



KV01AT

June 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Geography fieldtrip to Iceland – Thursday 11.04.2024 to Wednesday 17.04.2024**

We have managed to secure 80 places for our annual Iceland trip. The country has become extremely popular and as a result, places for groups are becoming harder to find. In 2024 this trip will run during the last part of the Easter Holidays and during 3 days of the summer term. This will be after the Year 10 exams. The itinerary will allow students to gain a fantastic insight into topics covered by both the GCSE and A-level Geography (and Geology) specifications. Examples include glaciation (studied at A-level), hydrology, volcanoes, and plate tectonics (all at A-level/GCSE). This trip will once again provide a fabulous opportunity to understand the landscape and tectonic background of this beautiful island.

The trip itinerary is listed in full so you can look up some of the places we are visiting:

**Thurs 11.04.24 Travel Day and trip to Laugardalslaug, an outdoor geothermally heated swimming pool.**

Depart WKGS at 0800 (estimate) by coach to Manchester.

Fly from Manchester (at 1305 with Iceland Air, the national carrier) to Keflavik airport in the SW of Iceland. On arrival around 1400, we will transfer to the Hotel Cabin. Before dinner we will walk into the centre of the capital – the city of Reykjavik. After dinner, we will walk to the nearby public outdoor geothermally heated pool for swimming and then overnight in Reykjavik.

**Fri 12.04.24 Full day visit to Snæfellsnes Peninsula**

Breakfast in the hotel. Snæfellsnes peninsula, is a geological paradise with its lava fields, volcanoes, glaciers, yellow and black sand beaches and caves. The main attraction is Snæfellsjökull glacier with its beautifully shaped stratovolcano at the very end of the peninsula. The area around the glacier makes up Snæfellsjökull National Park, Iceland's oldest national park. Lunch box on the way. The volcano is mentioned in Jules Verne's science fiction novel *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*. Arnarstapi offers a great opportunity for a walk along the sea cliffs with spectacular columnar rock formations where sea birds nest. We visit Djúpalónssandur, a beach area of unusual lava pebbles and jagged cliffs. You'll also learn about legends and Viking history in this beautiful corner of Iceland. Dinner and overnight stay in Reykjavik with evening visit to local ice cream parlour even though the temperature may be chilly.

**Sat 13.04.24 Golden Circle & Efstidalur.**

Breakfast in the Cabin Hotel and pack cases for move to new hotel in a more rural location at the end of day. This full day 'Golden Circle' excursion will start with a visit to the beautiful Gullfoss, the huge 'golden' waterfall and impressive canyon where tectonic actions and erosion by water join forces to create a stunning landscape. A few minutes drive from here is the Great Geysir that has given its name to hot springs all over the world. Geysir no longer erupts, but you will see one of the most active geysers in the area - Strokkur - spouting up to 30 metres (98 feet).

Lunch is at Efstidalur Farm which makes its own burgers and amazing ice cream with its own produce. Possibly one of the best burgers you will taste! The afternoon is spent exploring Thingvellir National Park, a remarkable geological, and the most historical, site in Iceland. Þingvellir (twinned with Thingwall, Wirral) is the site of the world's oldest democratic parliament, founded in 930 A.D. The beautiful canyon running through the park is actually the meeting point of two of the earth's tectonic plates. From here, we will drive to a different hotel at Dyrholaey in a very peaceful remote locality. It was here in February

2020 and 2022 that we were treated to a fabulous Northern lights display – though please remember this is never guaranteed to happen.

**Sun 14.04.24 Skaftafell & Jokulsarlón Dyrholæy Tour**

Good breakfast in the Dyrholaey Hotel. Drive in the direction of Skaftafell National Park. At Kirkjubærklaustur we get close to glaciers and learn about their formation. Stop off at Eldhraun “woolley fringe” moss lava fields (from Lakagigar eruption). Lunch box. At Skaftafell National Park we will walk (uphill) to see a stunning waterfall and glacial snouts. The vantage point allows for spectacular views of the huge glacial outwash plains and nearby glaciers. Another highlight is the Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon, where huge icebergs break off from the Vatnajökull (Europe’s second largest ice cap) and float in still & deep waters of the Lagoon. This lake was frozen to film the car chase in the James Bond 007 - **Die Another Day** film. A visit to the nearby ‘Jewel beach’ with its icebergs is always memorable. Evening dinner and pack to leave the hotel in the morning.

**Mon 15.04.24 South Shore & Lava Centre**

Early start and breakfast so we can visit the Solhemajokull glacier, part of the larger Myrdalsjokull ice sheet as the light comes up and before any other tourists arrive. The South Shore region is an excellent way to discover more about how volcanic activity shaped the Land of Fire and Ice. Drive past Dyrhólaey, a magnificent keyhole-shaped headland with sheer cliffs. Take a walk on the seashore, which is flanked by steep bird cliffs rising above the black, basalt wave pounded sands. You will have frequent views of mountains, including snow-shrouded Hekla and the towering, ice-capped strato-volcano Eyjafjallajökull. Continue through the region that is the setting for the Viking-age epic, *Burnt Njáll’s Saga*. We will learn a lot about this tectonic landscape at the Lava Centre, a new interactive museum where you can learn about volcanoes and earthquakes. From here we will take time to visit two spectacular waterfalls, Seljalandsfoss and Skógarfoss. Each waterfall has its own unique shape and story. Lunch in Árhús, Rangárbakkar for all you can eat pizza. Head over the scenic mountain pass Hellisheiði for a magnificent view of the wide southern depositional outwash plains formed by glacial meltwater streams. Back to the capital Reykjavik to stay again in the Cabin Hotel. Evening walk into the city centre.

