



Church of England School
Executive Head and CEO: Dr Hilary Macaulay

14th October 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

2023 Ski Trip

Apologies for the lack of information regarding the Ski trip recently. As you are aware we have been working flat out to find a skiing trip for 2023 after the trip to Salt Lake City became untenable due to the increased flight costs.

I have been working with a number of tour operators to find a solution, exploring resorts in the East and West coast of America, Canada and in Europe during Easter and February half term, however the situation with flight costs, full accommodation (due to trips being rescheduled from the pandemic) and the falling strength of the pound has made finding an alternative next to impossible.

I have been holding off writing to you to cancel the trip, as every time I sit down to write the letter, I miraculously receive a glimmer of hope from one of the tour operators. With so many students to let down, I really did want to ensure that every avenue is explored before cancelling the trip. However, I am very aware that Easter is fast approaching, many of you have plans that are in limbo and will need to find a large sum of money relatively quickly if the trip was to go ahead.

This week I have been offered a trip to Canada, the trip meets most of our criteria, however there are still a few unknowns and there is also the potential that we lose the trip if we don't commit quickly enough.

The trip is to a resort called 'Panorama' situated up in the Canadian Rockies. The surroundings look stunning and there is the very real possibility of seeing the Northern Lights at that time of year!! The hotel we would be staying in is called 'The Approach', which is currently in the final stages of a multi-million pound renovation and is due to open in December. The hotel seems to be focused on group travel and the pictures look great. Meals will all be taken in the hotel. Snow permitting, it is a ski-in, ski-out hotel, so there will be no transport required each morning. The hotel is surrounded by natural hot springs, which we would have access to after a hard day's skiing.

Sound great so far! My only concern at present is the evening activity schedule, which has yet to be finalised for next year. The resort is just a small village, so does not have the restaurants and entertainment activities we had hoped to include, such as visiting an NBA basketball match, however I believe/hope it will include things such as Swimming, Ice Skating, Bowling and a Cinema trip in the local town of Invermere.

Flights will fly into and from Calgary Airport and I hope to be able to visit an outlet shopping centre (Cross Iron Mills) on our last day but, unfortunately, I do not yet have concrete flight times or an evening activity plan so am unable to confirm these before we commit to the trip.

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The trip dates have changed slightly, we would fly out from Heathrow on Saturday 2nd April and arrive back on Sunday 9th April, with 5 days of 5 hours skiing. The cost of the trip is slightly more expensive, coming in at **£2050** (plus ADT of £84 for those students over 16 years old on the departure date). A non-refundable payment of (at least) £250 will be due by 1st December, with the full balance **due by 7th January**, which is fast approaching.

Last year the resort had good snow conditions at the start of last April, but being a bit lower, is less snow-sure than Snowbasin, or some of the other USA West Coast resorts.

If I have enough parents confirmed by **17th October at 10.00am** (and someone else does not book these spaces before we confirm) I will book us in to travel to 'Panorama' and will write you to confirm your place on the trip – there will, I am sure, be some movement from the waiting list.

Alternatively, I have received some quotes for a number of resorts for 2024 and should the trip not run, those signed up to this trip will have first refusal on next years' trip. The cost for 2024 has increased significantly, coming in at around £2500-2700pp. Sadly I suspect these are the sort of prices we are likely to encounter moving forward. However, parents will have a longer time to pay, with the full balance of a 2024 trip not being due until January 2024. This trip however would be to a resort which has a more exciting evening programme and is likely to be more snow-sure.

I would appreciate if you can confirm whether you would like your child to have a place on a 2023 trip to 'Panorama' (or not) by completing the attached MS form by **Monday morning, 17th October**.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=24d0Rvyl2Eiol9ljnqylTj94EDi8e25Fo-kBVNgE-KJUNijlWVlc1T1U2SldLMkc3QTJDTTk5MDZPSy4u>

I am aware this is very short notice, but the tour operator is unable to hold our booking beyond this time. I will let you know early next week the decision on the trip.

Should you prefer to receive a full refund, please note this on the MS form and I will arrange for this to be made.

Yours sincerely,

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