

15th October 2021

Dear Varndean Families,

I am pleased to inform you that the Geography Department will be running a trip to Sicily for our current Year 9 and 10 GCSE students between 24th - 28th October 2022. There are 40 spaces available for this trip, 20 spaces for each year group.

Our operating company is Travelbound, a company renowned for providing enjoyable, stimulating and safe tours, with an excellent health and safety record. We have used this company several times for residential trips abroad.

Sicily is a great destination that will provide your son/daughter with inspiration and experiences that will stay with them for life. We have designed the trip to encapsulate and complement geographical studies at Varndean School and the trip will include excursions to Mount Etna, Lipari, Vulcano and the town of Taormina. In addition students will learn how and why communities chose to live in close proximity to active volcanoes and how the natural environment has grown and developed from its volcanic history.

Excursions include:

- Taormina to visit the town and amphitheatre
- Full day at Mount Etna
- Full day visiting Lipari and Vulcano
- Visit to Alcantara Gorges

We have worked hard to ensure that this trip is as cost efficient as possible. The cost will be approximately **£745 (reduced rate may be available, please enquire for further information)**, this includes coach transfers in the UK and in Sicily, return flights, full board hotel accommodation for 4 nights, all excursions and coach tours and Covid travel insurance (please contact Kate Barnes for further details).

Please note: there may be some small entrance fees, payable on site only, but these should amount to very little. In any case, we will inform families of these costs prior to departure. There may also be an additional cost for covid testing, it is almost impossible to predict what this might look like towards the end of 2022 and we will keep families updated as much as possible on this, however, in line with new government guidelines, we don't anticipate this amounting to the large sums such as those seen during the summer for overseas travel.





Proposed payment schedule

Deposit due 30th November 2021 - £100

1st Installment due 28th February 2022 - £215

2nd Installment due 2nd May 2022 - £215

3rd Installment due 15th July 2022- £215

All payments are to be made via ParentPay. If you wish to discuss the above payment plan, please contact lynnhill@varndean.co.uk.

Deposits, where charged, are non-refundable. If a pupil is unable to take part in a trip after further monies have been paid, the school will endeavour to recoup costs on the pupil's behalf. Please note that in the majority of cases this is not possible, owing to group booking terms and conditions and cancellation fees.

We anticipate that this will be an incredibly popular trip for our students. In the event of oversubscription we will allocate places based on the following factors; student attitude to learning in KS4 Geography, whole school conduct and attendance.

For this reason, we are currently only asking families to submit an expression of interest, by completing the form attached below and returning it to the medical office by Friday 22nd October.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kate Barnes, Head of Geography

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Sicily Trip 2022 Expression of Interest

Student's name: _____ Form: _____

I confirm my child's expression of interest to attend the Sicily trip in October 2022. I am also committing to pay the initial £100 deposit by 30th November, once my child's place has been confirmed. In addition I agree to make the further 3 payments on time. I note that money will not be refunded if my child withdraws from this trip unless a replacement student is found.

[please print]

Parent/Carer name: _____

Parent/carers signature _____

Date: _____ **Please return to Caroline Heath at the Medical Centre**