



Letter to Families – Launch of INSITE project – December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to inform you about an opportunity that is being offered to the pupils in our school, through the Hong Kong Scotland Schools Improvement Partnership. This partnership spans over a decade and has most recently seen headteachers and other leaders from Hong Kong visit Edinburgh in November 2023 as part of a professional knowledge exchange programme.

Part of this partnership is to support our pupils as part of a wider Learning for Sustainability project, to potentially visit our partner school, along with 6 other Edinburgh schools in October 2025. Ahead of any potential visit, pupils will engage in a 7-month project relating to Learning for Sustainability. The aim being that the project culminates with pupils considering their project in relation to their partner school as part of the visit.

Each of the partner schools have 4 places to access the **International Network for Sustainability, Intercultural and Transformational Experiences (INSITE)** Project and St Augustine's RC High School will be opening applications up to the current S4 (who will go in the October of their S5). Those who wish to be considered must complete a very basic application form, after which a randomised draw will take place and from this the four places will be filled. This will be made available to all S4 through the morning Sway in registration. If they require support to complete it, I will be available and can provide this. Whilst the form is accessed in registration, the form is filled in at a time and place of a pupils choosing.

### Summary headlines of the project and provisional trip to Hong Kong

It is stated above that there is a 'provisional' trip to Hong Kong included as a key aspect of the INSITE project. All overseas trips require approval from the Overseas Trips Panel and our application will be submitted before the new year, but we can't wait to start the selection process until then. As such we are moving forward in the hope that the application will be accepted, but there are no guarantees.

- Pupils who are randomly selected will undertake a project linked to Learning for Sustainability between February and October 2025.
- During this time, pupils will work independently on their project. Support will be available from other pupils in the partnership and school staff.
- Part of the project requires pupils to attend nine Friday afternoon in-person sessions where they will network with the other pupils from Edinburgh Schools who are part of the partnership. This includes a range of pupils from S3-S5 and will be at a central location.
- Staff accompanying the trip might not be from St Augustine's RC High School. As part of the partnership there is a rota of staff from the across the seven Edinburgh Schools who will accompany the group of circa 30 pupils. The staff will be well known by pupils by the time of the trip through the in-person contact days.



- The cost of the trip to Hong Kong is expected to be circa £1150 and the provisional dates are 8-15 October 2025. This includes the first half of the October holiday. The cost includes all transport, accommodation and food costs (not inc. food during travel days to and from the UK).
- Pupils must have a passport that does not expire within a year of the return date of the trip.
- Places are non-refundable.
- A £250 deposit is required to be paid by Friday 28 February 2025. It is likely that the full balance will be required no later than 8 weeks before the departure date.
- As with trips and wider experiences, financial aid can be requested through the school. This wouldn't be done unless your child's place was confirmed.
- There is an expectation that pupils conduct their own fund raising to help reduce the cost of the trip – supporting documentation can be provided by the school.
- On returning from Hong Kong the pupil group will be involved in a knowledge exchange where they will present the findings of their project to local stakeholders including education officers, community schools and groups of pupils in school.
- The final stage of the project is moving into a mentoring role to support the cohort that comes after them, providing 1:1 support to a peer as they go through the same process.

### Next Steps

The application form will be available through the morning Sway in registration from Tuesday 10 December. Pupils will scan a QR code, which will take them to a very simple form that is to be completed before 3.30pm, Sunday 12 January.

The randomised draw will take place between 13-23 January, with pupils finding out the result of the selection during this time.

### Limited space

Due to this opportunity coming through a citywide opportunity places are limited (4 per school), however we have a chance for some pupils to access this excellent opportunity and I have taken the decision to afford that, rather than remove us completely from the partnership. The application form is found through this [LINK](#) and the poster which helps understand the themes of Learning for Sustainability can be found through this [LINK](#).

Kind regards,

Robert McLauchlan  
Depute Head Teacher

