



23rd March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

COVID-19 (coronavirus) – Impact on school trips, visits and events

Thank you for your patience whilst we have been working our way through the health & safety and financial implications of the current situation on the many trips, visits and other school events planned for the months ahead. Thank you, too, for respecting our request not to contact school for further details, to enable us to gather this information and take the appropriate action as quickly as possible. We can now confirm the following:

Residential trips (2019/2020)

We have spent much time over the past ten days exploring how best to approach the large number of foreign visits and UK-based residential trips which were scheduled to take place in coming months. The situation is extremely complicated as different cancellation policies apply to different providers / venues / tour companies / airlines etc. In particular, we have been very aware of the danger of invalidating a future insurance claim if we cancel, too early, a trip which is due to take place on a date which is not *currently* covered by government advice not to travel, thereby potentially preventing parents/carers from obtaining a refund.

We are now in a position to confirm that **all international and UK-based residential trips** planned for **the rest of this school year** have been cancelled, given that we have now received confirmation that all of these trips will be covered by our insurance. We therefore expect to be able to provide a full refund to parents/carers of all sums paid. This applies to the following trips:

- Year 8 Rugby Trip to Rosslyn Park (22nd – 23rd March 2020)
- Year 9/10 Sports Tour to South Africa (7th – 18th April 2020)
- Year 8 Outdoor Activities Trip to Kingswood Dearne Valley (24th – 26th April 2020)
- Year 9 History Trip to the Battlefields (21st – 24th May 2020)
- Year 8 German Trip to Cologne (6th – 9th June 2020)
- Year 7 French Trip to the Opal Coast (19th – 22nd June 2020)
- Year 7 Spanish Trip to Barcelona (A) (19th – 22nd June 2020)
- Year 10/11 Holocaust Education Trip to Poland (24th – 28th June 2020)
- Year 7 Spanish Trip to Barcelona (B) (26th – 29th June 2020)
- Music Tour to London (11th – 13th July 2020)

Please do not make any further payments for any of these trips.

We now have to work through a very lengthy process which involves:

1. Contacting each travel company, tour operator, venue, activity provider etc for all of these trips, one by one, to ascertain how much money we can recover from them directly (as required by our insurers).
2. Obtaining a response from each of these companies to evidence that we have done this.
3. Submitting an insurance claim for all costs which we have not been able to recover through step 1 above.
4. Obtaining bank details and processing refunds to the parents/carers of over 500 students.

In short, this is obviously going to be a very lengthy process! I would ask for your patience whilst we work to obtain refunds on your behalf, and, once again, respectfully request that you do NOT contact school (including the Finance Office) to ask for further details at this stage.

Residential trips (2020/2021)

We very much hope that those trips planned for the next school year will be able to take place as planned. Please continue to make monthly payments (preferably online) for the following trips, to ensure that your child's place on the trip continues to be secured:

- GCSE (current Year 9/10) Spanish Trip to Cordoba (October 2020)
- GCSE (current Year 10) Geography Trip to Iceland (February 2021)
- Ski Trip to Sunday River (April 2021)
- Volunteering Expedition to Ghana (July 2021) (*payments to Venture Force*)

DofE Award Scheme

All DofE expeditions scheduled **between now and the end of the summer term** have been postponed to a later date (exact dates to be confirmed). This relates to all expeditions for Bronze, Silver and Gold levels of the Award, and includes those which were due to be delivered by our Approved Activity Provider partner, Lupine Adventures, over the Easter and May half-term holidays for Year 9 students. In addition, the Year 9 Bronze assessed expeditions scheduled to take place over the summer holidays are "on hold" at this time. Mrs Ellis will contact those parents/carers concerned directly when we are in a position to look at re-scheduling expeditions.

By making this decision now, we have been able to avoid any financial loss to parents/carers. Although the *expedition* element of the Award is currently suspended, students continue to be enrolled in the DofE scheme at the appropriate level and, in some cases, may be able to continue working towards some of the other sections of the Award (where safe / appropriate to do so). Mrs Ellis will contact all participants directly in due course with further details.

Day trips / other events

The following other trips / events are now cancelled:

- Year 12 Maths Fest (24th March 2020). *Parents/carers will be contacted regarding refunds.*
- Bands' Night (3rd April 2020). *Details regarding ticket refunds will follow at a later date.*
- Senior Concert – Otley Parish Church (28th April 2020).
- Senior Rugby Dinner (30th April 2020). *Payments will be refunded via online banking.*
- Year 11 Prom (30th June 2020). *Payments will be refunded – details will follow.*

The Year 13 Prom (26th June 2020), which is organised by the Senior Students, is currently postponed. Senior Students are exploring alternative dates and will provide further information once available.

The following trips are "on hold" at this time. Refunds of voluntary contributions will not be made as these trips are compulsory curriculum activities which will have to be re-scheduled for alternative dates, if they are unable to go ahead as planned:

- Year 12 Geography field trip to Scarborough (10th June 2020)
- Year 10 Geography field trips to Hornsea (16th / 17th June 2020)

All other school events scheduled for between now and the Easter holidays have been cancelled or postponed, as advised previously. All other school events (not listed above) due to take place after Easter are currently "on hold", as we await information about the duration of the current school closure.

Finally, although I know that students and staff will be extremely disappointed where we have had to cancel activities, we are relieved that we will, in time, be able to reimburse parents/carers. I am grateful to those members of staff who have spent so much time planning and organising these opportunities for our students, and to our colleagues in the Finance Team who are working hard to organise refunds.

Yours faithfully



Mr C Lillington
Assistant Headteacher: Learning Community