

## Leigh Academy Hugh Christie Educational Visits Policy

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### Revision Log

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Brief detail of change</b>

Education for a better world

# Educational Visits Policy

## Aims

Educational trips, visits, and off-site learning opportunities form an integral part of the curriculum at Leigh Academy Hugh Christie. These experiences offer valuable learning and cultural enrichment that extend beyond the classroom, creating lasting memories and enhancing students' educational journeys. The Academy is committed to providing high-quality external visits that support the development of independent and investigative learning, broaden students' understanding of both the local and wider world, and help make learning more meaningful and applicable to real-life contexts. Aims of including Educational Trips and Visits into our curriculum include:

- To enhance and deepen students' understanding of curriculum content through real-world application
- To promote personal growth, independence, and confidence in unfamiliar settings
- To encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving through experiential learning
- To foster teamwork, communication, and positive social interactions
- To provide opportunities for cultural enrichment and appreciation of diversity
- To build students' awareness and engagement with their local, national, and global communities
- To support the development of life skills and practical knowledge outside of the classroom environment

## Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The governors, through this and other policies, to ensure the Health and Safety of staff, students, and others visiting and helping at the school. Governors will approve trips overseas and/or involving an overnight stay.
- The Principal, either separately or together with the school EVC, to ensure that those leading the trip are competent to do so, the risks have been assessed and controlled, and arrangements are fit and appropriate. The Principal will give permission for the visit to proceed or will recommend to governors whether the visit should proceed.
- The Vice Principal, either separately or with the appropriate Director Learning and, where necessary the school Leadership Team and the EVC, assess the impact of the trip across the whole school.

- The trip organiser to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out, and that charges, where appropriate, have been made and collected. The EVC can advise with, but never carry out, this process.
- The trip organiser to ensure that all those involved in the trip are kept informed and that appropriate permissions and guidance are both sought and given to the staff, parents, students and volunteers involved.
- All academy employees have a responsibility to:
  - take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
  - co-operate with their employer
  - carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction
  - inform the employer of any serious risk

This policy has been produced to offer academy staff advice and support in the planning and organising of all off- site activities to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.

### Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the students to leave the academy premises having been authorised to do so by the Principal. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Sporting activities including swimming sessions
- Adventurous activities
- Residential trips in the UK and abroad

### Expectations

Our aim is to ensure that all students at the Academy are offered a broad range of educational visit opportunities across a variety of subjects, with the expectation that each student participates in at least two visits per academic year. Class teachers are encouraged to organise trips throughout the year, subject to approval from senior leaders and provided that overall costs remain reasonable and manageable within the academic budget.

In addition to curriculum-based visits, a range of enrichment trips will also be offered throughout the year, including those focused on sports, citizenship, the arts, and careers education. All trips and activities are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all students, regardless of individual needs, ethnicity, gender, or religious background.

### Procedure

A minimum of four working weeks' (except for overnight/overseas trips which require 8 weeks) notice to the EVC is required for trips and, wherever possible, proposed trips should be calendared at the start of the school year. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Principal deviate from this approach.

As soon as the visit is proposed, the member of staff organising it must consult their Director of Learning and the Vice Principal/EVC, concerning the wider school implications, such as clashes with other activities and the cover required. Once agreed, a trip pack should be completed as an aid to discussion and sent to the Assistant Principal/EVC.

The Vice Principal, as outlined above, may refuse to give permission for the trip to take place at the time proposed or at all if they consider that it would be too disruptive to other activities in the school. A decision to refuse to authorise a trip, even on an alternative date, would be taken by the Principal.

Once the trip has been approved/outline permission has been given by the Principal/governors (dependent on category of trip), preparations may commence. The EVC will send an email to the trip organiser, the Finance Assistant, Director of Learning, Catering Manager, Office Manager, Timetable Manager (for Cover) and Student Services, to keep them informed. It is essential that the procedure outlined in the Academy Trips and Visits Folder be followed when planning a trip/visit of one day or involving overnight stays.

### **Risk Assessments**

A comprehensive risk assessment must be completed at least two weeks prior to any trip and submitted for approval to the academy's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), using the designated academy risk assessment template. To support this process, existing risk assessments may be referenced, reviewed, and updated as appropriate—this includes generic assessments provided by the destination venue and those created by colleagues for similar past visits.

The risk assessment must clearly outline all relevant medical needs, any emergency medication required off-site, and appropriate staff-to-student ratios. One copy of the completed assessment should be carried during the trip, while another must be retained by the EVC for reference and safeguarding purposes.

### **Parental Consent**

Parents and carers will always be informed about the trip or activity by email or letter, and permission sought for educational visits which are beyond the locality. In accordance with the Home Academy Agreement, parents/carers give permission for their son or daughter to attend local educational trips. As a result, permission is not always required for local educational visits.

