

3rd October 2017
IW/SR

Dear Parent/Carer

BATTLEFIELDS FIELDWORK VISIT OF THE GREAT WAR - 2018

Many of the current S1 pupils have expressed a keen interest to me in visiting the battlefields of the First World War. I am sure that you are aware that 2014 marked the start of a series of 100th anniversaries connected with the First World War. The year 2018 will mark the final anniversary of the Great War and this will be the last opportunity to visit the battlefields at this very special time which marked a turning point in world history.

The visit has always been very popular. We would visit the Somme, Vimy Ridge and the Ypres Salient where pupils have participated in the famous act of remembrance at the Menin Gate laying a wreath on behalf of the former pupils of Breadalbane Academy who died in the First World War. There would also be an opportunity to visit the war grave or memorial of a relative if this is within reach of the itinerary. Often pupils from the school have been the first family member to do so – an experience even more poignant at such a significant time. The First World War battlefields are largely located in very rural areas away from capital cities and other prominent urban areas.

The visit would mainly interest the current S1 pupils and is scheduled for the November 2018 – I am currently waiting for the exact date, but expect it to be close to the second week of November. This also gives parents the opportunity to spread the cost of the visit and hopefully makes it more affordable to a wider number of parents. The total cost that I have been quoted is £460.00 based on 30 pupils and is only a small increase on previous years. The visit would run from Sunday afternoon to the following Saturday morning, so pupils will get a full 5 days in France and Belgium. As soon as I can get a deposit off to the coach company, the hotel can be secured. As you can imagine, there is a lot of interest in the battlefields amongst schools at the moment – so there is competition for hotel accommodation – particularly with the approach of this final anniversary year.

Securing the hotel is of key importance and I am therefore asking you for a deposit of £65.00 payable as soon as possible, but no later than the 30th Nov. If we do not achieve the minimum number, the deposit will be returned. Once the visit has been booked, it becomes non-returnable.

PARENTS AND PUPILS NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION:-

1. This is an academic visit in school time and work will be set and checked during the visit – it is not a holiday. Most pupils really enjoy the visit and get a lot out of it. It has proved a useful topic for discussion at college and university interviews in the future. It can also contribute to the Added Value Topic for National 4 and 5 written by all History pupils.
2. Travel Company – Reays of Egremont, Cumbria, has been used successfully between 2014 and 2017 by the school and previously as a feeder coach.
3. Date: To be confirmed, I have asked for the 4th Nov. - 10th Nov. 2018 - Commencing on Sunday afternoon 4th Nov and returning the morning of Saturday 10th November, 2018, i.e.5 full days [4 nights], plus 2 travelling days.
4. Price - £460, based on 30 pupils. This includes travel from school, hotel, food and admission fees. It does not include a passport. Insurance – this is a fully comprehensive insurance policy through Perth and Kinross Council.
5. Location – the Hotel Munchenhof, Langemark, Belgium. This is a typical schools hotel. However, all of the rooms have private facilities and the site is as secure as it can be at night. Langemark is a quiet village.
6. Payments – after the initial deposit of £65.00, payments are made about every 8 - 10 weeks. The final payment must be with Reays Coaches 8 weeks prior to departure. Payments are made if possible via Parent Pay
7. All pupils will be expected to sign an undertaking of good behaviour and will be withdrawn from the visit if they act in a way prior to the visit that would jeopardise the safety of others, or the success of the visit. In this event, payments will only be returned if a replacement can be found. The consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and illegal substances, etc. will not be tolerated on the visit. Pupils will not be allowed out of the hotel at night, unless accompanied by a member of staff.
8. A small amount of shopping time will be scheduled where pupils may shop in small unaccompanied groups, probably in Ypres. This will depend on parental agreement given at the pupil/parent briefing held about 4 weeks prior to the visit.
9. Cancellation – once booked, any pupil who drops out, unless a suitable replacement can be found, could incur financial loss. This could be more than the deposit if it is within 2 months of departure.
10. Please return your deposit and the consent form by the 30th November 2017.
11. If there is insufficient support, your deposit will be returned.

If you would like your son/daughter to participate, please return the Parental Consent Form attached together with a deposit of £65.00 made payable to Breadalbane Academy preferably by Parent Pay – this is a non-returnable deposit after the booking has been made. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours faithfully

Miss I Wilde
Principal Teacher of History