**Tues 16.04.24 Hellisheiði Power Station, Reykjanes Peninsula & Blue Lagoon**

Breakfast in the hotel. Visit Hellisheiði Power Station before discovering the amazing geological features of Reykjanes Peninsula, a UNESCO Geopark. Take a coastal road to Lake Kleifarvatn, set in fascinating, stark, moon-like surroundings. Near the lake’s southern end lies Krísvík with powerful jets of sulphurous steam escaping from deep below the earth’s crust. Here you can view innumerable small hot springs, mud pots, boiling pools and other types of geothermal activity. Lunch box included Continue under low mountains along the shore, where with craggy cliffs rise sheer from the sea. Visit Grindavík, a bustling town with a large fishing fleet. Take the road that leads to the Bridge between Continents. Here you can see the MidAtlantic ridge that divides the North American and European tectonic plates. Iceland is the only place on Earth where the ridge can be seen on land. Afterwards, continue to the famous Blue Lagoon (comfort package including a free drink in the pool). The Lagoon is a unique lake with pleasantly warm mineral-rich geothermal water in the middle of a black lava field. Natural silica salts and minerals give the Lagoon its rich blue colour. Here we enjoy a sauna, steam baths and a ‘massage waterfall much needed after the long day of travel. The facilities include modern changing rooms and showers. A visit to the Blue Lagoon is invigorating and exciting. After about one hour of bathing, we return to Hotel Cabin for dinner.

**Wed 17.04.24** Early wake up at 0430 and Breakfast in the hotel before leaving for Keflavík International Airport departure (0800) and flight back to Manchester arriving around 1130. Coach back to WKGS with a stop for lunch arriving at school around 1500.

**The cost of this trip will be £1560. This trip is 7 days (6 nights) and is longer than that offered by other schools. This amount currently includes:**

- Coach travel from WKGS to Manchester airport and return
- Return scheduled flights with Iceland Air
- Full board accommodation. Students will share a double, twin, or triple room equipped with Wi-Fi, satellite TV, en-suite bathroom.
- Insurance will be the school’s own school journey insurance, used on other international trips arranged by WKGS and supported by the UK government (RPA).
- Admission to extra museums on the tour.
- Lunch box/packed lunch except on the days travelling to and from Iceland.
- All travel and tours (6 in total) including both a swim at Blue Lagoon and an evening swim in a geothermally heated outdoor pool in the capital.
- A trip hoodie with logo added.

Final arrangements about departure times and flights are to be finalised.

This trip will be open to any student studying GCSE or A-level Geography **in September 2024**. Priority for the 80 places is given to GCSE geographers with any spare places going to other Y10s in 2024 (Current Y9). This is a **non-compulsory** trip and as the trip is partly in the Easter holiday and teacher's give of their time freely, we reserve the right of which participants are selected (usually based on a student's behaviour over the last year). **Usually, we operate a first come basis**. Please also be aware that because this is an extracurricular trip that it is usually not possible for the school to provide financial assistance.

**To secure a place, please pay online, via Scopay, a deposit of £200 by 1600 on Wednesday July 5<sup>th</sup>**. Further instalments will then be due as follows:

£300 by 8 September 2023  
£300 by 31 October 2023  
£300 by 30 November 2023  
Final balance of £460 by 10 January 2024


**Please also complete the online slip and medical form using the link which will be emailed to your daughter/son/ward following payment**. Should you drop out then we reserve the right to keep this deposit until a replacement is found or an agreement with the insurers to cover the cost has been reached. The balance for the trip will need to be paid by Wednesday 10 January 2024. Students on the trip will be expected to participate in the activities and also be able to eat the good food provided. It is possible to cater for vegetarians and other dietary requirements, although veganism is still tricky in Iceland.

To assist with your planning, and for information, please be aware that GCSE Geography students usually undertake their **compulsory** three-day residential fieldtrip (Lake District and NE England) in the October of Year 10 (2023) at a cost of £130 (fully inclusive) – this is still being planned.

A risk assessment, together with further guidance literature and details of the insurance policy, will be available at the parents' meeting should there be sufficient interest shown.

Temperatures at this time of year will probably average around -4°C or colder with a frequent cold wind further decreasing the temperatures at times. In 2022 this dropped to a 'feels-like' temperature of -12°C. Heavy snow is common. Advice will be given on the most suitable clothing to be worn. All participants will need to wear thermal underclothes and a **good waterproof outer coat** preferably insulated with a good liner. Hats, gloves etc. will also be needed. **Walking boots are compulsory for the trip**. Given these weather conditions and the nature of the terrain, participants should therefore have a reasonable level of fitness. We may have some suitable clothing that students can borrow.

Yours sincerely



Mr Kevin Vane  
Head of Geography

*The School has a blanket School Journey Insurance policy in place to provide appropriate cancellation, curtailment, medical and personal possessions cover. This policy also carries very limited personal accident insurance cover for pupils. As the School will not be liable for any injury arising from incidents beyond our direct control, parents/carers may wish to consider purchasing their own personal accident cover to enhance the limited protection of this policy.*