All the necessary details will be included in the letter, as well as information about any payments required. Permission will be specifically requested from parents for:

- Residential trips
- Adventure trips (e.g. outward bound) or a long journey
- Trips beyond Tonbridge and the local area
- Trips that take place outside of academy hours

## Ratios

All trips should be individually risk assessed to ascertain the safe level of adult supervision required. Staff ratios **must** be adhered to, based on the risk assessment and take into account:

- Sex, age and ability of the group
- SEND/medical needs
- Nature of the activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of journey
- Competence and behaviour of children

The following ratios (adults to children) as a guide are 1:15/20 for UK based trips and 1:10 for residential, or overseas trips (where there must also be one male and one female present). For all trips, but definitely overseas and overnight, students should be divided into groups and attached to a given member of staff who will be responsible for the welfare of these students.

## Residential Trips

For all residential trips, a parent/carer information meeting will be held well in advance of the departure date. This meeting will provide comprehensive details about the trip, including payment plans, which are also available upon request. A list of any required special equipment or clothing—such as waterproof or additional outdoor gear for adventurous activities—will be shared with families to ensure students are appropriately prepared.

Emergency contact details and relevant medical information for all participating students must be provided via the parental consent form prior to the trip. To support student welfare and safeguarding, the academy will ensure that staff of each gender accompany students on all residential visits.

## Payment for Trips

When planning educational visits, class teachers will always take into account the financial impact on parents and carers. Wherever possible, excessively costly trips will be avoided. For visits that are an essential part of the curriculum and take place during curriculum time, parental contributions will be requested on a voluntary basis. However, if sufficient funding is not secured, the academy may be unable to proceed with the visit, and cancellation may be necessary.

For non-curricular trips, such as rewards-based outings that fall outside of the required curriculum, full parental contributions will be expected. Clear communication will be provided regarding the cost and purpose of such trips.

For residential visits, where costs are typically higher, flexible payment plans will be made available to help families spread the cost over time. In some cases, the academy may be able to offer financial support or subsidies. Parents and carers wishing to apply for this support should complete a request form, which is available from the academy office.

## Behaviour on Educational Visits

Students are expected to demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour during trips as they do throughout the academy day. Should a student's behaviour be deemed inappropriate or pose a risk to themselves or others, it may be necessary for the student to be returned to the academy with appropriate support in place. In such cases, the class teacher must ensure that the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team is informed both before and after the student's return.

## Trip Safety

The academy places the highest priority on the safety and wellbeing of its students during all off-site visits. All supervising adults must be fully aware of their duty of care and the responsibilities this entails. The academy's Safeguarding Policy applies in full during all off-site activities and must be adhered to at all times to ensure the protection and welfare of all participants. The academy will adhere to the following to ensure the safety of students on educational visits:

- An adult of each gender to accompany mixed groups of students if possible
- Newly Qualified Teachers to be accompanied by an experienced member of the teaching staff on their first visit
- Supervising adults to include a member of staff with knowledge of basic First Aid
- Supervising adults must know of any special medical details relevant to any student
- First aid kits and any individual medicines, e.g. asthma pumps, must be taken on the trip along with any Individual Health Care Plans
- The named adult will always stay with the named students they are responsible for in accordance with the Visit Risk Assessment
- Regular headcounts to be taken
- Adults must never travel alone with a child in their own vehicle

## Emergency Procedures

In the event of a student or students needing urgent medical attention, one staff member will accompany that student (or students) for treatment, while other staff members remain with the rest of the group. The academy will be notified at all times, and they in turn will notify parents/carers. In the unlikely event that a student becomes separated from their group, they must follow the steps below, about which they will have been briefed prior to departure:

- Wait so that the trip leader can retrace their steps to locate the student
- If a student has been left on the tube/train, they are to get off at the next station and wait
- Speak only to adults in uniform, e.g. police, shop staff etc. but under no circumstances go with them

The trip leader will immediately inform the Principal or other Senior Leader by telephone. They, and one other member of staff where this is possible will search the immediate vicinity. Another member of staff will assume overall responsibility for the group during the absence of the trip leader to maintain the safety and well-being of the other students. The trip leader will contact the police after 30 minutes of the student going missing. Once the police arrive,

all relevant information about the student will be given, so that the police can take over the search. The trip leader will remain with the police to comfort the student when found and maintain regular contact with the academy. The remaining staff will return to the academy with the rest of the children. The academy will notify the parent/carers if the student is missing for any longer than 30 minutes.

When the situation has been resolved, the Principal and SLT will conduct a full investigation to ascertain how the incident occurred and revise the risk assessment procedures where appropriate.

### **Safeguarding**

If a safeguarding concern is raised during a school trip, either locally or on a residential trip, the academy will follow its Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and will contact relevant agencies, such as the police or social care, either in the local area of the trip location or where the child resides. Any decisions will be made based on the assessed risk and urgency of the incident, and are at the discretion of the DSL in attendance.

Local police/social care, either in the UK or abroad, should be notified of a safeguarding incident if the child is at urgent risk of harm. The agencies where the child resides will be contacted if the incident is lower risk or if the risk has been adequately mitigated by the DSL on duty, and where the management of the incident can wait until the return. In either case, the parent of the child is to be contacted immediately and informed of the reason for either decision (unless the parent is the subject of a disclosure). If necessary, the identified DSL will contact the local authorities where the trip is taking place for advice.