



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Head Master: Dr S D Smallwood BSc (Hons) PhD NPQH

10 November 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian

RUGBY TOUR - 2017

This letter is in reply to a number of parents contacting me regarding the proposed trip to Australia in 2017. Please see below my explanation for choosing Australia as our next destination. Wherever we choose to go, it is always a fantastic trip and opportunity. My only preference as a tour leader is getting the balance between the boys safety and quality of excursion (which is great wherever we go), but the biggest variable is the quality of rugby to be played. The boys would learn very little if the opposition were not the right standard.

Why Australia?

We have chosen Australia based on a number of factors. We have toured there previously and so know the destinations, teams and excursions. From our end this makes organising and running the trip a lot easier, especially if a lead member of staff is unable to make the trip (as happened last summer). The quality of opposition is excellent and the level of billeting fantastic as well as the hotel options. Australia also allows us the option of multiple natural free excursions, but also extras if fund raising permits. We know the language (just) and also the location of medical centres should they be needed. Regardless of destination, matches are not played unless medical staff are present.

Based on the last two trips where options have been given to parents, Europe has not been picked, North America was picked by one person and there was a 50:50 split between Argentina and New Zealand. Using this information and what we know of the destinations, we chose Australia for 2017. I have attached a copy of some slides from our last tour to Australia in 2013 for your information.

Destinations omitted

From the list of possible destinations we considered, I omitted South Africa personally due to safety and security concerns. Although previously discussed, Japan would cost the same if not more than the current proposed trip and South America is not included as we have just returned and although a fantastic trip, it is at times a hard destination in terms of logistics. The competition in North America/Canada is not strong enough and Europe has not been chosen since my very first tour when we had a year to turn it around.

Tour costing

The cost of the current trip is the lowest we have offered since Italy in 2011. We cannot lower the cost of a trip, but fundraising frees funds for other things like extra excursions, extra kit and most importantly to subsidise boy's meals which are not always included. On the last two trips we have been able to give boys spending money to save them spending their own. Some even gave money back to their parents. Personally having been at the school myself and raised money for my own trips, I think the onus should be on the boys to make the money for the trip rather than relying on parents. If boys really want to go they should be able to find ways to raise their own funds, thus reducing the pressure on parents.



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Why Y11 and Y12?

By taking the two year groups coming back in to the school we benefit from having boys who have travelled and played together, while not having the worry of leavers touring who perhaps have less of a school focus on their travels. We would intend to have two teams, one 1st XV and another Developmental XV. Once we know the tour party, we rate our teams and are assigned to the relevant opposition. By choosing Australia we know the match ups will be correct having already played the opposition. In Argentina and Italy the match ups were not quite right and we had to intervene.

What to do now

My intention was to make people aware of the forthcoming trip and secure interest so I can move forward with planning. However in light of various correspondences I have felt the need to clarify the above and I hope I have put people's minds at ease. I have extended the deadline for replies now by a fortnight so please ensure that all replies are received by Friday 20 November 2015. Currently we have enough boys committed for the tour to run, and I hope others will join. We sincerely believe Australia is our best option as a tour destination for all of the reasons above. Please discuss as a family and with team mates as all replies for the Tour must be received by Friday 20 November.

If you have already paid your deposit for the forthcoming trip, thank you for your promptness in doing so. Without this early commitment I cannot move forward. If you are yet to pay, but intend to or have any specific concerns regarding finances please contact myself or the finance department.

As previously stated prices include excursions, flights, insurance, tour kit and most meals. Payments are broken up over the course of the next couple of years in order to help budget and prepare for the trip and to fundraise to add as much as possible to the experience. A large scale sports tour is a fantastic experience and an opportunity that does not come around often.

Yours sincerely

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