

8 July 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing in response to a number of emails we have had regarding trips and enrichment opportunities for Year 8 students.

We recognise that some parents and carers have been disappointed with the trip offer for Year 8 in Activities Week this year. The £110 for Activities Week covers both the Legoland trip and a trip to Warwick Castle as well as the other activities that are taking place onsite during that week. Throughout the week, students are encouraged to develop many of the skills that go with our ALIVE values (interdependence, resilience, contribution, communication) and with the diversity of socio-economic background in our school we have to try and find trips that offer a middle ground. At SMRT we have students who have never left Bristol in classrooms with students who go abroad on holiday every year. We think it is important to take the whole year group to one place and Legoland/Warwick Castle do this well, as there is enough challenge, but it is manageable for all students. Whilst I appreciate that Legoland may feel a little young for Year 8 students, we find that students have a wonderful day, and it is a real treat at the end of a long year.

We recognise that there are opportunities to do more throughout the year and take that feedback on board. We have been reviewing Activities Week this academic year based on a range of feedback, and it is likely we will change our approach to offer more of a spread of activities throughout the academic year in future. We offer visits to Europe and beyond but over the last 2 years we have been unable to do this for some year groups due to colleagues being on leave, which has impacted planning. During this time some year groups have experienced visits to Germany, Spain, Panama, Rome, and Switzerland. We are hopeful for next year and will do our best to ensure that our current Year 8 students have the opportunity for an educational visit abroad.

With regards to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, students in Year 9 are encouraged to apply. We cap the number of students allowed to take part at 80 as this ensures we can effectively and efficiently run all aspects of the award, including the expeditions, safely. Students are not picked on a lottery basis but rather in order of application (first come first served). Mr Trott (DofE Coordinator) always ensures that this is done as fairly as possible and will be open to discussion in exceptional circumstances.

We hope that this answers your questions and concerns. We recognise that it can be a challenge to please every family in a large year group all of the time and are grateful for your support as we navigate trying to do this.

Yours faithfully



Del Planter  
Headteacher