Highams Park Academy Trust

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Educational Visits Policy

Date of Review	SLMT Lead	Trustee Approval
10 October 2024	D Stephens	
16th September 2025	D Stephens	2 October 2025

Date of next review: October 2026

Aims and Scope

At Highams Park School, we believe that learning beyond the classroom is a vital part of our curriculum. It offers students a distinctive chance to develop creativity, initiative, and a chance to develop key life skills in an enriching environment.

Educational visits are school-organised activities that take place off-site, approved and supervised by the designated trip Lead.

These visits play a key role in supplementing the curriculum, broadening students' education, and offering valuable social and cultural experiences. They also teach life skills, encourage independent learning, and foster social awareness, providing a foundation for lifelong learning and supporting students' educational and personal development.

This policy outlines our approach to organising and conducting educational visits, ensuring the safety and well-being of students and staff, while ensuring all students have access to these opportunities. It also defines the roles and responsibilities of staff, students, and volunteers involved in such visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

This policy has been written with the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) guidance and will be updated in accordance with any new relevant information.

The educational visits co-ordinator is Karen Kemp: KKemp@highamsparkschool.co.uk
The lead SLT member is: dstephens@highamsparkschool.co.uk

Trip lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, considering the health and safety risks to students, staff and volunteers.
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed.
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments.
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed.
- Consider the environment and general public whilst on the trip.
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party.
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, students and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour. To also communicate key details of the trip including appropriate attire, lunch arrangements and returning to school details.
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for students and others.
- Remind students of all safety and key information, including the days itinerary and meeting points before the trip commences.

Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all students and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part.
Staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the HOD in the first instance and this is approved by the SLMT Trip Approver.
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead.
- Consider the health and safety of themselves.
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all students needs and those around them.
- Help manage student behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit. This includes conduct and care of the environment and general public.
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate.
- Must not take photographs of students on their personal phones.
- Must remain with their allocated group at all times.
- Must not consume alcohol/drugs or any illegal substance at any point of the trip.
- Must only administer medicine that has been authorised. The trip leader has overall responsibility for this.

Parents and carers

By agreeing that students can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Read all required details about the trip to ensure they are informed of all aspects of the trip.
- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable.
- Give consent on Arbor and complete any consent forms or any other documentation required in a timely manner.
- Share any concerns or information about the student that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip.
- Meet the payment plan dates (where applicable).

Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly.
- DBS checking.
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for students.
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible.
- Make sure students under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible.

Students

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that students will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip.
- To always follow the safety expectations and contingency instructions.
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip.
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor.
- Take responsibility for their belongings, including devices and money. Online devised should be used appropriately and inline with the school's policies.
- To engage in the activities taking placing during the trip.

Students will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times. They must not bring the school in disrepute in anyway.

The school must ensure that students who attend are upholding the highest standards of behaviour and maintaining Highams Park's reputation. Students who have been isolated, excluded or have multiple behaviour points in a given period of time may be refused entry to trips, events or activities. The Principal reserves the right to refuse entry to any school, events, trip or activity without any notice, and delegates this responsibility to the Trip/Event Leader in each case. This is to ensure that school trips can take place safely and students that attend are upholding the standard of behaviour we would expect from Highams Park students. Students will be sanctioned in accordance with our behaviour policy and may mean further visits are not permitted.

Planning and Preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by SLMT and based on factors including:

- Educational purpose and value.
- Disruption to the normal running of the school.
- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers).
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes.
- Cover implications.
- Health and safety considerations.
- Staff-to-student ratio.

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance.
- Travel plans or options.
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available.
- Resources, including staffing, volunteer, and physical supplies.
- Accommodation options for abroad trips and residentials.
- Insurance detailed, where needed.
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision.
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks.
- Cover implications.

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the principal will seek approval of the Trust board.

Once the trip has been approved by the principal, and the Trust board where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Parental consent will be required for all trips that take place outside of normal school hours. This may at times require parents to opt out of trips if they are a free educational visit.

During some visits, students will be allocated remote time where they will be independent and not closely supervised by staff. If remote supervision is to form part of the trip this must be identified on the notification form, the Senior Leader i/c trips will decide whether to authorise this depending on the planned activity, location and age of the students, their decision is final. Parents will be informed in the communication home if remote supervision is to take place at any point during the visit. Parents not wishing for this, will need to inform the trip leader in advance of the trip date.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

Inclusion

All students, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a student with a disability, statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and students.

Risk Assessment

We will attempt to carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.
Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

The risk assessment will include any specific SEND and medical issues and allergies, the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination. Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with SLMT and, where appropriate, third-party vendors. Every risk assessment will be approved by an SLMT member and a copy taken on the visit and another copy left with the trip team.
At times, a doctor's note may be requested to parents to support the risk assessment. A student may not be permitted to attend a trip if the school cannot fully meet the need of the student after a thorough risk assessment has been completed.

