

28th June 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

**Re: First World War Battlefields Trip 2024**

In March 2024 we are excited to offer Year 9 students the opportunity to join a residential trip to France and Belgium. The visit will depart on the morning of Thursday 28th March, returning on the evening of Sunday 31st March. **The focus of the visit will be to visit key historical sites associated with the First World War as well as exploring some cultural sites in France and Belgium.** The provisional itinerary is outlined below, although specific excursions and the timing for each excursion cannot be confirmed until shortly before the visit:

Thursday 28th March	Early morning departure from school by coach. Ferry crossing to France followed by an afternoon visit to the Passchendaele Memorial Museum and Tyne Cot British Cemetery. Evening arrival at our accommodation, Le Chateau D’Ebblinghem near St. Omer, a centre for school groups owned by the specialist school tour operator NST. Evening meal at the Chateau.
Friday 29th March	Full day in Belgium including an immersive experience in the trenches at Sanctuary Wood Museum, and a visit to Langemark and Essex Lane Cemeteries. In the afternoon, students will visit sites of the Battle of the Somme, including Sunken Lane battlefield. This will be followed by a guided tour of the underground Wellington Quarry. Evening meal at a restaurant in Ypres before attending the daily Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate.
Saturday 30th March	Travel to France to visit The Armistice Museum and Compiègne Wagon. In the afternoon students will have free time exploring Nausicaá - Europe’s largest aquarium. Evening meal and activity at our accommodation.
Sunday 31st March	A visit to the beautiful Belgian town of Poperinge, including a guided tour of Talbot House. Return to Calais for the ferry crossing to Dover in time for an evening arrival back at Ruislip High School.

The cost of the trip is **£500.00**, which includes:

- 3 nights’ accommodation at Le Chateau D’Ebblinghem, in 2 – 4 bedded rooms, all with private facilities;
- All travel by seat-belted coach which remains with us for the duration of the trip;
- Return ferry crossings from Dover to Calais;
- All admission fees to several historical sites, and a visit to Nausicaa Sea Centre (Europe’s largest aquarium)
- All breakfasts and dinners from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 4 (including one restaurant meal in Ypres) and packed lunches on days 2, 3 and 4;
- Full travel insurance;

Only a small amount of pocket money will be needed for snacks, soft drinks, souvenirs etc.

Please be aware that your child must have a valid passport to travel and it will need to be valid for at least 3 months after 31 March 2024. Your son/daughter will also need a EHIC/GHIC (European/Global Health Insurance

Card) for the trip. Places will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis, and **as this is a popular trip we would encourage early replies.**

A deposit of **£100** will also be required via ParentPay by **Monday 4th September**. This will be refunded if the trip is oversubscribed, but this becomes non-refundable after the place has been confirmed as payments are then made to the travel company.

Further non-refundable payments of **£100** will be payable by **29 September 2023, £100 by 31 October, £100 by 30 November** and the final balance of **£100 by 29 December 2023**. Partial payments via ParentPay can be made before the last payment date. Please note that the school makes payment to the travel company on the above dates, and therefore refunds cannot be issued except where valid claims can be made on the travel insurance policy. In the case of your child not being able to attend the trip due to personal circumstances, and if a suitable replacement is not found, no refunds will be made. Please also be aware that participation is subject to the terms of the School Visits Contract to which all students and parents have agreed. In particular we reserve the right to not take students whose behaviour in school indicates that they may not safely and considerably undertake the range of experiences offered on this residential experience.

Our experiences of past visits to these areas are that they always achieve positive educational objectives but students also return having thoroughly enjoyed the unique opportunities provided. We look forward to hearing from you if your child wishes to join us in 2024.

Yours sincerely



Mr L Sills  
Head of Year 11  
Battlefields Trip Leader

Please [click here](#) for a digital copy of the permission slip.