



Battlefields Tour 2024

Parent information evening

Tonight we will...

- Share information about the nature of the trip
- Give guidance on packing for the visit
- Provide reassurances about the trip
- Share clear messages with parents/carers about expectations to discuss with students



Two groups, two hotels, one itinerary

Trip lead – Mrs Blomeley	
Site A- Old Abbey	Site B- Ypres Lodge
Early morning Tuesday 18 th June – evening Friday 21 st June	
Mr Clough / Mr Kelly	Mrs Blomeley / Mr Reece
3 coaches 113 students / 12 staff	3 coaches 110 students / 12 staff

Monday 17th June is a normal school day.

Accommodation

Ypres Lodge



Oude Abdij [Old Abbey]



Itinerary

Tuesday 18th June (travel day)

- **Arrive at school at 4:30am** to drop off students and walk them to the cage inside the school gates.
- Parking not available on site – Rock street carpark
- Students will line up in their correct coach line in the cage with their luggage
- Once you've walked them to the cage, please say your goodbyes so we can register students and load coaches
- Your son/daughter's lead teacher [TBC] will be on hand if you need to pass any last-minute information on to them
- The coaches will leave no later than 5am. Please be on time.
- You will be given your son/daughters coach lead's number to contact if there are any emergencies on the night before / morning of the trip
- If your son/daughter falls ill the night before / morning of the trip – please contact the coach leader AND contact school Tuesday morning as normal

Itinerary

Tuesday 18th June (travel day)

- **Leave school at 5am**
- Please reiterate the legality surrounding seat belts on coaches
- Travel from Dover to Calais via ferry *
- **Opportunities to purchase breakfast and/or lunch at the services / ferry (if not already brought)**
- Arrive in Ypres, Belgium early evening and unpack. Evening meal in the hotel and activities organised by staff.



* Students not allowed on the outside deck on the ferry*

Coach company rules: No fizzy drinks or hot food/drink on the coaches at any time.

Itinerary

Wednesday 19th June

Activities on this day include:

- **Bruges visit** (including canal cruise and shopping time)
- Visit to **Sanctuary Wood trenches** *[wellies!]*
- Visit to **Tyne Cot British Cemetery**
- Visit to **Langemark German Cemetery**
- Evening meal at the hotel and activities led by staff



Itinerary

Thursday 20th June

On this day students will:

- Visit Bellewarde Theme Park during the day [all 6 coaches]

In the evening, students will:

- Have a meal in Ypres (pre-paid)
- Attend the Last Post Ceremony [wreath laying]
- Return to the hotel and pack



Itinerary

Friday 21st June

- All coaches will leave straight after an early breakfast
- Students will board the ferry in Calais mid-morning.
- We will aim to be back at school around 6pm (TBC), but will ask students to update parents/carers throughout the journey



Practical information

Money

- **Small amount of sterling money (approx. £30/40)** to buy drinks and/or snacks on the journey down but also tea and snacks on the way home
- €70-100 will be plenty for spending whilst away – capped at €150.
- **We will operate a ‘bank’ every morning to enable students to manage money.**
- Ferry is cashless. consider pre-paid travel card
- Opportunities to buy snacks in the theme park, Belgium chocolate, souvenirs etc. They’ll get a packed lunch from the hotel each day.
- Small denomination notes please. We also cannot change currency so students must bring Euros



Practical information

Passports/EHICS and insurance

- All students will be travelling with their own **passports and EHICS**. These must be handed into school unless required over half term. **They should be handed to the main school office no later than Friday 7th June.**
- Some passports need signing by the student before they are handed in – please check this is done at home first to avoid queues in school
- Once we arrive at the hotel, all passports/EHICs will be stored in the hotel safe.
- Passports will be returned to all students just before we get back to school.

Students will be travelling under the Cranmer Education Trusts' travel insurance, so you do not need to purchase additional insurance.



Practical information

Customs

- All staff and students will be expected to get off the coach and go through a passport checking process at customs, both in Dover on the outbound journey, and again at Calais on the inbound journey
- Please discuss with your son/daughter that this is like going through passport control at an airport and will need to demonstrate exceptional behaviour



Practical information

A small / medium
size suitcase

Packing essentials

- A waterproof coat for outdoor visits [check weather in Ypres prior to trip]
 - Two pairs of sensible footwear including sturdy trainers suitable for activities
 - A sun hat if it's forecasting high temperatures
 - Sun cream is an essential item – factor 50, sunglasses
 - Casual wear for all types of weather - layers
 - **No crop tops or 'hot pant' style shorts – students will be instructed to change if necessary.**
- Trip t-shirts...**
- Socks and underwear
 - Nightwear
 - Wellies – pack in a separate plastic bag labelled with child's name – to be left separate from other luggage [remains under the coach for the trip]

Practical information

Packing essentials

- Toiletries
- Makeup is the same expectation as in school
- Towel - the hotel does not provide
- Plastic bag for wet or dirty clothing
- Portable charger / Phone charger and European adapter plug

- Students can bring snacks in moderation – please discuss this with your son/daughter if they are not used to managing snack intake.
Please do not pack nuts.

