



Dream big • Do your best • Give back

22nd November 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

School Trips 2022/23, Activities Week 2023 and Parental Support

Gordano School is proud of the variety of school trips it has traditionally been able to offer to its students to support both the curriculum and as an enrichment opportunity. As in other schools, this was significantly disrupted by national Covid lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 and consequently many students missed out on the positive experiences they would otherwise have experienced. The uncertainties of Covid brought significant challenges in forward planning but despite this, thanks in no small part to the willingness and support of staff and the community, we were still fortunate enough to be able to run a Summer School to incoming year 7's in 2021, an (albeit slightly compromised) Activities Week in 2022 and a small number of other day trips.

As we progress into the current academic year there is a real desire and keenness to "return to normal" with the trip offer to students and there are many great trips that we are hoping to run. However, 2022 has seen a significant shift in the financial climate which will have a direct adverse impact upon public finances (including schools) as well as the more immediate impact that many families and individuals are already starting to feel. Whilst Gordano School will always strive to seek the most competitive prices for the trips it runs, we are now seeing a significant rise in:

- Coach costs (which are being driven by increased fuel costs and drivers' wages) as well as supply chain pressures (coach availability)
- Accommodation costs (driven by rising food prices, staff wages)
- Teaching supply cover costs (driven by rising agency fees)

Alongside this, families are themselves feeling the significant financial pressures from a rise in energy and food costs and are having to review their own spending priorities. Inevitably, at least for many families, this will lead to a greater likelihood of some school trips being unaffordable. We have therefore been reviewing the overall "offer" to strike a balance between running trips that:

- Provide a positive learning and enrichment experience for students
- Are affordable for parents/carers. Although costs are ultimately difficult to control for individual trips, by providing a reduced overall number of trips we anticipate this mitigating the total financial impact across the academic year

Headteacher: Ms L Blundell BMus(Hons) MA

Gordano School, St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR

Tel: 01275 842606

e-mail: mailbox@gordanoschool.org.uk www.gordanoschool.org.uk

Lighthouse Schools Partnership, Registered address: St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR

A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales (Company Number: 07662102)



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

We also are able to share a summarised Trips Calendar for 2022/23 (attached) which shows the provisional trips (subject to financial viability), the year groups they relate to and an indicative cost range. We had hoped to publish this sooner but the uncertainties following the two-year “trip lockdown” made this impossible until now. You will see that we are planning on running a limited number of overseas curriculum-trips this year; for 2023/24 we are hoping to offer more overseas trips whilst being mindful of costs and affordability. In future years we intend to publish an annual trip calendar in advance of the academic year to afford parents greater notice of dates and costs so that they can plan ahead and therefore make more informed choices on which trips to select for their children.

All of Activities Week 2023 will be UK-based comprising residentials for Year 7 and 9 and Day Trips for Year 8 students (more information to follow in due course).

In addition to school support for extra-curricular trips, we are also working to support families through the cost of living crisis in the following ways:

- Sending out a survey/questionnaire to allow families to express what they are worried about
- Investing in pupil and staff wellbeing
- Regular 'safe and well' check-ins with identified families
- Pointing families in the direction of funding available, such as the Government’s [Household Support Fund](#), and helping them apply for it
- Signposting parents to support with cheaper and second-hand uniform
- Free sanitary products for female students
- Giving as much notice as possible about upcoming unavoidable costs
- Being flexible when it comes to payment deadlines
- Offering sensitive and anonymous ways to donate money to charity, such as by using sealed envelopes or showing parents how to appear anonymous when contributing to fundraising websites

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Ms L Blundell
Headteacher