

Social Programme Policy

Aims of the Social Programme

1. To offer a varied social programme that will include activities that appeal to students from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.
2. To offer students an opportunity to participate in sporting/physical activities.
3. To offer students the opportunity to visit popular and interesting British destinations, providing the students with an insight into British culture and history.
4. To encourage students to interact with one another, and learn more about each other's cultures.
5. To provide opportunities to use their conversational English in a natural context.
6. To also provide extra opportunities outside of class time to practice speaking/ listening/ vocabulary skills.

Overview

This procedure applies to any after school activity or weekend excursion, either on or off site. Activities conducted away from the school may increase risks, and therefore the standard of care required must reflect the level of identified risks. It is the role of the Social Programme Organiser to identify any potential risks and take the necessary measures to reduce and manage these.

Procedure

A. Organisation and scheduling

Activities are organised year round, except during the two week Christmas break and on Bank Holidays. The type of activity and frequency with which activities are repeated is determined by demand, volume of students and popularity.

B. Cost of activities

The Social Programme is varied and the weekly calendar includes both free and charged events. Approximate prices are clearly advertised on the monthly calendar (due to changes in train prices etc.) and finalised prices are clearly advertised on the event posters.

C. Availability of activities

Activities are available to all students, unless otherwise stated (e.g. due to health concerns such as pregnancy etc.) with the exception of the Executive social activities that are arranged specifically for Executive students. Students on the 30+ course are able to attend both the General English and Executive social programmes. Some activities are capped due to a limited number of spaces which are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

D. Risk Assessment

Each activity is carefully risk assessed, and all risk assessments are filed away and reviewed every 12 months. Please see *Risk Assessment & Minimising Risk* for further information. If during or after the activity, additional risks are identified, they are recorded and considered for the risk assessment should this activity take place again.

E. Ratios

All activities within the Social Programme must be supervised by at least one member of staff. Please see the *Supervision Ratios* section for further information

F. Promotion & advertising

The activities/excursions are advertised via posters and sign-up sheets on the boards in the second floor students' room, in both lifts and on the fifth floor coffee lounge for the Executive students. On enrolment, students receive the monthly Social Programme calendar inside their starter packs, which includes an approximate cost for each activity. Further

information about the General social activities is available from the Social Programme Organiser in the Social Hub (second floor student's lounge), or with regards to the Executive programme from the Executive Social Programme organiser who can be found on the fifth floor coffee lounge during breaks.

General, Exams and Pre-sessional students are also reminded about the activities happening during the following week at the students leaving ceremony every Friday.

Information regarding activities and excursions can also be found on the LSI Portsmouth mobile app. The app includes a calendar along with a map highlighting the location/meeting point of each activity/excursion. Students are introduced to it during the morning of their first day and are encouraged to download it.

G. Feedback

Following an activity/excursion, leaders let the Social Programme Organiser know of any students who did not show or any extra students who attended. We aim to file away sign-up sheets following an activity/excursion and these are kept in the Social Programme Organiser's office. Activity leaders are encouraged to provide feedback for each activity, in order to help improve the social programme and the specific activity should it be repeated in the future. Students provide feedback either during a tutorial with their teacher, or on the Leavers' Questionnaire. An anonymous suggestion box is also situated in the second floor students' room and in reception, and is checked weekly.

Questionnaires are also handed out by the Social Programme Organiser in the second floor student's lounge during students' stay at LSI Portsmouth. Although this is not compulsory, the students are encouraged to complete it. The Social Programme Organiser then reads feedback and is able to make any necessary changes, should any be required.

H. Cancellation

Although we do our best to ensure all activities/excursions go ahead, due to certain reasons outside of our control, some may be cancelled. Please see the *Cancellation* section for further information.

