



Preston Lodge

High School

Dear Parent/Carer

17 September 2020

Residential School Visits – Academic Year 2020/21

Due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding public health and travel, the council has made the difficult decision to cancel all residential school visits to the end of the current academic year. Whilst I know this will be very disappointing for pupils and parents, the safety of our pupils and staff is paramount in reaching this decision.

[The Scottish Government has issued guidance](#) to local authorities and schools regarding domestic and international residential visits. They continue to advise against schools undertaking visits due to heightened risks associated with pupils and adults from different families and households mixing and sharing facilities. For international visits there are concerns around changes at short notice due to the ever-evolving infection rates in other countries. This may mean pupils and staff could have to quarantine for 14 days on their return to the UK, or potentially have to remain in the destination abroad for longer than planned. These risks cannot be underestimated.

The council also feels duty bound to protect monies paid by families for school visits. The need to pay final balances of school visits many months before travel is due, coupled with the difficulty and cost of securing cancellation insurance, and the financial pressures many families are experiencing due to COVID-19 related employment issues, presents a significant risk.

Potential transmission on day trips is considered less of a risk than in a residential setting therefore school day excursions can still take place with rigorous planning and risk assessments in place.

I can confirm that any trip monies paid to date for any school visit this academic year will be fully refunded to you as soon as possible by the school office. Due to the high volume of refunds this may take a few weeks to complete but it is a priority for the school.

The situation will be kept under review and following Scottish Government guidance we hope to be able to offer our children and young people the opportunity to participate in residential school visits in the future, when it is safe to do so and there are adequate health and financial safeguards available.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Clark
Headteacher

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