

6th March 2024

Dear families

Music and Battlefields Tour 8th July 2025 - 11th July 2025 Ypres, Belgium

It is with great excitement that I write to you to introduce our Music and Battlefields Tour which will take place in July 2025. This is a fantastic opportunity for those involved in our Vocal Group (choir) and those interested in History to visit and experience the country and culture of Belgium. This trip serves as a reward trip for students in Vocal Group and students across the school. As it is predominantly a choir trip, students in our Vocal Group will get priority for places.

We will visit Belgium, staying in Ypres which is situated in the west of Belgium, near the French border. Our accommodation is likely to be the Ypres Lodge. Students will stay in multi-bedded rooms, all of which have en-suite facilities. The hostel also has recreational areas which our students will have access to. Breakfast and dinner will be provided by the hostel.

Our proposed itinerary will involve performing two concerts: one is likely to be in a Cathedral and the other will be at the Menin Gate during the daily Last Post Ceremony. We also plan to visit a theme park, take a canal boat cruise, visit the Flanders Field Museum, the Tyne Cott Cemetery and other visits to town and city centres to experience the culture of Belgium.

We will be travelling with the renowned tour company, Halsbury Travel and have entrusted them with the planning of this trip. They have a comprehensive safety management system and are fully bonded through ABTA and ATOL. They meet all the requirements of the DfE guidelines. The cost of the trip includes comprehensive travel insurance for all those attending.

We will be travelling via an executive coach with a professional and experienced driver. The coach remains with us throughout the tour and has air conditioning and toilet facilities. We will travel via ferry from Dover to Calais. This is a 4-day tour with 3 nights in Belgium.

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What is included in the price?

- Comprehensive travel insurance, including that for medical emergencies.
- Return travel
- 3 nights **half-board** accommodation (first meal - Tuesday evening)
- Full trip programme
- Concert organisation

Lunches are not provided and students will need to bring money to buy lunch for the days we are away. Whilst we can include this in the cost, we have found that students don't tend to want to eat the lunches that are provided and so have not included this.

How to book

The total cost of this tour is **£430**. In order to secure a place on the trip, please pay a non-refundable deposit of **£50** by **Monday 15th April**. The schedule for payments is as follows:

Date	Payment
15th April 2024 (deposit)	£50
Friday 31st May 2024	£120
Friday 5th July 2024	£50
Friday 4th October 2024	£120
Friday 7th March 2025	£90

All Pupil Premium students (those students entitled to free school meals) are entitled to a 50% discount on the cost of this trip. If you would like to take advantage of this discount, please contact Fiona Easton via email: f.easton@gfcs.uk

There are a limited number of spaces on this trip. Places will be prioritised to students who are part of Vocal Group and then further places allocated according to behaviour and engagement with the school.

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Deposit payments of £50 should be made electronically via www.parentpay.com using the payment item 'Music and Battlefields Tour - July 2025' payment item. If you do not have access to ParentPay, please contact the school.

You will need to complete the consent details on ParentPay, including passport information.

Passports

Please be aware that you are responsible for organising the correct visa for your child if they require one for travelling to Europe. If your child is a British citizen and does not have a passport, we may be able to arrange a group passport for them. If you are interested in this, please indicate so during the consent process.

Thank you for taking an interest in this project. If you have any questions at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours faithfully



Mr Sean Dingley
Assistant Headteacher