Dear Parent/Carer,

Geography Trip to Iceland 23rd July – 27th July 2019

The Geography department have run many successful trips to Iceland since 2006. In fact, we have been every year since 2010. Iceland truly is a remarkable place and is often described as the land of ‘Fire and Ice’.

30 places will be on offer for the trip. In fact, I must reach that figure for the trip to viable. However, previous experience has shown that the trip is often over-subscribed. Last year, we were able to take 34, and there may be a chance to expand the numbers this year. I will let parents know once I have the initial replies to see if this is the case. Students studying Geography in current Years 10 (20 places), 11 and 12 (10 places) will be eligible to attend the trip. This may be extended to students not studying Geography if there are remaining places. If Years 11 and 12 do not fill their allocation, their places will be transferred to Year 10 students.

Itinerary (provisional, although the dates are fixed – all swimming optional):

- **Tuesday 23rd July**: Leave Oaklands at 8am and fly to Keflavik (Iceland Air), arriving early afternoon. Our first stop will be the Gunnuhver Geothermal area and ‘The Bridge between two Continents’. We will then visit the Blue Lagoon health spa for a couple of hours - [http://www.bluelagoon.com/](http://www.bluelagoon.com/). We will arrive at Hvolsvollur to stay at the Husid Guest House (we have stayed there many times before - [http://www.guesthousehusid.com/](http://www.guesthousehusid.com/)) where we will have an evening meal. N.B. it is becoming increasingly difficult to book the Blue Lagoon – if it is not available on the day of arrival, we will try to go on our final day. If it doesn’t happen at all, then you will be refunded that part of the tour price.

- **Wednesday 24th July**: The ‘Golden Circle’ - Kerid volcanic crater, Faxi waterfall, watch the Strokkur geyser erupt at Geysir, Gulfoss waterfall, Thingvellir (where the plates are moving apart) and Ljosfoss Hydro-electric power station.

- **Thursday 25th July**: Seljalandsfoss waterfall, Skogafoss waterfall, Solheimajokull glacier walk ( crampons, ice axes and tour guides - a real highlight). Basalt columns at Reynisfjara, Vik and coastal scenery at Dyrholaey.

- **Friday 26th July**: Boat trip to Vestmannaeyjar islands (Heimaey) - scene of the 1973 eruption. Climb Helgafell volcano and visit the ‘Pompeii of the North’- buried houses under ash and lava. Take the ‘Viking tours’ boat trip around the island with potential whale watching (we watched Killer Whales in 2014, which was an unforgettable experience). Swim in the outdoor pool on Heimaey, which is a fantastic pool. Visit the Gluggafoss waterfall once back on the mainland.

- **Saturday 27th July**: Visit the capital, Reykjavik. Visit the Hallgrímskirkja church, the Catholic church, concert hall, city hall and the main shopping areas. Leave Keflavik late afternoon and return home about 10pm.

If you would like to see the places where we go, I took drone footage on a trip from a previous year. The video is published on the school YouTube page - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWibGo1c0q0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWibGo1c0q0)
If there is inclement weather, the itinerary could change. However, we have not had to do this on our previous trips. I try to pack in as much as we can in the time that we have there, so the days are extremely busy. Students will need to be reasonably fit and be able to cope with the physical exertion and the long days.

Accommodation is on a full board basis and we will stay at the Husid Guest House. We have stayed there on many occasions and it is ideal for a school group. Cereals and toast are provided in the morning, students make their own packed lunches after breakfast and a two course hot meal is provided in the evening. All excursions will have been paid for in advance, but students will need to take some spending money (Icelandic Krona) if they want to purchase additional snacks/ drinks or/and purchase souvenirs. Students will also be advised to eat a meal at the airport on the day of departure, so will need money for this too.

The cost will be £1134. Reply slips (not the deposit payment) should be handed in to the Finance Office by 2pm Tuesday 30th October (second day back after the half term holiday). If the trip is over-subscribed by this date, places will be allocated by means of a draw, which will take place on Tuesday afternoon 30th October. Parents will then be informed whether their child has been successful in gaining a place on the trip and a reserve list will be generated. Once informed by the school, Deposits of £134 are payable by Friday 2nd November 2018 to secure the place on the trip. All remaining payments (5) will be £200 and these will be payable by:

- Second payment – 7th January 2019 - £200
- Third payment – 4th February 2019 - £200
- Fourth payment – 1st March 2019 - £200
- Fifth payment – 1st April 2019 - £200
- Sixth and final payment – 1st May 2019 - £200

The quote provided has been based on flights costing £155. If the flights increase in cost between now and the deadline for paying the first deposit, then this cost will be added to the tour price. This has not happened to us before, but I wanted to make you aware of this.

As this trip is non-curricular, the school normally is unable to offer financial assistance and therefore the full cost of the activity must be borne by yourselves. Payments and accompanying paperwork must be handed in on or before the deadline date outlined above and late payments will jeopardise your child’s place on the trip/activity. Should your child withdraw from the activity, please be aware that deposits are non-refundable. The deposit is paid to the travel company straight away to secure the flights that are ‘on hold’ for us and is not refundable. Any further payments can only be refunded if the place can be filled by another student on a waiting list, or if the withdrawal is for an insurable reason.

If there are any significant changes to the costs of the trip, these may have to be passed on to the student. Be assured that we will try to keep such costs to a minimum.

Please complete and return the consent form to the Finance Office. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at m.bamford@oaklandscatholicschool.org.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Bamford – Assistant Headteacher/ Iceland trip leader
I would like to submit an application for my child to participate in the visit to Iceland. He/she is in good health and I consent to him/her taking part in the programme detailed in your letter. Should my child secure a place on this trip, I will ensure deposits and payments are made according to the payment schedule as outlined in the trip letter.

I will make future payments on line

Parent/Carer Name:  

Signature:  

Email address:  

Contact Number:  