



14 September 2017

Dear parents,

Uganda 2018

I am writing to update you on the Uganda trip planned for 2018. We have been unable to confirm details before now for two key reasons:

- Firstly, the flight prices were only released last week and so any pricing was potentially liable to change. We always stressed that we wanted to give people an accurate price for the trip before students commit.
- Secondly, there has been unprecedented interest in the trip, with over 30 students paying a deposit. We have been working with Build Africa to establish the largest number of students we can take. In the past, the maximum number of students we have taken is 17.

As a result of this there are still some uncertainties which I want to outline below and also some different options.

Itinerary

After speaking to Build Africa they are suggesting they will accommodate us in a range of school-based and wider charity options for four days.

We will fly out to Uganda on Thursday 19th July/ Friday 20th July and return by Monday 30th July. Our plan is to travel to Masindi on Saturday 21st July from Entebbe. We have provisionally booked in a safari experience for Sunday 22nd at Murchison Falls. We will spend the majority of the week after the safari visiting the Build Africa projects and then return to Entebbe at the weekend. The plan will then be to fly home by Monday 30th/ Tuesday 31st July.

Pricing

There is still an element of variability with the pricing but we have secured good value flights and we are now confident that it will not rise above £1900. When we initially advertised the trip the anticipated cost was £1700-2000. The 2016 visit did actually come in under budget and parents received a substantial refund, but the cost has not been helped by the exchange rate with the dollar.

It should be remembered that vaccinations and the cost of the visa are in addition to this price. The vaccinations in 2016 came to around £300. The visa is currently quoted as \$50 for a single entry, but this did change throughout the planning process last time.

If anyone feels now that this is too high a cost then the school will provide a full refund of the deposit paid.

Selection of students

Build Africa are able to accommodate 21 students. We have looked at other options but they would undermine the nature of the trip. We are therefore proposing two different options:



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- Option 1: If a student no longer wants to go, we will as stated above give a full refund of the deposit paid
- Option 2: We are proposing that Year 12 are prioritised, as this is the only chance they will have of going on this trip. Due to numbers we will be organising a second trip to Uganda for current Year 11 students who are still at Ashcombe in July 2019. This means that everyone who has expressed an interest in taking part will be able to take part in the trip. It also has the added advantage of a longer lead-in time for payment.

Fund raising

We stressed at the initial meeting that there will be an important fund raising element to the trip and this will be a 12 month venture starting (for those visiting next summer) in January 2018 and lasting through till December 2018. It is vital that students are aware of this commitment to the visit. As a school we need to raise around £15,000 and the expectation is that students will lead this.

The next stages

Year 12 students need to contact Mr Blackband on blackband.ben@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk to confirm that they still want to take part in the 2018 visit. We will then share the payment plan details with them.

Year 11 students need to contact me on panting.chris@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk to say whether they would like to take part in the **2019** visit. We are aware that some people will be disappointed but we did not want to draw people's names out of a hat and we feel that this proposal will allow everyone to go to Uganda, albeit (for Year 11s) 12 months later.

Yours sincerely,

Mr C G Panting