Health and Safety

The Social Programme Organiser who leads the majority of weekend excursions, the teacher who organises the Social Programme for the Executive students and the teachers who lead the weekly football games are first-aid trained. They have all attended an approved course for 'Emergency First Aid at work' which is renewed every three years, and are able to provide basic first aid if an accident should occur. For every Saturday excursion, the leader will take a first aid kit, along with the pre-visit document pack to ensure the safety of students. For activities that take place on site, there is always a first aid kit situated in the school should it be required. For those which take place off-site, we aim to go to places which are required to have first aid kits (for example, cafes, restaurants, local tourist attractions).

When a non-first aid trained member of staff leads an excursion, we aim to go somewhere fairly low risk and based in a main town/city which is easily and quickly accessible by the emergency services.

The excursion leader's telephone number is always on the front of the excursion booklet which is given to students when they sign up. They are told that this is the emergency number to call/text if necessary.

The excursion leader also has a list of mobile telephone numbers for all students on every excursion. The list of names for students going on the weekend excursion is emailed to either the Director of

Operations prior to the excursion. Any changes on the day is then also emailed to them so they have an up-to-date list of who is on the excursion.

To ensure that leaders are appropriately trained, staff will not be permitted to lead any excursions without being the support leader on at least two excursions/activities beforehand. Once they have had this experience, they should be fit to be a leader. This is at the discretion of the Social Programme Organiser and the member of staff – if it is thought that they need further training, they will continue to be support leader until confident enough to be leader.

Supervision Ratios

All of our students are over 18 years old and ratios are set depending on the activity/excursion and the identified perceived risks involved.

A. Weekend Excursions

For the majority of excursions, the ratio is 1:12. In cases when the leader is not very experienced in leading excursions, it will be lowered to 1:10. This is at the Social Programme Organiser's discretion and varies for excursions.

B. Coach Travel

For excursions that involve coach travel, the minimum ratio is 1:1coach. This may increase to 2:1coach at the Social Programme Organiser's discretion, and is also dependent on the number of students on the trip.

C. Evening Activities

For activities such as bowling/cinema the ratio is 1:20, and for activities held within drinking establishments, the ratio is 1:15. For the Executive student activities the ratio is 1:10.

D. Sporting / Physical Activities

For all sporting activities, such as football and volleyball, the ratio is a minimum of 1:15. However, at the activity leader's discretion, this ratio may change, considering the risk involved in each individual activity.

These ratios are flexible and take into consideration the risks associated with the particular activity/excursion. In order to make the activity/excursion as enjoyable for students and as cost effective for the school, the ratios and numbers required for activities/excursions to go ahead are at the Social Programme Organiser's discretion.

Teachers are encouraged to lead activities that they have a specialist interest or knowledge in, and are given opportunities to be involved in the Social Programme.

Risk Assessment & Minimising Risk

Risk assessments for each activity/excursion are completed by the Social Programme Organiser prior to the activity/excursion taking place. These risk assessments identify **all risks** for each activity/excursion, and the control measures we need to put in place in order to minimise risk. The assigned leader (and support) of the activity must read through the specific risk assessment prior to the activity/excursion and sign to confirm that they have understood all risks and safety precautions, and the control measures we have put in place. Any queries should be directed to the Social Programme Organiser. Signatures can be found at the front of the risk assessment file, which is kept in the social office. This is kept for a minimum of twelve months.

If the activity/excursion leader does not have a lot of experience, they are able to take a copy of the questionnaire and use it on the activity/excursion as a guide. If the leader has a lot of experience, then this is not always necessary, however they are always given the option.

For weekend excursions, students must be briefed on potential risks, and how they can minimise these risks during the excursion. This information can be found in the trip information booklet which is uniquely prepared for each weekend excursion. The excursion information booklet which is given to all students attending the excursion contains information such as the itinerary, weather conditions, advice on clothing/footwear etc. along with the travel timetable and general information with regards to the destination. This booklet may also include additional information such as maps, or a contingency itinerary.

