Key Stage 4 Lesson Plan

Based on a visit to Highbury Hall & Park,
with a focus on Joseph Chamberlain,
Victorian politics, and social reform in Birmingham.
The lesson is structured to support curriculum links in History, Citizenship, and PSHE.

Highbury Hall & Park

Lesson Plan:
Leadership & Reform – Joseph Chamberlain and Victorian Birmingham

Key Stage 4 | Subject Links: History, Citizenship, PSHE
Duration: 2–3 hours (on-site visit) + pre/post-visit activities

Learning Objectives
By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the political and social context of Victorian Birmingham.
- Explain Joseph Chamberlain's role in transforming the city through local government reform.
- Evaluate the impact of civic leadership on public health, housing, and education.
- Connect local history to national social change and reform movements.
- Reflect on how political action can create lasting community impact.

Curriculum Links
History: 19th-century British social and political history; Industrial Revolution
Citizenship: Democracy and government; Local and national leadership
PSHE: Social responsibility, leadership, and civic engagement

Pre-Visit Activities (Classroom)
1. Introduction to Victorian Birmingham (30 mins)
   Map comparison: Birmingham c.1850 vs today
   Key issues: sanitation, housing, working conditions
   Group discussion: What might a city need to grow fairly?
2. Who was Joseph Chamberlain? (30 mins)
   Short biography video or reading
   Timeline activity: major reforms and local government roles

Introduce key vocabulary: reform, civic pride, sanitation, municipal.

On-Site Visit: Highbury Hall & Park (2–3 hours)

Part 1: Highbury Hall Tour (45 mins)

Explore Chamberlain's former home
Guided discussion: What do the rooms and design tell us about Victorian values and status?
Focus: Chamberlain's family life, hosting political guests, role in public service

Part 2: Interactive History Walk in Highbury Park (45 mins)

Park as a legacy of Chamberlain's belief in public green spaces
Activity: Observe and record evidence of Victorian values in park design
Link: health, nature, and wellbeing in urban reform

Part 3: Workshop / Debate Session (45 mins)

Topic: "Was Joseph Chamberlain a hero of the people or a man of power?"
Use source material (quotes, newspaper articles, images)
Group presentations and reflection

Post-Visit Activities (Classroom)

1. Reflective Writing Task
   Prompt: "How did Joseph Chamberlain shape the lives of ordinary people in Birmingham?"
   Encourage structured writing using PEEL (Point, Evidence, Explain, Link)
2. Local History Project
   Research another reformer or movement in Birmingham's history
   Create posters, short essays, or digital presentations

Resources Needed

- Timeline and vocabulary sheets
- Access to historical maps and documents (physical or digital)
- Guided tour and workshop materials at Highbury Hall
- Note-taking tools or worksheets for observation in the park

Assessment Opportunities

- Participation in debate/workshop
- Quality of reflective writing and project work
- Verbal contributions during site visit and class discussions

Plan your trip and download resources
www.highburyhallandpark.co.uk

Highbury Hall & Park