



6<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### **GCSE Geography Trip to Iceland (February 2021) - UPDATE**

I am writing to inform you of the current situation regarding the GCSE Geography Trip to Iceland, which is scheduled to take place next February. As you know, the Government is still advising against all overseas travel for an indefinite period, and there is currently no indication as to when this advice will be lifted, or what future restrictions may be imposed on international travel in general and school trips in particular.

Although we would very much like to proceed with this visit (if it is safe to do so and restrictions have been lifted), the situation for this particular trip is complicated by the fact that we had made a *provisional* booking with the tour company concerned, but had not (and still have not) actually confirmed that booking by paying the non-refundable deposit to the tour company. This is usual practice for this trip, as we always deliberately spread the cost of the tour company's initial deposit over three monthly payments, to make the trip more accessible to parents.

The good news is that this means we have not yet made any payment to the tour company, and so all monies are refundable, if we decide not to proceed with the trip. However, on this occasion, this approach also has the disadvantage that we are currently unable to make a confirmed booking with the tour company as our insurers have informed us that we should not make any **new** bookings for 2020/2021 at this time. In other words, if we were to proceed with making a payment to the tour company to secure the booking now, our insurance could be invalidated and all monies lost, if the trip were subsequently unable to proceed next February.

For this reason, unfortunately we are unable to make a confirmed booking at this stage. We realise that this will be disappointing for students, and therefore we are proposing the following two options:

- 1) Parents/carers can decide to withdraw their child from the trip with immediate effect. If you wish to do this, please email [finance@princehenrys.co.uk](mailto:finance@princehenrys.co.uk) by **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020**, putting "Iceland cancellation" in the subject line and including your child's name and your bank details in the email. The Finance Office will then process your request for a refund. (Please be aware that this may take some time, as the Finance team is also extremely busy processing insurance claims for over 500 students whose trips were due to take place this term).
- 2) Parents/carers can decide to retain their child's place on the trip at this time, on the understanding that we will make a booking for the trip (for Feb 2021) as soon as the current restrictions are lifted and we are happy that it is safe to proceed. If choosing this option, we would encourage you to continue to follow the monthly payment schedule to help with your own budgeting, and so that we are able to act quickly and confirm the booking, when possible. However, please be assured that we will not hand your money over to the tour company to confirm the booking until we receive confirmation that the insurance restrictions have been lifted. Please be aware that any subsequent booking would be subject to:
  - Sufficient numbers of students choosing this option, to ensure that the trip is still viable;
  - Availability of flights/accommodation at the time of booking;
  - Our ability to run the trip safely in accordance with any future restrictions in place;
  - Restrictions being lifted early enough to allow for our usual planning protocols to be followed.

Although I am sorry that this trip (like so many things at the moment) is currently “on hold”, I hope you will agree that this approach provides maximum flexibility whilst also minimising the financial risk to parents/carers.

Yours faithfully

Mrs N Edney  
Faculty Leader: Humanities