For weekend excursions, a list of names for all those on the excursion is sent to the Director of Operations– any changes, such as students not showing up on the day due to illness, are then also emailed to her on the Saturday morning.

Additional factors which arise during the trip may be added. These forms are reviewed by the Social-co-ordinators on a regular basis and the pre-risk assessments are updated accordingly. Risk assessments are formally reviewed annually, or when deemed necessary by the Social Programme Organiser.

Emergency Procedures

For every weekend excursion, leaders are given a pre-visit document pack. This includes:

- Names and phone numbers of everyone on the visit.
- Medical information for those with conditions or taking medication.
- The nearest A&E hospital name, address and phone number.
- The nearest defibrillator address.
- An itinerary (and route map when required).
- Emergency response page.

In the event of an incident or emergency, the excursion leader would take charge of the situation. Leaders/support leaders are given the LSI Portsmouth emergency telephone number in the Social Programme Handbook and are able to call this number if necessary (e.g. in the event of injury or major incident).

Late Students

On weekend excursions, we try our best to follow a protocol for students arriving late at the meeting point to return home or for leaving for the excursion. If students wish to stay at the location for longer/ overnight they must tell the activity leader beforehand or via the phone.

When meeting to leave for a weekend excursion in the morning, if a student is late the activity leader will try to contact them and find out how far away they are. If going by coach, the group will wait for up to 15 minutes for the student. If going by train, the wait will be determined by the train times – if trains are frequent (every fifteen minutes for example) the group will wait until the next train. If the train times are more than this, the group cannot wait for late students.

When arriving at a destination, or whilst the students are still on the coach, the activity leader will tell them what time they must return to the coach / meeting point.

- **When travelling by coach**

If any student fails to return to the coach, the activity leader will call their mobile number. If there is no response, the other students are asked if they know anything of their whereabouts. If a student is missing in an enclosed area such as castle grounds, the activity leader can make a quick search while the other students remain with the coach. If the visit is in a town/city, the activity leader should not attempt to find the student(s) but wait at the meeting point. The activity leader can wait up to forty-five minutes before starting the return journey home. If the student is contactable, the student will be given comprehensive information about alternative ways of getting home. This is determined by the student's level of English and is at the leader's discretion. If the leader feels this is necessary, then the support leader is able to stay behind and return home with the student.

- **When travelling by train**

If there are two or more activity leaders, one leader may stay behind and wait for the late student(s). This is at the activity leader's discretion, and is based upon certain factors, e.g. the student's level of English, whether or not they are contactable by phone, and how confident the leader is in the student's ability to get home alone. If no leader stays behind, the student must be told the times of the next available train.

Students are told about our policy with regards to lateness prior to the excursion, and asked to communicate with the leader with regards to delay or change of plan during the excursion, via the emergency contact telephone number given to them on the front of the excursion information booklet. Whilst the activity leader should do everything they can to make sure all the students return together, we cannot guarantee that someone can always wait behind for them.

If the leader of the excursion is unsure of what to do in a situation, they are able to contact the Social Programme Organiser who may offer assistance.

Cancellation

In some cases we may have to cancel activities/excursions. Although we do our best to avoid this, there are some cases which require cancellation. These include when we consider the students' safety to be at risk or when there are too few students to make the activity/excursion viable (or enjoyable).

When cancellation occurs, we offer alternatives where appropriate and make recommendations for other activities students can do without a leader. If required, students are given detailed information regarding travel, costs, things to do etc. so they are fully prepared to go somewhere without supervision.

In order to make an activity/excursion enjoyable for students and as cost effective for the school, we aim to have a minimum of five students for a weekend excursion. In terms of activities, the minimum number is variable and is to be decided by the Social Programme Organiser. For example, a cinema activity requires a minimum of three students, whereas an evening activity at a drinking establishment may require a minimum of eight students.

These numbers are variable at the Social Programme Organiser's discretion and are not fixed. Always refer to the Social Programme Organiser if you are unsure when scheduled to lead an activity.