



14<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Dear Parents / Carers

**Year 9 History Trip to the First World War Battlefields: Somme and Ypres  
(Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2027)**

*'Unforgettable and truly inspiring.'*

*'Moving, enjoyable, never nothing to do.'*

*'A breathtaking experience of something so horrific, yet so important and memorable.'*

(Comments made by students about previous Battlefields trips)

I would like to draw your attention to the proposed Year 9 trip to the French and Belgian First World War Battlefields, departing from school late at night on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2027, and travelling by coach and ferry to Calais, returning in the late evening of Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2027.

Overnight travel will be on a spacious executive coach and will allow students to make maximum use of the first day of their trip, visiting Vimy Ridge and Wellington Quarry, a museum dedicated to showing the complicated network of underground tunnels built by British and Commonwealth troops during the war. Students will then travel to their first accommodation venue in Albert, where they will spend their first night.

The next day students will have a tour of some of the most famous sites on the Somme battlefield, including Thiepval, the Newfoundland Memorial and the Sheffield Memorial Park. Later in the day students will visit the Museum of the Great War in Peronne before heading to their next accommodation venue in Ypres for two nights. On Saturday, students will have an opportunity to experience a guided tour of the Ypres Salient, Lijssenthoek Clearing Station and the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917. In the evening, students will attend the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres. Finally, on Sunday, there will be a visit to Ypres town centre and an opportunity to visit a chocolate shop.

This is a great opportunity for students to gain first-hand experience of the British sector of the First World War battlefields, and this visit will supplement the work which they will complete in class. In our experience, students find a visit to the battlefields deeply moving. Expert guides will accompany us on parts of the tour to ensure that students are provided with the best possible experience.

A considerable proportion, although by no means all, of the visit will centre around cemeteries and commemorative monuments and it is appropriate to emphasise from the outset that every member of the group must conduct themselves in a manner sensitive to those visiting family graves, and appropriate to the sobriety of the environment. Any commitment to take up a place on the trip must be given with this in mind.

The cost of the trip will be **£520**. This will include all travel to and from school and throughout the trip, full-board accommodation, full insurance cover and all excursions and entrance fees. It does not include breakfast and lunch on the first day or an evening meal on the last day.

Please note that students will **require their own passport** for this trip. This must be valid until at least 14<sup>th</sup> September 2027 to meet entry requirements. (If your child is not a UK national, please also check any visa requirements before applying for a place).

For this particular trip, the school may be able to provide a subsidy to students who are currently in receipt of **targeted** free school meals (i.e. with an annual household earned income of £7,400 or less), provided that they aren't receiving a subsidy for another residential trip this school year. Please see the end of this letter\* for details of recent changes to FSM eligibility. If eligible, please contact the Finance Office as soon as possible to request a subsidy.

The school party insurance is comprehensive and covers personal accident, medical treatment, loss or damage to personal effects, cancellation due to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, and other standard risks. A copy of the policy will be made available at a later date to parents of students participating in the trip.

If you wish to apply for a place for your child, please complete the electronic consent form on Scopay and pay an initial **deposit of £100** (also on Scopay) by **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2026**. If this short deadline causes particular problems, please contact me directly as soon as possible. If you are unable to use the online payment system, please contact the Finance Office.

Further payments (using Scopay) are then required as follows:

|                                |     |                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|
| 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2026  | £65 | 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2027 | £65 |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2026 | £65 | 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2027    | £65 |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> December 2026 | £65 | 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2027    | £30 |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2027  | £65 |                                |     |

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Please read carefully before applying for a place for your child**

- In the event that demand for this trip exceeds the number of places available, names will be "drawn out of a hat" in friendship groups. Therefore, payment of the deposit must not be taken as a guarantee of a place. Students will be informed as soon as possible whether or not they have a place, and deposits will be returned, where appropriate. We have operated this system for many years and believe it to be the fairest way of allocating places. **Please do not apply for a place for your child if you are not happy with this.**
- In recent years, we have had an increasing number of students who enroll on a school trip but then later decide that they no longer wish to take part. May I stress that, should your child take up a place on this trip, this will be taken as a firm commitment. **In the event of a student withdrawing from the trip (or leaving the school before the trip departs), a refund of monies already paid can normally only be given if cancellation is covered by the terms of the insurance.**
- Payments must be made on time in accordance with the schedule above to avoid your child's place on the trip being put at risk.
- For Health and Safety reasons, students who have, or later develop, a record of poor behaviour in school may not be permitted to participate in this trip.

There will, of course, be a meeting for all parents and students concerned shortly before the trip departs next year. In the meantime, if you have any immediate questions regarding the visit, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours faithfully

Mr P. Low  
Area Leader: History & Politics

#### **\*Recent changes to free school meals eligibility**

Subsidies for school trips and other activities are only available to students in receipt of "**targeted free school meals**", where the annual household earned income is £7,400 or less.

Unfortunately, the school is unable to provide a subsidy for students who receive free school meals under the recently introduced "**expanded free school meals**" programme for all families in receipt of Universal Credit with an annual household earned income of more than £7,400. This is because we do not receive any additional funding for these students (beyond the cost of a daily meal).