Staff ratios and **First Aid** risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will attempt to have:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult present (for mixed student groups)
- In line with the school's recommendations (no specific DFE guideline current in place) there should be a staff to students' ratio of 1:10 and 1:8 for overseas residentials.
- Where possible, at least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid present
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies.

- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip. This includes staff and students'.
- A medical list will be produced on Arbor and the trip leader will collect all of the relevant medication form the in the main school office prior to the trip departing .
- Students who are diabetic MUST have a member of staff who is diabetic trained on the trip with them at all times.
- Controlled medication must be administered by the first aider and returned immediately to the medical officer after the trip.
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls.

Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure students, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

On occasions where students are meeting staff at a specific venue, parents will be informed of all the details of the meeting point. It will the parent's responsibility to ensure the safe travel of their child.

Use of External Organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards, liability insurance and an up to date Safeguarding policy.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on health and safety on educational visits to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

The organisations risk assessment must be read and understood in the initial planning stage. Any relevant information must be added to the HP risk assessment with the risk assessed.

Communication and Consent

Parents and carers will be contacted and notified prior to the educational visit. Communication will be via letter on Arbor and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, information about lunch arrangements including those students eligible for FSM.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location.
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school.
- Expected behaviour and consequences of student's failure to meet these standards.
- Parents/carers will be asked to provide consent and/or payment on Arbor for educational visits where appropriate.

Information and Final Trip Packs

The group leader holds this information for the duration of the visit and checks immediately prior to departure for any late changes, for example due to student illness or absence. Such changes are noted and an amended copy submitted to the Attendance office.
Trip pack includes:

- x2 copies of student registers attending (1x copy trip leader) (1x copy attendance)
- Student's parents /carers emergency contacts.
- Copies of student Medical details / Dietary requirements/ Allergies from Arbor.
- Copies of any insurance documents, contracts, etc. if necessary.
- Risk assessments (both school and venue) with site maps if available.
- Venue tickets (if applicable).
- Students eligible for FSM.
- SEND Students.
- TFL Tickets (if applicable).
- School Mobile phone.

Emergency Procedures and Incident Reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk.
- Serious and life-threatening injury.
- Individuals going missing.
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations.

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the SLMT or school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a student seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a student being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other students. In the unlikely event that a student cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office

who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the student when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school / appropriate location with the rest of the students.

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

Charging and Insurance – Please also refer to the Charging and Remission Policy

Parents will be notified of the cost of trips well in advance and before the trip date.

In some cases, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect students' ability to take part fully in the trip. We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items. In some case we may ask for non-refundable deposit to secure a place on a trip; this will be no more than 25% of the total cost of the trip. The school will not keep places on trips open where payment deadlines are missed and reserve the right to cancel the place. In this instance all monies paid will not be returned.

Residential Visits

The principal, together with the Trust Board, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1- day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- The trip proposal and draft letter to parents are submitted for approval no later than 12 weeks prior to the trip taking place, along with a detailed itinerary.
- The trip leader will need to submit proof of insurance and the certificate of compliancy from the company/venue.
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip.
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with students – this will include relevant DBS checks.

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school.
- The full address and contact details of the destination.
- Planned activities and options.
- Meal provision.
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions).
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what students must bring themselves.
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations.
- Accommodation options and arrangements.
- Names of staff attending.

During the visit:

Staff where possible will stay in communication with parents and /or the school regarding any updates. We will aim to communicate any updates to parents in a timely fashion via email / WhatsApp message /phone call.

As with any day trips, students will be responsible for their belongings. Though it will be at the trip leader's discretion on the safe keeping of students' items (e.g. phones / passports / money). This may also be the case to ensure the safely and smooth running of the trip. This will be communicated to students and parents in advance of the trip. Where possible, belongings will be kept in a locked safe or secure holder.

Room allocation on residential trips will aim to meet the students' preference (e.g. friendship groups), however, this may not always be possible. Same gender rooms will be mandatory. To also ensure the safety of students, staff may need to enter the bedroom of students. This will be to ensure the welfare of students or to provide clear messages regarding the visit. Students will not be permitted to be in other rooms and must follow the behaviour expectations of any visit.

During some visits, students will be allocated remote time where they will be independent and not closely supervised by staff. If remote supervision is to form part of the trip this must be identified on the notification form, the Senior Leader i/c trips will decide whether to authorise this depending on the planned activity, location and age of the students, their decision is final. Parents will be informed in the communication home if remote supervision is to take place at any point during the visit. Parents not wishing for this, will need to inform the trip leader in advance of the trip date.

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities hold the LOtC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance and foreign travel advice when organising these visits. For trips abroad, the Trip team is expected to obtain the students passport information at the initial planning stage.

Approval and review

Approved on 2nd October 2025by Trustees at The Academy Effectiveness Meeting.

Reviewed: September by D Stephens

Next review:

Signed: T Penfold N Armsby

Chair of the Trustees Principal

Date: 2/10/25