- You must bring a **refillable bottle** – there isn't a place to buy drinks at the hotel for evenings. Water will be available.

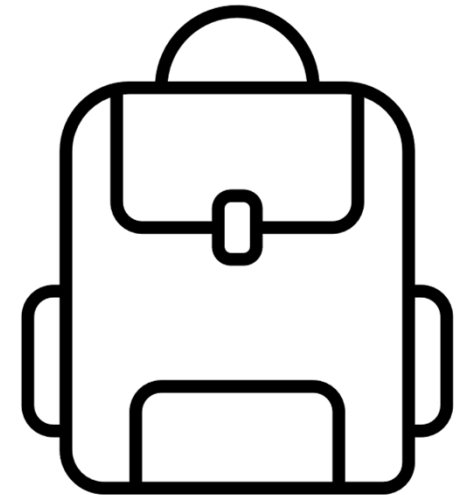
A small /
medium size case



Practical information

Packing essentials (for on the coach)

- A packed breakfast / lunch / snacks /drinks for the long first day
- Any device that uses sound must have headphones with it.
- Money – we will collect most of it for safe keeping once on the journey down
- Water bottle - **no cans / no fizzy drinks / no shakes/frappes / hot drinks etc. Juice is fine.**
- Medication for travel sickness, allergies etc.
- Sun cream (a must)
- Pillow and blanket
- Portable charger



Practical information

Food and drink

All meals are pre-paid except:

- **Breakfast and lunch on day 1** [Tuesday]
- **Evening meal on day 4** [Friday]
- Breakfast at the hotel is fresh pastries, cereals, water and juice
- Packed lunches are typically a ham and / or cheese baguette, a biscuit snack, a piece of fruit and a bottle of water.
- The evening meals are likely to be 'different' to meals pupils typically eat. Please encourage them to try the food. There is no alternative!

Please ensure we have the up-to-date information on any allergies/dietary requirements.

We can only accommodate if we know in advance.

- **Etiquette at meal times...**

Practical information

Breakfast and evening meal etiquette

- We all sit and eat together as a group – this means over 100 students.
- There is no ‘opt out’
- Students will be given a breakfast ‘time’ in the evening instructions and an evening meal ‘time’ at the end of our daily itinerary
- Students must be fully dressed for the day with shoes on.
- Mobile phones / headphones must be away – it is not ‘free /social time’
- Students will not be permitted to leave the table without permission and will only use the social area toilet one at a time
- Students must be respectful of noise levels at all times
- At the end of each meal, we will request silence so instructions and information can be given out. We will constantly communicate with students so that they understand what is happening, when and why.

Practical information

Breakfast and evening meal etiquette

- The hotels operate a policy where the students clear their own food away and tidy their meal areas
- Students will be instructed to do this one table at a time
- They will have to clear plates in between courses for the evening meal
- At the end of each meal students will stack plates, cups and condiments and work together as a table to ensure no mess is left behind

Practical information

Valuable items

- Whatever your decision, every child will be responsible for looking after their own possessions.
- No valuables (with the exception of cameras and phones) should be taken along for reasons of security.
- Mobile phones will be allowed.
- Hair dryers / straighteners are allowed but it would be best if students could arrange to share.
- Plug extensions are NOT allowed, they are a fire hazard
- No other electrical items are allowed e.g., irons, kettles, laptops etc.



Practical information

Use of mobile phones

- **Mobile phones will be switched off and collected at night-time** and stored with staff overnight unless it is linked to medical alerts
- Student and staff rooms are located together, and students will know their nearest staff member in case of emergencies
- Mobile phones will be returned when students are woken up by staff each morning
- Students will be allowed to use phones in social areas – phones will only be in rooms in the evening during social time for charging.



Practical information

Use of mobile phones

- **It is important that both students and parents/carers put their trust in the staff running the trip**
- If you do not hear from your son/daughter regularly across the trip, this is likely because they are having a good time!
- **We will be actively encouraging students not to contact home if they have a concern on the trip e.g. homesick, lost item, fall outs!**
- Any issues will be dealt with by staff members and followed up immediately. There is very little you can do from home! Please discuss this with your son/daughter especially if this is their first trip away from home and they need these reassurances.
- **We will always contact you if there are any issues and you will have the number of the trip/coach leads for each hotel.**



Curriculum expectations

- Key parts of the itinerary are sensitive in their nature and behaviour must reflect this at all times
- There **WILL** be relatives of those who fought during the war at different sites
- There will be times when students will listen to key information about the place they are visiting
- There will be no earphones or use of phones in an inappropriate way when we are visiting places on our itinerary
- Students are ambassadors and must demonstrate respect at all times



