



ST. AIDAN'S

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

February 2023

Dear Year 10 Pupil and Parents

Year 11 Ardeche Adventure Trip - July 2024

We are delighted to offer our annual Ardeche adventure holiday in July 2024 when your child is in Year 11. The Ardeche trip is undoubtedly a most memorable experience for all those who participate, falling as it does after the completion of the GCSE Examinations. The tour operator is Acorn Adventure; a well-established, ABTA bonded company with nearly 40 years' experience of running trips.

We will be running two trips next year on the following dates:

- **Group 1** departs on Friday 5 July 2024 and returns on Friday 12 July 2024
- **Group 2** departs on Saturday 6 July 2024 and returns on Saturday 13 July 2024

Each group will have exclusive use of a private tented village within the centre in the Ardeche, together with a central marquee for dining, a swimming pool on site and a cafe. Individual tents are equipped with a proper bed and hard flooring.

An example of the itinerary is as follows:

- Day 1 Depart/Overnight Travel
- Day 2 Arrive, lunch, activities, swim, river prep
- Day 3 Ardeche canoe trip (overnight bivouac)
- Day 4 Ardeche canoe trip, swim / relax
- Day 5 Land/water-based activities / disco
- Day 6 Excursion Day
- Day 7 Land-based activities / lunch / depart
- Day 8 Return home

No previous experience of any of these activities is necessary although you must of course be prepared to be fully involved. Qualified Acorn Instructors provide the instruction necessary to ensure safe and enjoyable involvement in all the activities. Acorn's safety record is highly impressive and we as a school are confident in their ability to safeguard all who go on the trip and to deal with any problems that may arise. Acorn provide specialist safety equipment such as helmets and buoyancy aids. **Please note that all participants must be able to swim at least 50 metres.**

The Governing Body at St Aidan's are happy to support this holiday and will be releasing a considerable number of staff to accompany those who participate. St Aidan's staff will always be with students during activities. If we visit any of the local towns, students will be allowed to explore in small groups although they will know where to contact staff in the event of a problem arising. They will also be given detailed instructions as to the extent of their exploration. During activity sessions, the responsibility for students' safety does lie with qualified Acorn Instructors.

Interim Headteacher: Mr D Thornton



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Passports

Students will travel on their own passports. Passports must currently meet **two requirements for entry to France**. They must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

If your child holds a passport other than one issued by the UK Passport Agency, please note it is your responsibility to check if they require a visa to travel to France and apply where appropriate.

Cost

We anticipate the cost of the trip to be between £940.00 and £990.00 which includes all travel, full-board accommodation, and all activities. The payment schedule is as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| • 1 st Payment | £50.00 | by Monday 20 February 2023 |
| • 2 nd Payment | £75.00 | by Friday 28 April 2023 |
| • 3 rd Payment | £165.00 | by Friday 30 June 2023 |
| • 4 th Payment | £225.00 | by Friday 29 September 2023 |
| • 5 th Payment | £235.00 | by Friday 24 November 2023 |
| • 6 th Payment | £240.00 (approx) | by Friday 1 March 2024 |

The final price will be confirmed in **February 2024**. Reminder emails will be sent to parents before each payment is due. I appreciate that I am asking for payments a long time before this trip is due to take place, but I am trying to meet an Acorn deadline that will allow us to qualify for an early payment discount, which is of course passed onto you in the price we charge.

Important Financial Information / ParentPay

To give you time to discuss this trip with your child, ParentPay will open on **Friday 10 February 2023 at 18:00**.

If your son or daughter is interested in a place, we ask that you pay the first deposit payment of **£50.00** via ParentPay by Monday 20 February 2023. If you do not have a ParentPay login, please contact Mrs Holey in the Finance Office on h.holey@staidans.co.uk.

There are 192 places available, and these will be allocated via ParentPay on a first-come, first-served basis by receipt of online payment.

Once all the places have been filled, please note you will not be able to sign up for the trip or pay the deposit, even if it is before the deadline of Monday 20 February 2023. Please then email Mrs McDonald, the Trips Administrator, (t.mcdonald@staidans.co.uk) and she will create a waiting list based on the date and time of your email in case of any cancellations.

All payments made by parents are non-refundable, as we must make regular payments to Acorn. Whilst we offer a payment schedule for the trip, please note that if your child withdraws from the trip after Monday 20 February 2023, you will be required to pay the cancellation charges as imposed by Acorn, unless together we can find a replacement student.

Interim Headteacher: Mr D Thornton

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We therefore ask you to take the time to discuss the trip in detail with your child prior to paying the deposit to ensure that they are fully committed to the trip.

Consent for the trip is required on ParentPay. Please note that by ticking the box online, you are agreeing to the following:

- You are happy for your child to take part in the trip
- You agree to the cost of the trip and understand that all payments are non-refundable
- You confirm that the medical information we hold at school is correct and up to date
- You confirm that your child can swim at least 50 metres.

Behaviour

School residential trips form an important part of the curriculum offered at St Aidan's. When accompanying students on a school trip, staff are acting *in loco parentis* just as they do in school. However, trips away from the normal school environment involve considering different routines and environments, which demand that students can show an increased level of responsibility and maturity.

After 20 February 2023, the Head of Year and Senior Staff will look at the behaviour, attendance and wellbeing of the students registered on the trip to confirm they are able to cope with the demands of the tour. We will inform you in writing if we have any concerns and we will return deposits in this case. If we have concerns about a student's participation in the trip prior to departure, **the Head of St Aidan's reserves the right to withdraw their place and payments made may not be refunded.**

Insurance & EHIC/GHIC

All students are covered by our school insurance policy. Students will also need a GHIC which has replaced the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). However, if your child still holds a valid EHIC card, this can be used until the expiry date on the card. You will need to apply for a new card [here](#).

If you have any queries about the trip, or if meeting the initial deadline for payment presents a problem, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Mrs McDonald.

Kind regards

Mr D Holdsworth
Assistant Head & Coordinator of Outdoor Education

Interim Headteacher: Mr D Thornton