

26 September 2021

Dear Parents

YEAR 9 FRENCH / HISTORY TRIP 2022 - FRANCE AND BELGIUM / WORLD WAR 1

After two years off because of COVID, we are hoping to once again be able to take Year 9 pupils to Northern France for a short stay in 2022. We will be leaving early morning **Friday 17th June** and returning early evening **Monday 20th June**.

This year we are going to be staying in The Château d'Eblinghem near St Omer in Northern France. We will be travelling with the well-established company NST.

The trip will be extremely beneficial for all boys, giving them an opportunity to experience French food and culture at first hand, to improve their spoken French and to look at some of the history of the area with particular reference to World War 1, an important part of the Year 9 curriculum and highly supportive of their study of Weimar-Nazi Germany in the GCSE History specification. This is also a wonderful trip for personal development and character building. All pupils will be expected to take a full part in the History / French fieldwork.

The provisional programme for the four days is:

- Friday: Travel to the château via Notre Dame de Lorette (trenches, memorial, museum) or Vimy (trenches, museum, monument).
- Saturday: French day. In the morning we will visit Arras market and, in the afternoon, boys will take part in French activities back at the château.
- Sunday: Visit the Somme (Beaumont Hamel, the trenches, Thiepval monument, Lochnagar Crater, Ulster Tower, British and German cemeteries).
- Monday: Remembrance Ceremony at grave of VC winner and RGS old boy Frederick Youens (Belgium), followed by visits to Ypres and other WW1 sites in Belgium.

The cost of the trip will be £370. This covers ALL transport High Wycombe - France - High Wycombe, full board and lodging in France (from evening meal on Friday to packed lunch on Monday), ALL excursions and entry fees within the four days and travel insurance.

If you would like your son to go on this trip, please log onto ParentPay, look up **French History 2022**, and pay the initial deposit of £50 by **Monday 11th October**. There are 105 spaces available which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Please be aware that places have traditionally sold out long before the deadline. If you are unable to pay online, please contact the Finance Office to pay by an alternative method. If you are unable to secure a place, please email me immediately to be added to the

reserve list. We appreciate that some boys will be disappointed but we are unable to take more than 105 due to other bookings at the Château.

We would not like anyone to be prevented from going on this trip for purely financial reasons. If you are in this situation, please contact me in confidence immediately as help may be available.

The deposit will be sent to *NST* before half term to secure a discounted booking. Please note that the School cannot be held liable for the refund of any payments made in good faith to travel companies on your behalf. The final balance will be due in February. Once we have made payments to *NST* we will be unable to make any refunds, unless we can find a replacement.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THESE PLANS MAY BE SUBJECT TO SHORT NOTICE CHANGES OR CANCELLATION DUE TO UPDATES IN COVID GUIDANCE OR ISOLATION PROCEDURES. Although not expected, in the event of any changes or cancellation the School, to the best of our ability, will look to reschedule or recover any costs committed. Many companies now have COVID guarantees in place and the School has undertaken due diligence checks. However, there always remains the possibility that some of the funding is unrecoverable and parents/guardians understand this when signing students up.

At this stage we do not know what the COVID travel procedures will be. However, we feel it is important to make you aware that there might be additional requirements which would incur an extra cost. Additional paperwork may be required, but this would be facilitated by the School. Please also note that travel restrictions may require students being vaccinated in order to travel.

Please ensure your son has a full valid passport as you will need to submit his passport number to us in advance of the trip. If he requires a visa for entry into France please contact me as I can organise a visa waiver for boys travelling with a school group.

If you have any queries, please contact me – rls@rgshw.com

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Smith

KS3 French Coordinator / Trip Leader