



TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL

NORWICH'S FINEST PREP SCHOOL • FOR GIRLS & BOYS • 3-13 YEARS

HUMANITIES TRIP 2019 Monday 25th March – Friday 29th March 2019

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Dear Parents

Contained in this letter is a vast amount of vital and useful information. Please forgive the business-like tone but, as I am sure you will appreciate, I must be rather succinct when imparting information for a trip of this nature.

I will be holding a meeting in the Read Hall at 4.15pm on Thursday 7th March – I *strongly* urge all parents and their children to attend this meeting.

Following the meeting I will be available in my classroom for any confidential conversations parents may wish to have with me. Should you have any queries, but cannot make this date, please contact me at school ASAP.

During the course of this letter I will outline the major issues that arise from the Humanities Trip. I have organised the information in bullet points in order to provide greater clarity.

Travel & Accommodation

We travel by coach via the Channel Tunnel.

From Monday 25th March – Friday 29th March we are staying at:

Château du Baffy
Colombiers-sur-Seulles
14480 – Creully

Staff accommodation is interspersed amongst the children's rooms.

- I shall be in touch with school on a daily basis. The school will be able to contact me on my mobile phone.
- We will also be taking a school mobile phone to allow contact in an emergency.

Departure and Return

It is important that we leave **no later** than **6:30am** from Town Close (Ipswich Road **not** Newmarket Road)

Please park on Ipswich Road, on the school drive or in the staff car park.

Please make sure your child is at school by 6:00am on Monday 25th March

We aim to be back at school between **4:30pm and 5:00pm on Friday 29th March (subject, of course, to any possible travel disruption)**. We will keep in touch with school with regular travel updates on our homeward journey.

We will provide a 'continental breakfast' and drink for your child, but could you please supply a packed lunch and a drink (1. I would be extremely grateful if no fizzy drinks/energy drinks are included – 2. please be aware we will be disposing of all packing, so no lunch boxes – 3. please do not pack their packed lunches in their luggage, as this never ends well!).

Passports and EHIC

As per my previous letters, all children require their own passport and EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). Please check that the expiry dates of both these items do not coincide with the trip. **Based upon an article I read recently it appears that many EHICs expired in 2018 so please check.** Application forms for an EHIC are available from all Post Offices or they can be ordered on line. However, do be aware that they can take some time to be processed so if your child does not have one I suggest an application is made immediately.

Whilst understanding that many families have private health insurance I know from experience that a valid EHIC is **vital** in order to receive initial health care in France and is obligatory in the case of hospitalisation.

N.B. No child will be allowed to travel without a valid EHIC or passport. Please would you be kind enough to hand in your child's passport and EHIC in a sealed, named envelope to Mrs Henton or Mrs Rice, in the Prep Department Office, for safekeeping by **Friday 15th March at the latest.**

Luggage, Clothing, Footwear and Personal Hygiene

Luggage – Please make sure that your child's luggage is clearly labelled with a large label. 50 or so bags all look rather similar to the children when it comes to claiming them upon arrival at our destination.

We are travelling on a 64 seat coach. The total number of staff and children travelling is 62. Available space on the coach and in its luggage compartment will be at an absolute premium. Please can I implore you to be sensible regarding the size/ weight of your child's bag – we simply will not be able to take large suitcases – **A 'squashy' sports type bag is much more practical than a suitcase e.g. a Town Close games bags would be about right.** Additionally, your child will have to carry their bag to and from their bedrooms, which will be up and down flights of stairs.

Clothes – an area for common sense in which the following factors ought to be taken into consideration.

Weather – A warm jacket/coat and a waterproof jacket with a hood (school one is fine) are a must. A warm hat and gloves are also recommended. We spend most of our time outside and I have lost count of the number of children who have, over the years, said they are cold simply because they are not wearing enough layers. To quote Alfred Wainwright – "There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing"!

Trainers – During the course of the week we do a great deal of walking as well as scrambling up banks, going into bunkers and gun defences, walking along beaches etc. as such, I would go as far as saying they are **vitaly important** on the trip. **I strongly suggest your child has 2 pairs with them (or a pair of trainers and a pair of walking boots).** Trainers to be worn on the day of departure. NO OTHER FOOTWEAR IS REQUIRED.

General Clothing – An appropriate number of trousers/tracksuit bottoms (these may get damp, given the type of sites included in the trip so please bear this in mind), tops, sweatshirts, hoodies, t-shirts, socks, vests and pants/ knickers etc for a week.

Onesies or pyjama bottoms – Please do not wear them on our day of travel! A few such items appeared on the day of departure last year and, although I am sure they are extremely comfortable to travel in, they are simply not appropriate on the trip – other than to sleep in.

Please note - skirts are not practical for this trip.

Please include a **bag for dirty washing**. This will help your child to keep their room and clothes organised.

Personal Hygiene - A tricky area! We do our level best to ensure that each child showers, washes and cleans their teeth every day, but we cannot physically force them to comply. So, in essence, the children have to take a little self-responsibility in this area.

