palace and Gatehouse**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- These were used as more storage space for food and wine – maybe for royal feasts.

**Teacher prompts**

Why do you think this was a good place to keep food?

There are two people watching you in here... can you find them?

**Desired pupil responses**

Cool, dark. Food would keep longer.

Two heads on ceiling arches.

**Return the way you came back through the palace, through the kitchen and up the winding stairs to the ticket office. As you go, you can see the gatehouse from the outside.**

- The abbey used to be surrounded by a huge high wall. This marked where the world of the abbey stopped and started. It reminded visitors that they were now entering a special place where god was very important. It also marked the limits of where most monks were allowed to go – most of them never left the abbey once they'd become monks.
- There were several gates with gatehouses in the wall. They would each have a kind of janitor, who would control who was allowed in and out of the abbey.

**Teacher prompts**

There are still two entrances in this gateway. What do you think each entrance was used for?

**Desired pupil responses**

Wider one for horses and vehicles, smaller one for pedestrians.

**Go through the shop and down a few steps to find a small display of carved stones from the site.**

**Teacher prompts**

These stones all came from different parts of Dunfermline Abbey. Can you find a stone with:

- Two unicorns
- A skull and bones
- Two angels
- A bull
- A guitar

**Desired pupil responses**

All are easy to find.

This is now the end of our suggested tour. School parties may also wish to visit nearby Pittencrieff Park ("The Glen"). As well as being a good place for a runabout and for picnics, you can also visit Malcolm's Tower, where Queen Margaret and King Malcolm stayed and St Margaret's Cave, where the Queen allegedly prayed before the abbey was built.



## FAQ

**Q** What is the minimum number of adults required for supervision?

**A** One adult to ten pupils.

**Q** Is there disabled access?

**A** The refectory floor, kitchen area and lower floor of the palace together with the upper floor and stone display in the gatehouse are not suitable for visitors using wheelchairs, and three steps lead to the shop. All paths in the grounds are accessible. They have a gravel surface and there are flagstones within the abbey. Palace entry is from Pittencrief Park with limited access for visitors using wheelchairs.

**Q** Are there lunch facilities?

**A** Pupils can picnic in the abbey grounds or in nearby Pittencrief Park.

**Q** Where are the toilets?

**A** There are public toilets at nearby Pittencrief Park Glen Pavilion.

**Q** Do you carry out risk assessment on behalf of schools?

**A** Risk assessment of the site is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the group. Hazard information sheets available on the Historic Scotland website provide information that can help teachers prepare their risk assessments.

## Visiting Dunfermline Abbey

**Pre visits:** We strongly recommend that teachers make a free planning visit to the abbey to familiarise themselves with the site and to make a risk assessment before bringing school parties.

**Booking a visit:** Phone **01383 739026** to book a visit, discuss your needs and to confirm opening times with the site Steward.

**Cost:** Admission is **free** to a range of educational groups including most school parties. More information about who qualifies for free visits can be found the Historic Scotland Education Unit website (see below). It may also be possible to apply for subsidised travel.

**Location:** In Dunfermline town centre, off the M90.

**Parking:** There is limited space for coaches by the gate. Otherwise use the Chalmers St car park or the car park in Pittencrief Park Glen.

**Health and safety:** Please note the following:

- Pupils should be supervised at all times and should not climb on the walls.
- As part of our commitment to Green Tourism, we ask that all rubbish be disposed of back at school.

### Historic Scotland Education Unit:

For further information about school visits, activities and resources for teachers linked to **Dunfermline Abbey** visit: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk). It is also possible to download a free model of an abbey which can be photocopied and constructed by pupils:

[www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/education\\_unit/for\\_the\\_classroom/worksheets.htm](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/education_unit/for_the_classroom/worksheets.htm)

## Additional resources

### For teachers:

Richard Fawcett *Dunfermline Abbey and Palace* Historic Scotland 2004. The official guidebook to the site; includes detailed information, maps and photographs.

Richard Fawcett *Scottish Abbeys and Priors* Batsford/Historic Scotland 1994. Detailed and more specialist architectural and historical information. S Hebron *Life in a Monastery* Pitkin 1988. Though slanted towards English sites, a useful guide to life in monasteries, well illustrated.

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/index.shtml) A clear overview of the periods with helpful essays on the medieval church and Reformation.

[www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/dunfermline/abbeypalace/index.html](http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/dunfermline/abbeypalace/index.html) A useful overview of the site, with good photographs.

[www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk) Images of objects associated with the medieval church.

### For pupils:

Terry Deary *Horrible Histories: Bloody Scotland* Scholastic 1998

Elizabeth Newbery *Lookout! Mostly Monks* Pitkin 1999

E Dunlop *Saints of Scotland* HMSO 1997

D Osler *The Way it Was: Queen Margaret of Scotland* Chambers 1987

[www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/sym/scots/index\\_choice.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/sym/scots/index_choice.shtml) Activities relating to the life of monks in pre-Reformation Scotland.

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishhistory](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishhistory) An excellent library of resources suitable for levels D-F.

## Acknowledgements

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