

## **BATTLEFIELDS 2019**

### **Some initial questions answered....**

#### **How much will it cost?**

The 2019 Battlefield Experience will cost £495.00 per student. This charge will cover all food, transport, accommodation, trip hoodie and entry charges.

A fund has also been put aside which parents can apply to on a confidential basis should they require a reduction in cost. The school would encourage parents to apply – we want all of our S3 students to take part in this trip! Please speak to Mrs Wilson if you would like to find out more.

In addition, students are advised to take some pocket money. Approximately £60.00 will give students enough spending money to enjoy the trip, although we may alter this recommendation in light of any changes in the Euro-Sterling exchange rate.

#### **What are the dates of the trip?**

The trip leaves at approximately 8.00pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May and returns between 11.00pm and midnight on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

#### **Who are Mercat Tours?**

Mercat Tours were the first Scottish-based company to organise Battlefields tours run by acknowledged experts. All Mercat Tours guides are thoroughly trained and are enthusiasts who conduct the tours with real flair and commitment.

#### **What is the payment schedule?**

To secure a place on the trip we require a non-refundable deposit of £75. The payment schedule is detailed below:

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Children in receipt of free school meals / clothing grant</b>	<b>To reach school on or before:</b>
£75 (non refundable deposit)	£75 (non refundable deposit)	26 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
£75 ( non refundable deposit)	£75 ( non refundable deposit)	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
£90	£62.50	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
£85	£62.50	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
£85	£62.50	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
£85	£62.50	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019
<b>Total - £495</b>	<b>Total - £400</b>	

If, however, you would like to discuss an alternative payment schedule for the amounts above please contact Mrs A Wilson.

NB :- Mercat Tours take an initial non-refundable deposit of £75 in October and a second non-refundable deposit of £75 in December. Final payment is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Final payment is non-refundable, unless under exceptional circumstances, within 30 days of departure.

### **Who collects in the deposit/payments?**

**Our preferred method of payment is via ParentPay wherever possible.** However money can also be handed to Miss Cowe in the School Office. Cheques should be made payable to Kelso High School.

### **What will the accommodation, transport and food be like?**

Accommodation will be in high quality youth hostels and transport will be by luxury coach. Detailed addresses will be provided prior to the trip. In hostels there will be various sizes of rooms and all rooms are ensuite. Room allocation will depend on the size of the group and students will have an input to this process – all students will have at least one room-mate that *they* have chosen. The quality of food and packed lunches in the hostels is excellent.

### **What about passports?**

All students will require a valid passport and European Health Insurance Card, which is available free of charge from the official NHS website, [www.nhs.uk/ehic](http://www.nhs.uk/ehic). Both must be submitted to the school office by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019. In recent years we have had some learners unable to go on the trip because their passport hasn't arrived in time. If you need a passport please order it as soon as possible!

### **What will students actually do?**

The Battlefields Excursion is an unforgettable visit to the Western Front in France and Belgium. Students will be in role as Kelso 'Pals' Battalions and will walk in front line trenches, gaze across the now peaceful No Man's Land and attend the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate. As a rough guide, the following itinerary is likely:

- Day 1 Depart school in evening (luxury coach) for overnight journey to Dover.
- Day 2 Dover to Calais ferry and travel to Bruges for afternoon visit. This day is deliberately relaxed to allow students to recover from the journey and prepare for the days ahead. We arrive at our accommodation at approx. 4pm.
- Day 3 Visit Ypres Salient, Messines, Sanctuary Wood trench network, Hooge Crater Museum, the infamous Hill 60 and Black Watch Corner.
- Day 4 Visit to the Somme's preserved trenches, underground tunnels and cemeteries.
- Day 5 Visit Ypres and Passchendaele. Attend Last Post ceremony at Menin Gate
- Day 6 Depart 9.00am for Calais. Calais/Dover ferry at 11.30am. Arrive back at school at approximately midnight.

### **Is there any free time?**

During the five days of the Battlefield Experience the majority of each day is spent visiting the sites detailed on the itinerary. The one major exception is the visit to Bruges on the first full day. There is a break of one hour at lunchtime and after a short evening briefing students are given plenty of free time.

### **Where can I find out more information?**

One obvious way is to ask any of the students who have previously taken part in this trip. Mercat Tours also have an excellent website [www.mercattoursinternational](http://www.mercattoursinternational) and much of the information contained in this leaflet is taken from that site.

### **What happens if I don't want my child to attend this trip?**

The trip is, of course, optional. It takes place during this year's Activities Week and it is anticipated that the majority of the S3 year group will wish to take part in the Battlefields Experience. Any S3 student who does not wish to take part will join the school-based Activities Week programme, along with S1 and S2 pupils. Normal school timetable will be suspended during this week.

#### **Standing in a crater**



#### **Exploring a ruined pillbox**



51<sup>st</sup> Highland Memorial



In a trench



**BATTLEFIELDS EXPERIENCE 2019**

**Parental Confirmation Form**

**Please return this form to the school office by Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018.**

One form must be returned for every S3 student.

**Name of student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Register Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

I would/would not (please delete) like my child to take part in the Battlefields Experience 2019.

I confirm I will make the first payment (£75 non-refundable deposit) via ParentPay on or before Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

Parent / Carer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Carer name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

If attending the trip please supply the information below:

Passport Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Issue date: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_