



Leigh Academy
MINSTER

Educational Visits Policy (2025-26)

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Our Vision Statement:

We believe that every learner is entitled to a high quality, varied and personalised education; delivered through a broad and balanced curriculum that provides challenge, irrespective of need, starting point or background. Our commitment to maximising the potential of every child; teaching them the skills they need to be successful and nurturing a desire to be a lifelong learner, will prepare them for whichever career path they choose to follow. At Leigh Academy Minster we inspire our learners to be responsible for their own learning, to be independent and have ambitions to develop themselves and enhance their community.

Our Academy community works collaboratively to achieve success and develop its own unique character. Our belief in 'human scale' education, delivered through a small school college model, means every one of our students is known and valued. Strong pastoral care is at the heart of our academy and we place great importance on building strong partnerships with parents and carers.

Our inclusive community has ambition, drive and responsibility. We embrace a high challenge, high support culture and seek positive collaboration with others. At Leigh Academy Minster our community allows ambition to take flight.

Our Mission:

'Leigh Academy Minster - Where ambition takes flight'

Our Values:

Ambition - Striving for Excellence

We encourage individuals to set high aspirations, push boundaries, and pursue their goals with determination. Ambition fuels innovation and fosters a culture of excellence, empowering individuals to reach new heights and make meaningful contributions.

Character - Integrity and Authenticity

Character is the foundation of our identity, built on the principles of integrity, honesty, and authenticity. We believe in the importance of maintaining strong moral and ethical values in all interactions. Our commitment to character ensures a culture of trust, respect, and transparency, fostering meaningful connections and genuine relationships within our community.

Achievement - Continuous Learning and Innovation

We celebrate achievement as a result of continuous learning and innovation. We value the pursuit of knowledge and the willingness to adapt and evolve. Through a commitment to excellence, we recognise and reward accomplishments that contribute to personal and collective growth. Achievement is not just a destination but a journey of exploration, curiosity, and improvement.

Responsibility - Accountability and Guardianship

Responsibility is at the core of our values, emphasising accountability and guardianship. We believe in taking ownership of our actions, decisions, and their consequences. As responsible members of our community, we

are committed to environmental and social stewardship, making choices that positively impact our surroundings and the well-being of others.

Introduction

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the curriculum at Leigh Academy Minster. Successful trips provide memorable learning and cultural experiences and enhance the student's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The Academy is committed to providing external visits as a positive tool to develop students' independent, investigative learning, to build their experience of the local and wider world and to ensure learning can be made functional.

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/Head of 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

Aims and expectations

We aim for all students in the academy to be offered a wealth of education visit opportunities from across all subjects, taking up at least two of these yearly. Class teachers will be encouraged to arrange visits throughout the year following authorisation from senior leaders, providing the costs for the academic year are not excessive. In addition to this, there will be additional trips arranged throughout the year, such as sports, citizenship, arts and careers. All activities are available to all students irrespective of needs, ethnicity, gender or religion.

Procedure

A minimum of ten working weeks (except for overnight/overseas trips which require 16 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/Head 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/Head of Learning, Catering Manager, Office Manager, Timetable Manager (for Cover) and Student Services, to keep them informed. It is essential that the Academy ([Trip Folder](#)) Instructions be followed when planning a trip/visit of one day or involving overnight stays

Risk Assessments

A full risk assessment must be completed six weeks prior to a trip, which must be approved by the academy's EVC, using the academy's risk assessment template. To support the process, existing risk assessments can be used, evaluated and updated, including generic risk assessments provided by the centre to be visited and/or risk assessments completed by colleagues who carried out the same trip. The risk assessment must include details of all medical needs, emergency medication to be taken off site and staff ratios. A copy should be taken on the trip, and another copy left with the EVC.

Parental Consent

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

In the case of residential trips, a parent/carers meeting will be held well in advance of the trip. This will provide all the relevant information, including the details of payment plans, which are always available on request. Special equipment/clothing will be listed as required; for example, for adventurous visits, additional or waterproof clothing may be necessary. Emergency telephone contacts must be obtained for all students participating in residential activities, along with relevant medical information, on the parental consent form. The academy will ensure that adults of each gender accompany the children on residential visits.

Payment for trips

When planning educational visits, class teachers will always consider the cost implications for parents/carers. Excessively expensive trips will be avoided wherever possible. Where the educational visit is a key part of the curriculum offer and falls within curriculum time, payments by parents/carers for trips is made in the form of a voluntary contribution. However, in the event that the academy is unable to cover the costs of a planned visit, the trip might have to be cancelled. For visits such as rewards trips, which are not fundamental to the curriculum that students are required to access, parent contributions will be expected and this will always be communicated clearly.

For residential off-site visits where the costs are likely to be higher, payment plans are available, to spread the cost. In certain cases, the academy may be able to subsidise the cost of trips. In these cases, parents/carers need to complete a request form which is kept in the academy office.

Behaviour on educational visits

It is expected that students will behave well on trips and in line with expectations during the academy day. If the behaviour of a student puts others at risk, or is deemed inappropriate, it may be necessary for the student to return to the academy with appropriate support. The class teacher must ensure in this event that the Principal or a Senior Leader are informed prior to and following the return to the academy.

Trip safety

The academy takes the safety of its students on off-site visits extremely seriously. All supervising adults must be made aware of the duty of care which is placed upon them. The academy's Safeguarding Policy will be implemented during all off site activities.

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

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.

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.

Other relevant policies

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. Safeguarding Policy
3. Behaviour Policy