

LANCASTER ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Mr A M Hall
Head of French



June 2019

The Normandy Experience

Briefing Letter & Information Evening

Dear Parents,

Thank you for encouraging your son to participate on this trip and in his study of French.

I am writing to invite you and your son to a pre-visit meeting where I will run through the final details on **Wednesday 26th June in the Assembly Hall from 5:00pm.**

Thank you also for sending the balance of payment for your son's visit to Normandy and for sending me important details relating to your child's dietary and medical needs. Please ensure that you inform us of any changes to this information prior to departure.

I am aware that this letter is very long but I am sure you appreciate that there is a lot of information I need to give to you. This is the penultimate letter that you will receive about the visit to Normandy and I imagine that you will want to refer to it several times as the departure date approaches.

Travel

The group will assemble in the car park behind Old School House from **5:30 am for a departure at 6:00am** on Friday 12th July to get the coach from Moorgate. We do not have much leeway for delays for getting our ferry so we must leave promptly. Please can you ensure that we have an up to date mobile contact number for you in case we need to call you. Please be punctual as the coach needs to leave on time and experience tells me that it takes at least 10 minutes to load all luggage. Apologies again to those who would normally join us at the Tickled Trout, however due to insurance reasons and the difficult operation of packing a very full coach, all boys must meet the coach at school.

Your son will need to register with Mr Ashby and hand in his passport and EHIC to him. The teachers will retain all passports for the duration of the trip and return them to the boys during the journey back to school on Wednesday 17th July. The members of staff who are accompanying the pupils are Mr Saul, Mr Kyle, Mr Swarbrick, Mr Ryan, Mr Humpage, Mr Ashby and Mrs Jenkinson.

All pupils need to ensure that their luggage is kept to a minimum and packed in a **soft bag**. The group will be travelling to Portsmouth by coach and then by ferry (14:45 – 21:30 local time) to Caen in France. It is important that all pupils have a small day bag with them that contains the items that will be needed during the journey, as **they will not have access to their main luggage until they arrive at the accommodation**. This should include plenty of food for the journey, some money, a washbag (with toothbrush and toothpaste etc.) and something to keep them **quietly** entertained, for example, a book. Electronic equipment is allowed on this trip but please ensure that you have adequate insurance to cover loss or damage to it. **However, the company has requested that no objects of value should be taken to the Château de la Baudonnière, e.g. expensive watches, I-pads, as these may be lost or broken.** The group will be covered by the school's general trip insurance but particularly expensive items are not covered.

Accommodation

All boys will stay at the Home du Cotentin. It is a comfortable, clean hostel, so boys must treat the fabric, facilities and staff with the utmost respect. It has spacious dorms, good food and is near the beach. The boys will be in dormitories of three or four with their friends, within one building housing boys and LRGS teachers. We will have a meeting with the boys prior to departure to organise who they will share their room with, but they must remember that this room is for sleeping in so if they can't be with all of their best friends, they will still have a great time on the trip.

Phones

We have decided that **pupils may bring mobile phones on this trip**. However, these should only be used infrequently, perhaps to text to assure parents of a safe arrival at the accommodation or to confirm an arrival time back at LRGS. They are not to be used for social media or general escapism which will distract from the experience of exploring beautiful, interesting places.

Furthermore the emphasis during the week is very much on immersion in the French language and culture and so we do not want pupils constantly texting or talking in English. In an emergency, please call the **château (+33 2 33 60 46 95)**. Also, Mr Saul will be carrying a school mobile phone and the number is: **07748 188141**. There will also be another school mobile which will be carried by a member of staff at all times, the number is: **07715 522479**. Please only call these numbers in an **emergency**.

Whilst it is not our intention to telephone parents during our stay, we do need to know how to contact you should an emergency arise. Please ensure that you have provided us with your most up-to-date and convenient contact phone number.

Insurance

The group is being insured under LRGS policy. A copy of the policy is available via the LRGS website. I will bring paper copies to the pre-visit briefing.

Activities

Pupils will be engaged in a range of activities in and around the château; some will be inside the buildings and others will be in the extensive grounds. Pupils will be divided into 6 groups and will be with staff, who are, of course, fully trained.

Throughout the week pupils will take part in excursions including the Bay of Mont St Michel, often the highlight of many boys' trips. Boys will have a chance to visit Mont

St Michel and then will have a guided walk along the coast looking at the coastal flora and fauna at low tide in bare feet – be prepared to get your feet muddy boys! We have booked the same guide as previous years who was really good at explaining the geography of the area, all in French.

We will head to the town of Bayeux, visit the Tapestry and will see the landing beaches in nearby Arromanches, go to the 360 cinema and the British and American war cemeteries in Bayeux and Colleville-sur-mer respectively.

The whole group will also go to Courseulles-sur-Noireau market one morning where pupils will be allowed to explore the stalls in small groups, enjoying the atmosphere and answering questions in their workbook.

In the evenings before supper, pupils will write their French journal and after supper, there will be another activity before the boys retire to their beds. On the Wednesday evening there will be a “déguisement”, which is a chance for pupils to dress up as French people, and on the final evening there will be a talent show, performed by the pupils. **Please bear this in mind when packing. Prizes will be given for the best costumes and performances.** The boys on previous trips have made a fantastic effort at both of these evenings – can you do even better?

Pocket money

Pupils will not require much spending money. Fifty Euros (please avoid large denomination notes) will suffice for the purchase of some postcards, snacks and souvenirs. Souvenir t-shirts of the château are normally available from the tuck-shop there. Pupils may also wish to take some money for the visit to the market and pupils should have some English money with them for the journey.

Kit list

I have attached a copy of the kit list; this is extremely important. I would appreciate it if you could help your son to pack sensibly. Old clothes are essential and please supply several plastic carrier bags as these are always useful! There is also a vocabulary list on the VLE which will help boys as much as possible if they revise in advance of going out to France.

Boys can access this via Mr Young’s Quizlet website:

<http://quizlet.com/24271977/normandy-vocab-list-flash-cards/>

If they prefer revising from a list they just need to click on the “print” button and they will be able to select how the list is presented. The more work boys do on this prior to departure, the more they will get out of the trip once in France.

Medication

If your child is asthmatic, please ensure that a spare inhaler **with your son’s name** on is handed in to Mr B Swarbrick. It is essential that your child also carry an inhaler at all times. If your child is taking any other medication, please ensure that your son has it with him and that we have a record of his needs well in advance of our departure day.

Arrival home

The group should arrive at school at about **midnight** on Wednesday 17th July, the return ferry crossing is 12:30 – 18:15 local time. Please collect your son from the coach on Moorgate. Your child and the accompanying staff will be very tired so please ensure that you are there to meet them on time. We will not make pick up or drop offs at any other point. If the coach is delayed or makes up time, your son or a member of staff should contact you to update you of the new time of arrival.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for supporting this school visit to France. I hope that all the boys will enjoy a stimulating and enriching stay in Normandy.

Yours sincerely,

Alastair Hall
Head of French