



The Crossley Heath School

Head Teacher: Mr Dean Jones MA

The Crossley Heath School, Savile Park, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 0HG
Tel: 01422 360272 • e-mail: admin@crossleyheath.org.uk

December 2024

Mandarin Excellence Programme - Study Visit to China 2025

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to you as your son/daughter participates in the Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP) and we have just received confirmation that the Department for Education has agreed to support the intensive study in China trip for summer 2025. With the change of government there has been some delay in getting confirmation and as such we can only provide outline details at this stage.

The intensive study in China trip is a fantastic opportunity which will enable students to put their skills into practice in 'real life' contexts as well as experiencing Chinese culture for themselves. Students will spend time at a Chinese university, having immersive Chinese lessons each day as well as spending time on cultural activities and visits.

Brief Introduction

The trip is organised by the British Council who liaise with their Chinese counterparts (CLEC) to ensure that over seventy English schools on the MEP can participate. This is a very complex process involving the coordination across multiple airlines and different host institutions of places for over 1800 students and their teachers. Therefore, the exact dates and location of the visit are yet to be confirmed but the British Council have stated that:

- **When** – Between 29 June and 18 July (likely to be up to 12-13 days away from home including 3-4 travel days [9 whole days in China]).
- **Arrival** - Students and teachers would need to arrive between 30 June and 9 July. Therefore, leaving the UK between 29 June and 8 July, depending on flight times and availability.
- **Duration** – students will have at least seven full learning days (morning classes and afternoon/evening activities on weekdays) plus one weekend.
- **Departure from China** - Students and teachers depart between 11th and 19th July, depending on their arrival date.

*Please note: The information above is an example and there may need to be some flexibility with days with travel dates depending on flight availability.

The visit to China is not a holiday programme but rather involves the intensive study of Chinese Language and culture. Participating students should be prepared to study for the set 35 teaching hours. As such, only students who will be taking Chinese for GCSE will be allowed to participate.

Costs of the Trip

We await confirmation on the details but given the prestigious status of the MEP the cost of the visit is expected to be heavily subsidised as in the past, with the Chinese government covering the costs of food, accommodation, tuition and any excursions and activities in China, and a UK subsidy to help towards the cost of flights and visas. We cannot at this time give an exact cost for the trip but we expect it to be in the region of £850. We will of course write to you with further details and exact costings once these are known but we understand that despite the subsidies this is still a significant amount and we wanted to give families as much notice as possible so that you can plan your finances.

Validity of Passport

Every student going on the study visit will require a passport **that is valid for 6 months after their return date from China. We return on approximately 19th July 2025, so your child's passport would need to be valid until late January 2026.** At this early stage, may I suggest that you check your child's passport or apply for a passport if your child does not already have one. Further information relating to passports can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/china/entry-requirements>

Visa Application

I would also like to give you advance notice that due the requirement that all visitors to China have a visa, we will have to undertake a visa application process, which normally commences straight after the Easter break. Please be aware that it is likely that as part of this process the visa processing centre will require your child's (and in some cases also the parents') passports, potentially over the course of a number weeks, and we would ask that you be mindful of this when booking any travel which require a passport in the period between Easter and late July.

In some cases it may be a requirement to submit an original birth certificate or other evidence proving legal guardianship.

If the child or parent(s)/guardian(s) have a passport that is not from the UK or EU, there may be other evidence requirements. A birth certificate in a language other than English may require translation and notarization from the home Embassy which can take up to 2 months.

Any student with dual nationality (including British nationality) must apply from the UK with a valid UK passport and not their non-UK passport.

We will of course write to you again once we have further details about the trip and we will be organising a parent meeting in due course. If, however you have any questions in the meantime, please get in touch with us at the school.

Please would you confirm that your son/daughter will take part in this trip. Please return it to Mrs Kneebone at school before Friday 10 January. Once we have these return slips, we will submit this information to our partners at MEP.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Brownlie, Associate Headteacher

Teng Hua Kneebone, Department Leader for Chinese

I would like my child to join the Crossley Heath School Mandarin Excellence Programme visit to China in July 2025.

STUDENT'S FULL NAME:

Surname: _____

Given Name: _____

Parent / Carer signature: _____

Date: _____