Practical information

Behaviour expectations – Blue Coat ambassadors

The trip in this format is in its 9th year and we have well established links and a strong reputation of good behaviour and high standards

The trip runs on trust and relationships, and this is absolutely vital to its success

The trip has some very sensitive issues connected to it and the upmost respect is a basic expectation



Practical information

Behaviour expectations – Blue Coat ambassadors

As in school

- Zero tolerance on use of banned substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, vaping
- Be mindful when packing to avoid other items not allowed in school - **please pack with your son/daughter**
- Pupils will be expected to maintain the professional working relationships that they have with their teachers during a working day
- Pupils must take responsibility for managing the relationships that they have with their peers
- Genuine causes for concern should be reported immediately to teaching staff, and not sent via text to parents/carers
- Travel expectations (coach/ferry)
- **It is NOT permitted to purchase replica 'war' related items such as knives, guns, bullets/shells, etc. Such items if purchased will be confiscated and disposed of in Belgium, so will be a waste of money.**

Practical information

Sleeping arrangements

- Students will be allowed to select who they share a room with, as far as possible, but this is a timely and difficult process and can be a very challenging time for some students
- Once rooming is complete, changes affect everyone and therefore unlikely to be accommodated
- Students may have to compromise, ultimately, we have to make this work based on the accommodation, but also in some cases, medical needs and the vulnerability of some students will take priority



Practical information

Sleeping arrangements

- Coach lists have recently been published including which hotel your son/daughter is staying in
- Once the hotels have provided us with information on the bedroom sizes for boys and girls, we will be asking students to select rooming
- Rooming sizes are different to the coach groups so some friendship groups may have to split up just for bedtime
- Students can only select to share a room with others going to the same hotel and it must be the same gender
- If students' select to share a room with students that will compromise behaviour and safety of the trip – we will not honour this – school has the final say



Practical information

Sleeping arrangements

- If your son/daughter is staying at Ypres Lodge the room sizes range from 3-6
- If your son/daughter is staying at the Old Abbey the room sizes range from 4-8
- All rooms have single bunk beds and/or single beds
- We will not know how many of each room there are until next week
- I will write to you to let you know how we intend to carry out the logistics for rooming and the deadline so you can discuss with your son/daughter
- We appreciate your support in advance



Practical information

Sleeping arrangements

- Students will not be allowed into the rooms of other students and must instead use the ample social areas
- Some students are used to sharing rooms and personal space, some are not, and this is potentially their first trip away

Please have discussions at home regarding:

- Keeping their room tidy
- Getting dressed/undressed in front of peers
- Personal hygiene – students will be expected to shower daily
- Brushing teeth morning and evening
- Use of sprays – bathroom only
- Washing hands before meals
- Being mindful of personal space
- Importance of sleep
- Supporting and showing empathy to their friends who may be feeling homesick



Practical information

Medical information

- Every coach has a staff member who is first aid trained and a first aid kit
- If your son/daughter has a specific/serious medical need the teacher lead will contact you prior to the trip [where appropriate] to ensure they fully understand requirements / needs / medication etc. and to reassure you and your son/daughter
- Where appropriate, individual medical risk assessments will be completed, and this will be communicated to yourselves for checking and in collaboration with Mrs Castle
- All staff will have up to date asthma training prior to the trip
- Please let us know if there is anything we can do to reassure you further if you have a son/daughter with specific medical needs

Please ensure the information we have is up to date

Practical information

Medical information

- **Homesickness** – please reassure your son/daughter they are in safe hands. If we can support in any way prior to the trip please let us know
- **Travel sickness** – please ensure your son/daughter has any medication / wrist bands – the ferry can be tough on those who are travel sick
- **Hay fever** – this can sometimes be worse abroad – please ensure they have the right medication e.g. tablets, eye drops, nasal spray
- **Over the counter medication** e.g. paracetamol – if students are used to managing this themselves that is fine but please discuss with them that they should touch base with their lead teacher if they take medication / feel unwell. We do not bring any spare medication.
- **Prescribed medication** – please ensure school know about this. If your son/daughter is used to managing this themselves that is fine. If they will need extra support and school do not know – please get in touch
- **Any medication you want staff to look after must be in a plastic bag and clearly labelled**

Practical information

Final reminders

Please keep us updated with:

- Medical changes
- Dietary requirements
- Passport/EHIC

Please support us and discuss:

- Rooming logistics
- Behaviour and etiquette across the trip
- Prohibited possessions
- Mobile phone misuse
- Communication with home
- Medical arrangements
- Managing money
- Personal hygiene and personal space

Contact information

trips@blue-coat.org

Good evening!

Thank you for attending this evening

The information from this evening will be sent to you via email

Please hand in passports/EHICs to a staff member

We will write to you with on-trip mobile numbers prior to the trip



Contact information
trips@blue-coat.org