

Notes for Parents' Meeting for choir trip to Venice

Meeting held on Friday 3rd October 2014 at 14.00.

Led by J Dance

Staff attending: J Liepa

Parents attending:, Mrs Shepherd, Lady Goschen, Mr & Mrs Geddes, Mrs Koller, Mrs Parker, Mrs Dobell, Mrs Drysdale, Mrs Hokinson-Woolley, Mrs Horowitz, Mrs Meek, Mrs Muncey, Mrs Oakshott, Mrs Plumptre, Mrs Milligan

Apologies from: Mrs Isles, Mrs Gbdema, Baroness Bentinck, Mrs Kung, Mrs Lowther-Pinkerton, Viscountess Woellwarth-Lauterburg, Mrs Allen, Mrs Baydur, Mrs Clarry, Mrs Henderson,

Parents have already been issued with:

- A letter, including flight information and details of the hotel where we shall be staying
- Three forms, the Behaviour Contract, Parental Approval and the Private Medical form for all non-EU residents, which must be completed and returned immediately after this Exeat. I have spare copies if anyone needs them.

Parents are being issued with:

- The School Insurance policy
- The itinerary
- Edited list of What to Bring

Can parents please check on the information list being passed round the following:

- PA = Parental Approval – please return completed form on Monday if you have not already done so. I need them from: L Bentinck
- BC = Behaviour Contract – all now complete, thank you
- EHIC = European Health Card – please return on Monday if you have not already done so.
- MI – Medical Insurance = for Non-EU residents – all complete now, thank you
- Parents' address during tour. If you are coming to Venice, please tick the column
- Parents' phone numbers during the tour – please write in the column
- Medical – any medical issues we should know about, including medication
- Supper – if you are taking your daughter out for Supper on the Saturday or Sunday, please write Sat or Sun in the Supper column. Parents and Guests coming to Venice – please fill in so that I can address you and your guests appropriately

Please note that girls are to be collected directly from Gatwick on our return. If they need anything for Half Term, they must take it home TODAY!

Please be advised that:

- JD, AB and JL are all first aiders
- Night duty will be covered by AB (on call)

If you are intending to take your daughter (and perhaps friends) out on Saturday or Sunday evening, Alison will ask you to sign a disclaimer, one copy to be retained by her, and you must bring them back at a reasonable time, certainly no later than 10.30pm.

Staff mobile phone numbers are printed on the front of the itinerary. Girls must put these into their phones. We do not want to see mobile phones being used except in an emergency. Any girl constantly on her phone will have it confiscated.

Please ensure that girls pack mobile phone chargers and continental adapters.

Every girl and staff member has been allocated a number for roll call purposes. Diana is No 1, Amber is No 26. Girls will find their numbers on the music notice board next week and memorise their number.

Alison is organising black skirts and cream blouses for the first concert on the Saturday at the church of the Santa Maria del Miracoli. They will be in a labelled bag and must be put back in the labelled bag after the concert. Girls are responsible for taking them to Venice and bringing them back. They must hand them in to Alison after Half Term. Girls will need flesh coloured tights and black school shoes for that concert.

Janet is organising albs. These are like cassocks and will need to be carried by every girl, to St. Mark's Basilica on the Sunday, so they should bring a bag large enough for this purpose. They will NOT be allowed to take a rucksack into St Mark's – my daughter was not allowed in in the summer, so I have crossed that off the list of Things to Bring and instead put "large bag". We are looking into leaving albs in lockers at the Doge's Palace and then collecting them once we have done our tour.

BA luggage policy: Hand luggage is 1 "standard size bag" (something that can fit in overhead lockers) + 1 smaller purse or laptop bag. Checked luggage: 1 bag 90cm x 75cm x 43cm and weighing no more than 23kg. Liquids of 100ml capacity and under must be presented in a re-sealable plastic bag. Once we have checked in we must go straight to passport control. We must also go to our gate as soon as it is displayed on the screen. Girls must stay in groups of 3 or 4 at all times.

Itinerary. There may still be some slight changes to the itinerary as we still have two weeks left before we depart. I went to Venice in the summer and have drawn up what I hope is a full, educational, cultural, interesting and fun itinerary.

At the Music Museum, there will some questions to answer in readiness for the quiz on the last night. On the Saturday, we will be having lunch in the piazza di San Stephano. If you say "Buon Giorno", they will be able to tell from your accent that you are English and will switch to English. Everyone I spoke to speaks English so you will have no problem making yourself understand. Just make sure you are polite!

Please ensure that your daughter(s) have appropriate clothing for the visit to St Mark's Basilica – no bare shoulders or midriffs, please. Girls must also take appropriate home clothes for the concert in Padua, i.e. no jeans or T-shirts.

Other points:

- Flights leave and arrive from/at Gatwick North Terminal.

- It is economical to buy one bottle of water and then refill it at one of the drinking water fountains in the city. There is a vending machine at the hotel, but drinks cost E2.50, so best to buy drinks from Brek's Bar on the Lista di Spagna
- Having spent a week in Venice in the summer, I am now recommending the girls bring 100Euros. To charter a gondolier on the last day costs 100 Euros per boat. If the girls share a boat, and take their tour leader, they can share the cost of the gondolier, as we found Venice to be quite expensive. If you use the vaporetti on the last day, it will cost you 6 Euros for one stop.
- Form III pocket money will be looked after by JD. Please put Euros for Form III in a named envelope. I will do the banking for my group at breakfast each morning. Other year groups should keep their own. We are checking whether there are safes in the hotel rooms.
- Although parents are asked to pick their daughters up promptly from Gatwick on our return, no girl will be left on her own if parents are delayed. Similarly, please do not leave without first telling a member of staff that you have taken your daughter

All the rooms have hairdryers with private bathrooms

Regarding special diets, I will let Equity know, but girls must be responsible for telling their waiter when we are eating out of any special diets

I will find out if we can leave our albs and music at the Doge's Palace

The vaporetti (water buses) get very crowded, so it is important to stay with your tour leader in case we can't all get on the same vaporetti. Tour leaders are:

Miss Liokoura UVI

Janet Liepa Form V

Alison Brooks Form IV (1st half)

Mrs Dance Form IV (2nd half) and Form III