



Leigh Academy
Milestone

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

Updated: December 2024
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Policy Owner: Sonia Sharma

At Leigh Academy Milestone we believe every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

We recognise that learning outside the classroom often provides the most memorable learning experiences and helps us to make sense of the world around us. These experiences allow us to generalise skills and transfer learning between the outside and the classroom and vice versa.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn.

The Academy has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Kent Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Educational Visits and Activities

Kent Regulations and '[A Handbook for Group Leaders](#)' (Department for Education) are available to view at:

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/49548/Educational-visits-handbook.pdf

Along with advice published by the DfE in November 2018 which is available to view at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

Guidance for visit leads and EVCs is available at all times through the <https://oeapng.info/> website which provides up to date national guidance for the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom.

Aims and Purposes of Educational Visits

The Academy has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the Academy premises.

Each year the Academy will arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the Academy site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the Academy. Leigh Academy Milestone aims to provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum tailored to meet the individual learning needs of its pupils.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the Academy:

- Out of hours lunchtime clubs (music, signing, gaming, ICT, sport etc)
- Forest School
- Inter-school competitions
- Swimming

- Horse riding
- Regular nearby visits (village halls, libraries, shops, parks and woodlands, places of worship, farms)
- Day visits for particular class or year groups
- Residential visits including overseas visits
- Adventurous activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

Leigh Academy Milestone ensures families are informed by letter of any outside learning opportunities and families are asked to give written permission for their child to participate in any off-site activity or residential visit which requires a more detailed risk assessment, such as for an adventurous activity or visit outside of the local area. Phase 2 pupils may be invited to participate in a residential visit in Years 5 & 6. Phase 3 pupils may be offered a residential visit in Year 8 and Phase 4 pupils in Year 10. Pupils in the Sixth Form department may be invited to join a residential visit at least once during their three years in the department. All Phase 2, 3, 4 & Sixth Form pupils are offered the opportunity to swim and in Phases 2-4 pupils may have the opportunity to be taught by fully qualified coaches in a pool attached to a local college if appropriate. Sixth Form pupils may choose to swim as part of a sport and leisure module.

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Headteacher has nominated the Assistant Principals in Phases 1, 2, 3 and 4 as the Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVC) who have completed appropriate training through Kent Outdoor Education Unit, updated as required, and the Governing Body has approved these appointments. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Health & Safety Committee and has nominated the Principal, Vice Principal and Assistant Principals as signatories, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body.

The designated EVCs are experienced visits leaders and:

- have the status to be able to guide the working practices of other staff
- are confident in assessing the ability of other staff to lead visits
- are confident in assessing outside activity providers with support of the Kent Outdoor Education Unit
- are able to advise headteachers and governors when they're approving trips
- have access to training, advice and guidance

Before a visit, including an adventurous activity or overnight stay, is advertised to parents the Principal and EVCs must approve the initial plan; for overseas visits the Governors must also approve the plan.

All visits but especially those that include adventurous activities and/or a residential element will be recorded on and require approval by the Local Authority via the on-line Visit Notification and Approval system, 'EVOLVE'. User names and passwords will be managed by the EVCs or Principal. Kent Outdoor Education Unit will check for appropriate safety standards and liability insurance for providers and recommends LOTC Quality Badge organisations be used.

Day visits that do not include adventurous activities but involve groups travelling outside the County of Kent will be registered (Notification) on the above system (EVOLVE). For regular visits in the very local community Evolve now allows for 'Local Area Visits' which do not require approval. Such visits will be fully risk assessed. Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the Academy on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the Academy's accounts.

Written consent will always be requested for nursery age children. For out of hours clubs, school teams and visits within the local community as part of the curriculum, families will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter enters the Academy. Families will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in as they are planned and will be informed using school communication systems if an activity has to be cancelled, along with being given the opportunity to withdraw their child. Class teachers under direction of the EVCs may also telephone families to seek verbal permission if their child has not returned any requisite permission slips, as long as the visit does not have a higher level of risk assessment or take place outside of normal school hours, when written consent must be obtained.

For any visit lasting a day or more, parents will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to their son/daughter taking part. All families are asked to sign a separate medical consent form which is held with their contact details by the visit leader. The Academy has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose.

The Leigh Academies Trust has a separate policy for 'Charging and Remissions' which is available on the Academy website.

Staffing

The Academy recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction, continual professional development and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

The Academy will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits. On residential visits the gender of the staff responsible for supervision and pastoral care will reflect the gender of the pupils.

The staff:pupil ratios will not exceed those as recommended by the Local Authority and the adult pupil ratio will always take into account the learning and care needs of the pupils. The Academy does not support additional people accompanying educational visits who are not pupils at the Academy or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Governing Body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. When completing risk assessments the abilities of the pupils must be taken into account, any adventurous activities should be identified and risk assessed prior to the visit, ensuring organisations have a licence if required to provide such activities. Adventurous activities must not be added during the trip.

Swimming pools should only be used if public pools with a lifeguard or ensuring a lifeguard is on duty in a named pool. For overseas trips, school staff could be liable under civil law for any injuries to the children due to negligence. The following guidance from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's detailed guidance on safer adventure travel overseas will be considered for such travel:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-adventure-travel-and-volunteering-overseas>

The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The Academy has a clear code of conduct for visits based on the Academy's 'Behaviour Support Policy' and 'duty of care'. This code of conduct will be part of the conditions of booking by the parents, and will include guidance in relation to the potential withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion.

The Academy would also ask families to collect their son/daughter should the pupil's health and wellbeing appear to be at risk e.g. as a result of a medical emergency such as an epileptic seizure or as part of an agreed behaviour support strategy.

Leigh Academy Milestone expects families to meet the costs of collecting their child, as part of the agreement signed by parents.

Emergency Procedures

The Academy will appoint a member of the Leadership Team as the emergency contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention. Daily check-ins from the Visit Leader to a member of the Leadership Team will take place.

The Visit Leader will take with them a copy of the KCC Major Emergency Plan which can be found at:

https://www.kent.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0014/11336/Kent-major-emergency-plan.pdf

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the Academy systems.

1. Visit Leader/First Aiders will take a pupil who receives an injury as a result of an incident/accident to Accident and Emergency for a medical assessment.
2. The Visit Leader will contact the parents/guardians on the day that any incident/accident occurs reporting any injury to their child.
3. Visit Leaders will complete an accident report via Behaviourwatch during the residential visit.

The Outdoor Education Unit should also be advised of any serious incidents or accidents.

The Academy will have emergency funding available to support the Visit Leader in any emergency that occurs in the UK or abroad. Leigh Academy Milestone will agree the range of emergency funding in advance of visits and Visit Leaders will be advised and reassured of the process of accessing this funding should it become necessary.

Evaluation

All overnight visits will be evaluated by the Visit Leader with the EVCs using EVOLVE in order to evaluate whether the planning worked. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.

The EVCs will ensure that any risk assessments for the visits or activities are evaluated and/or modified as a result of incidents, findings or feedback from the visit.

The Visit Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the Academy's procedures.

Signed: Sarah Goosani Principal

Date: December 2024