

6th June 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians

Re: First World War Battlefields Trip 2025

In April 2025 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 Friday 4th April and return on the evening of Monday 7th April. **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:

Friday 4th April	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.
Saturday 5th April	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. Evening meal at a restaurant in Ypres before attending the daily Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate.
Sunday 6th April	Travel to France to visit The Armistice Museum and Compiègne Wagon. In the afternoon students will have free time at Bellewaerde Theme Park. Evening meal and activity at our accommodation.
Monday 7th April	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 **£550.00**. If your child is in receipt of free school meals and wishes to join us, please contact me via the school office to discuss how the school can support financing some of the trip. The cost of the trip includes:

- 3 nights' accommodation at Le Chateau D'Ebblinghem, France, in 2 – 4 bedded rooms, 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;
- An expert tour guide for the duration of the trip
- All admission fees to several historical sites, and a visit to Bellewaerde Theme Park
- 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 7 April 2025. Your son/daughter will also need a EHIC/GHIC (European/Global Health Insurance Card) for the trip.

At this stage, we are asking for an expression of interest in the trip. If you would like your child to be considered for the trip, please complete [this](#) form by Friday 21st June. We will take into consideration all expressions of interests and offer places on a first-come, first-served basis. 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.

We will notify you by Friday 5th July to confirm if your child has been offered a place on the trip. Following this a deposit of **£100** will be required via ParentPay by **Monday 15th July**. Failure to make this payment will result in your child's place being offered to another student if there is a waiting list. The deposit 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 **30 August 2024; £100 by 30 September; £100 by 31 October; £100 by 29 November** and the final balance of **£50 by 31 December 2024**. 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.

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 2025.

Yours sincerely



Mr L Sills
Head of Year 11
Battlefields Trip Leader