

Frequently Asked Questions - School Trips and the Coronavirus 2020

Following queries from parents regarding School trips during the coronavirus outbreak, please see below answers to the most frequently asked questions. Please be reassured that Marling School trips are led by experienced staff whose focus is the safety and enjoyment of the students on the trip.

1. What happens if a trip is completely cancelled?

If the trip is cancelled due to Foreign Office (FO) advice or destination country travel restrictions, our insurers have advised that full refunds of the amount paid so far will be returned to all participants of the trip. We do not believe that a school trip constitutes “essential travel” but we will follow FO advice given at the time.

2. What happens if an element of the trip is cancelled, such as an event or workshop?

Often the event or workshop, even if it is the main purpose of the trip, is organised separately from the travel and accommodation and we must therefore still travel (unless advised otherwise by the FO). In this situation, we would work to ensure alternative activities are arranged at no extra cost. However, this will depend on the destination and we may need to discuss activity options and voluntary contributions further with you.

3. What if restrictions are imposed while the trip is away?

We will work with, and follow, all FO and Health agency advice at the time which may mean the trip returns early or that the trip must remain at the destination until it is safe to return. All costs incurred will be covered by the School’s Insurance arrangements.

4. What if I decide the risks are too great for my child?

It is, of course, your prerogative to withdraw your child from a trip at any time but the school’s insurance arrangement does not cover cancellation for disinclination to travel. You will not receive a refund for amounts already paid and may still be liable for the balance of the cost of the trip (depending on when you cancel)

5. What if my child falls ill or is injured before leaving to go on the trip?

A letter from your GP will mean that you can be fully refunded should your child be too ill to travel or in a self-isolation which has been instructed by the relevant agencies.

6. What if my child starts to show symptoms while on the trip?

This will depend on the destination and the current systems the country has in place to tackle the spread of the virus. The trip leader will follow advice given from health professionals and instruction from in-country agencies. They will also be in contact with a member of the School’s Leadership Team who will assist with communication with parents, the British Consulate and other health agencies. The cost of medical attention is covered by the school’s insurance arrangements, as are any additional costs in travel, accommodation and repatriation.

7. What happens if one of the Trip Leaders becomes ill while on the trip?

The staff and student ratios depend on the activity and destination. In the event of an incident or illness of one of the leaders, the school and other leaders will assess the rest of the trip and decide whether the school needs to send another member of staff to join the trip.

8. Should I send my child with additional spending money in case of emergency?

There should be no need to give your child additional spending money. Any emergencies will be covered by trip funds while away. However, depending on the incident, we may discuss a contribution with you on our return.

9. How can I keep in touch with the trip and my child while they are away?

We usually discourage regular home communication while away as it is important that students immerse themselves in the trip. Each trip will have a mobile number that parents can contact and we encourage the use of WhatsApp. Please be aware that trips are busy with activities and you may not get an instant response.

10. Will you let me know if there is an incident or illness on the trip?

Each trip has a designated School contact who will co-ordinate and communicate from the UK. You will be kept fully informed of any illness arising whilst your child is away.

11. Will my child need to self-isolate on their return from the trip?

We will follow any advice or instruction from health agencies regarding self-isolation on our return. You will be kept fully informed should this become a requirement.

12. How will trip leaders mitigate the risks of contracting the virus while away?

Each trip has a risk assessment that will consider any appropriate measures to reduce the risks to the trip participants while away. This will include;

- a. Regularly reminding students to follow the general advice of regular handwashing, and avoiding touching their face.
- b. Reinforcing the relevant information regarding drinking water, eating and contact with local people.
- c. Reminding students to take relevant medication (such as malaria tablets)
- d. Following current in-country advice on events and gatherings
- e. Being aware of activities that might result in an increased risk and assessing as they go.

It is important to remember that there are always risk/benefits to activities on a trip. For example it would be a shame to miss the experience of travelling on a New York subway and trip leaders might decide to reduce the risk by not travelling at peak times and encouraging the use of hand sanitiser.

13. Who do I talk to if I have specific concerns?

If you have any additional queries or concerns, please send them by email to the Trip Leader as this will mean that they can add it into their risk assessment and planning and it will benefit the whole trip. Alternatively you may email Marling School Education Visits Co-ordinator elg@marling.school