



Friday 27th May

Dear parents and carers,

As the date of the Battlefields visit draws nearer, the situation regarding international travel and COVID-19 restrictions becomes clearer. I am writing to inform you of the tour company's COVID-specific rules for foreign travel, as well as the school's approach regarding COVID-19 restrictions. In simple terms, the school has to work within the travel rules outlined by the tour company.

You will be aware that there are still a number of restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will be travelling through the Netherlands, and staying in Belgium and France. Each country has different rules regarding conditions of entry and the necessity or otherwise of being vaccinated. However, in two of the three countries mentioned, there are restrictions upon entry for those without proof of vaccination against COVID-19.

The tour company's insurance policy provides significant cover for those who are vaccinated against COVID-19. For trip leaders, the biggest concern is if a student were to test positive whilst overseas. Each of the three countries has laws requiring self-isolation in the case of a positive test. The insurance would provide cover for a fully vaccinated student to be flown home. However, the tour company's insurance does not provide the same cover for those who have *not* been fully vaccinated. This may create a situation in which staff to student ratios fall below the limits stipulated by the Local Authority. **Therefore, we are unable to take any students on the visit who have not received two doses of a recognised COVID-19 vaccine.** It is also important to note that, for France and the Netherlands, the entry requirements require the second dose of the vaccine to have had time to take effect. As a result, **students must have received their second dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before the date of travel (or 28 days if they received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine).** **They must also have received their first dose in the previous 270 days (approx. nine months) prior to travel. Anyone who received their first dose before this date is only considered fully vaccinated if they have had a booster (third dose).** This means that **anyone who had their first dose of the vaccine before the 11th November 2021 will need to arrange a booster immediately in order to travel.** Dates of all vaccinations are provided on the vaccination certificate discussed below.

The restrictions also mean that we will require proof of vaccination status for your child before they travel, and that they will need to have their own personal copy when they travel. France and the Netherlands both accept the vaccination certificate generated by the NHS App. This is freely available to download to mobile devices. The app provides clear instructions as to how to create a vaccination certificate, which it will automatically email to you. **Please generate the certificate as soon as possible and email it to Battlefields2022@durhamjohnston.org.uk with the subject line containing your child's name and 'Battlefields visit' by Friday 10th June.** Please be aware that the NHS App is different to the NHS COVID-19 App.

I am aware that this may create a situation in which your child may not be able to travel. Whilst I recognise that some of the above conditions may cause difficulty or disappointment for students and parents, it is important that we as a school (and I as a team leader) ensure the safety of our staff and students at all times. I hope that you understand my reason for contacting you. As you will appreciate advice continues to change, and I am more than happy to offer additional information if you contact me using the email address identified above.

Yours sincerely,

Mr F Doyle
(Trip Coordinator and Subject Leader, History)

Mr S McArdle
(Educational Visits Co-ordinator for Durham Johnston Comprehensive School)



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