Please send a small shower gel/soap and shampoo with your child as these are not provided at the Château. Speaking from experience, on previous trips, please make sure that any bottles which may leak (e.g. shampoo etc) are in a sealed bag to avoid spillage.

Do remember toothpaste, deodorant and any other toiletries your child may require.

Please - no make-up or face masks (with which we have had problems in the past ...yes really!), stick on false eyelashes and nails; the list could go on.

Towel – Your child will need to bring their own towel. Please pack a bag to put this in on the day of departure as it is likely to be damp.

In the past; essential packing has been augmented with a bizarre variety of items including a table top air hockey game, a large music centre with a separate speaker unit, Twister and other boxed 'party games', photo albums, vast quantities of sweets and biscuits and much more. However much your child tries to persuade you otherwise **please only pack the required items rather than 'treats/home comforts'**.

Pocket Money

Another tricky area, as much for you, as I suspect it is for me. For what they are worth here are a few thoughts based upon my previous experience. Most children, historically, have taken in the region of 10 Euros per day. The only place in England for your child to spend money is at a few 'comfort stops' at service stations to and from the Channel Tunnel.

The children are responsible for their own money and should use named wallets.

There is, as such, no limit to the amount of pocket money a child may bring but I urge you to be sensible. Please talk to your children about budgeting for the week and whether you expect them to bring home gifts etc.

Technology - Mobile phones, Digital Cameras, Tablets etc

The children are allowed to bring electronic devices with them **BUT** they will only be allowed to use them on the coach journey from Norwich to Normandy and on the coach journey home from France. They are entirely responsible for their equipment so please ensure that all items are clearly named and that your child is aware of the responsibility involved in keeping track of their precious personal items. These will be collected in after the journey to France and then returned for the return trip. It is often the case that an older, less valuable but equally suitable piece of technological equipment from home may be available for them to use. Do not be swayed by the frequently muttered statement "but everyone else is bringing theirs". Generally, as I am sure you are only too aware, this is not the case!

Pupils will be clearly briefed as to when they can and cannot use devices for and any inappropriate use will result in them being confiscated. Equally, please note that **Fitbits** or their equivalents are not allowed on the trip. There is no danger whatsoever that we will not be getting enough exercise!

Please note that you will not be able to make contact with your child by calling their phones or messaging them while we are away but you will be able to contact the teachers, on the trip, who will have school phones with them.

Children may bring digital or disposable cameras, which again should be named and is their responsibility, provided that the camera has no other capability and is not internet enabled. They will not be able to use the cameras on phones or other devices.

Please remember to **pack adaptor plugs** and a charger so that your child can recharge their devices. Please make sure chargers, adapter plugs etc are named as they quickly get muddled with similar ones. Do remember to pack spare batteries, some digital cameras require them, and make sure that memory cards, for digital cameras, have adequate space on them.

Children may not bring their school iPads on the trip.

Work Equipment

Each child requires a smallish **rucksack** (taken onto the coach on Monday morning).

The children will be using this rucksack during the week for wallets, cameras, pencil cases, packed lunches etc so please make sure they are of an adequate size, secure and easy to carry. The bag will have to allow your child to have their hands free for writing etc. The children will also require a **pencil case** with a pen, pencils, crayons and felts. Please ensure these are packed in the bag.

Behaviour

Although we are out of school, school rules still apply. However, I would like to stress that every child starts with an entirely clean slate.

My **main concern**, with regard to behaviour is that, if I am dealing with one child or having my eye on one child on a consistent basis, then attention to the others is compromised and this, for a variety of academic and health and safety issues, is clearly not desirable.

I really do look for your support in this area and that, furthermore, you imbue your child with the sense that he/she is not only representing the School, on this trip, but very much your family and himself/herself.

Staff

The members of staff accompanying the trip are: Mr Hall, Miss Vontzalidou, Nina, my wife, who helps coordinate many aspects of the trip and is in charge of medical issues, and two of the Town Close Gap Year Students – Mr Pilgrim and Miss Findlay and, of course, me – Mr Kendrick.

A ratio of roughly 1:9 is excellent for a trip such as this and falls well within the acceptable ratios for insurance and Health and Safety guidelines of the various sites/visits.

Medical Requirements

As per my last letter, regarding the compiling of medical and dietary requirement information, I should like to remind you that I shall be using the medical information the School holds for your child. This is also the case for contact telephone numbers. **May I remind you to contact the Front Office immediately if you think your child's medical/ dietary requirement details require updating. Equally please also get in touch if any of your contact numbers need updating.**

If your child is on any medication, at the time of departure, this needs to be named and handed to Mrs Kendrick on the day of departure. Information about dosage and frequency must also be included.

I will be sending you an itinerary and 'packing check-list' in the next few weeks, but I felt that it was important that the information sent in this communication was of a practical nature as it will help you and your child to prepare for the trip.

I look forward to seeing you after school on Thursday 7th March at 4.15pm.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Kendrick". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Richard Kendrick