



ABINGDON

From Mr I Fishpool: The Senior Teacher & Head of Geography

23 September 2016

Dear Lower Sixth parents

I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating your sons on an outstanding set of iGCSE geography results this summer. 95% A* & A is a record for the department.

Fieldwork is a central part of geography and I would like to draw your attention to our proposed fieldwork programme. In the summer term, after the L6th exams, we will be arranging a short residential field trip in the UK, the aim of which will be to focus attention on the Individual Investigation, which is a new element of the OCR course from this year. It is likely that this trip will take place in north Wales but this has yet to be confirmed. Attendance on this course is highly desirable. More details will follow in due course.

In addition we also intend to run our highly successful field trip to India during the summer holidays (2017). The details are outlined below.

Geography Department trip to India

We are proposing to run a geography field trip to India – our sixth. India is a fantastic country and offers the geographer an insight into many aspects of the subject, including experiencing the tail end of the monsoon season, cultural and historical legacies, problems and issues of megacities (congestion, slums) and many other features. The proposed itinerary, outlined below, offers a flavour of the trip. It is fair to say that the experience is far greater than the outline suggests. A very brief report on the trip this year has just been posted on the Abingdon School website along with a small selection of my photographs.

Proposed itinerary:

Day 1 : Arrive Delhi (we aim to have a direct flight to Delhi from London). Half day to acclimatise. Post-lunch tour of New Delhi with visits arranged at Rashtrapati Bhawan plus Parliament Museum. The tour will give an overview of Indian democracy. We shall also try to visit the Parliament building but this is subject to permission being granted. Whilst we are in Delhi we hope to be able to visit a charity, ASHA, which undertakes invaluable work in the slums of Delhi. The school has supported this charity for a number of years.

Day 2 : Old Delhi with visits to Rajghat (memorial to the father of the nation – Mahatma Gandhi, a strong believer in non-violence), Chawri Bazaar (Asia's biggest wholesale market), Chandni Chowk (Silver Square) with rickshaw ride in Old Delhi (a highlight for the students!). This tour will give an insight into the strong trading business established in Mughal times.

Day 3 : Visit to the satellite town of Gurgaon on the outskirts of Delhi to see the development and urbanisation that has taken place here in the past twenty years following a very western

model. All major MNC's have their offices here, and a strong service sector has emerged.

Day 4 : Road trip from Delhi - Agra (225 Kms/5 hrs) with en route stop at Lord Krishna temple in Mathura. Rickshaw ride around Mathura, visiting temple steps alongside the river (another very memorable visit for the students). Stay in Agra.

Day 5 : Road trip from Agra - Jaipur (250 Kms/5 hrs) : dawn visit to the Taj Mahal. Leave Agra after breakfast for Jaipur, followed by a lunch in a village. This is another highlight. The warmth of welcome in some of the remote villages can be quite overwhelming.

Day 6 : Jaipur : City tour visiting the Amber Fort by elephant, the Royal Astronomical Observatory (Jantar Mantar) that is still working accurately after many years, and the City Palace complex. There will also be the opportunity to explore the local bazaar of Jaipur.

Day 7 : Jaipur - Mumbai : Morning visit to Sanganer to witness the making of handmade paper in a factory, or other cottage industries. Transfer to Jaipur airport to board flight for Mumbai.

Day 8 : Mumbai : City tour of Mumbai visiting the Elephanta Caves by ferry, the Afghan Church, Dhobi Ghat (an outdoor laundry by the river) and the Prince of Wales museum. Evening walk through Marine Drive to Chowpatty.

Day 9 : Mumbai : Visit to Dharavi, the slums of Mumbai (perhaps the major highlight of the whole tour), including workshops. Interaction and visit to a school in the slum area. It is hoped that this year we can arrange a visit to an orphanage along with the cow sanctuary which was added to the itinerary last year. Evening free for last minute shopping.

Day 10 : Mumbai : After breakfast, transfer to airport for flight back home.

Dates: these are yet to be confirmed but will hopefully be the equivalent time to the trip last year. Departure Friday 18 August - return to the UK on Monday 28 August 2017. Hopefully, departure and return will be within 24 hrs of the dates stated.

Airline tbc: Qatar Airways (2012), Virgin (2013 & 2014) (British Airways 2015), JET (2016) and I hope to use a similar airline next year. This has yet to be confirmed.

The provisional cost of the trip will be £1,900.

This price is based upon a minimum of 10 – 15 students joining this trip.

This costing includes:

1. Flights from London to Delhi and from Mumbai to London.
2. Transfer and return journeys from Abingdon and airport in the UK.
3. Accommodation for all nights on a triple sharing basis.
4. Daily buffet breakfast at all hotels. Lunch and dinner in quality restaurants during sightseeing and drives.
5. Travel Pals representatives on arrival and departure from each city.
6. Flight from Jaipur to Mumbai in normal economy class.
7. Transportation by deluxe mini/large coach for all arrival, departures, sightseeing and inter-city drives.
8. Rickshaw ride in Old Delhi.
9. Excursion by elephant to Amber Fort, Jaipur.

10. Ferry ride to and from Elephanta caves, Mumbai.
11. Entrance to all monuments as per the itinerary.
12. Visit to the Lord Krishna temple, Mathura.
13. Visit to the Sanganer paper factory.
14. Visit to slum school in Mumbai.
15. All currently applicable taxes.

Additional costs not included:

1. Photography charges at some of the monuments – payable locally.
2. Indian Visa fees. This will need to be arranged individually: it is not possible to arrange a group Visa.
3. Drinks with meals.
4. Health & inoculation arrangements – these need to be arranged in consultation with your GP.

This trip will be covered by the Schools' Comprehensive travel insurance policy.

If you would like to reserve a place for your son on this trip I will require a deposit of £250 along with the slip attached to this email. This is refundable if the trip does not go ahead but non-refundable once the process of booking the trip commences. Two additional payments to make up the remaining balance can be made on the Lent term and Summer term school bills. Obviously, the final payments will be confirmed once the size of the party is known.

Please note that by completing the consent form (providing the trip proceeds) you are committing to the total cost of this trip. The non-refundable deposit secures your son's place, but thereafter the School will proceed to make bookings and reservations to procure the best possible deals. The payment arrangements offered are a means of spreading the cost rather than a reflection of when liabilities are incurred.

The geography department has a small fund to which applications can be made to secure some extra funding to help towards payment of the final balance. This fund was created to help those families who might otherwise find it difficult to meet the full cost of a geographical trip. For more information concerning the fund you should contact Clare Butcher, Financial Controller.

If you have any further enquiries about this trip please do not hesitate to contact me – email is probably the best method.

Yours sincerely



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