



THE DOWNS SCHOOL

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14 June 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

Current Year 7 - Ski Trip to La Thuile, Italy 8 – 16 April 2017 (when in Year 8)

It is the aim of the school not only to encourage your child with their academic studies, but also develop their social skills, self-esteem and physical fitness as well as to enable them to experience environments outside their normal day-to-day lives. For a number of years we have organised an Easter school ski trip to La Thuile, Italy. The trip is organised through a company called Interski who have the largest British run ski school in the Alps.

Please note, if your daughter is a current year 7 netball player you will have already received a letter regarding a sports tour to Holland, also taking place in Easter 2017. As the trips co-incide your daughter is unable to participate in both. Therefore, if you have already paid your deposit for the Holland trip and you now wish to apply for the ski trip, please email the school before Thursday 16 June requesting either a refund or the deposit of £200 to be transferred to the ski trip. If the ski trip is over-subscribed, places will be allocated by a random draw and therefore places are not guaranteed. On all other school trips deposits are non-refundable.

We will be travelling to Italy by coach and staying in 4 star apartments in a self-contained village of La Thuile situated in Italy's beautiful Aosta Valley. La Thuile is part of an international snowsport area, linked to the runs of La Rosière (in France) by the same lifts and skipass. There are over 150 kms of runs. The La Combe chair lift gives access to one of the best all-in-one runs for beginners. The Aosta Valley is one of the nearest Alpine snowsport areas to the UK by road – just 10/11 hours drive from Calais along fast French autoroutes to the Mont Blanc tunnel. Once you're through the tunnel, you are there. It could not be easier – no long, slow mountain roads to negotiate.

The costs of the trip includes: (* denotes added value compared to other travel companies)

1. Return coach travel
2. Meals during coach transit *
3. 4 Star accommodation* (apartments in self-contained 'village')
4. Breakfast and evening meals
5. Hot lunch on the mountain*
6. Ski Pass, Skis & Boot Hire
7. 4 Hours Ski Lessons per day
8. Lunch time supervision (instructors)*
9. Evening activities included*
10. Comprehensive winter sports insurance
11. One dry ski slope session prior to the trip
12. Hoodie & polo shirt

Students will need to provide money for any other food or drinks they may wish to purchase. Additionally, students will need specialist ski clothing. It is a legal requirement that all students

wear a suitable helmet whilst skiing. These can be provided by yourselves or ordered through SnowCo, further details will be given at the parents' evening.

Each student must have their own valid passport. Please ensure that your child's passport will be valid for the duration of the trip. In addition, it is always sensible to have an expiry date beyond the return date of the trip in case of any unforeseen delays. If your child's passport expires within a month of the return date, we would ask that you re-new their passport before we travel. (You do not have to wait until their old passport expires to apply to renew it and any time left on the old passport when you apply will be added to the new passport). If your child has a valid non-UK passport please check the visa requirements for Italy and let me know as soon as possible. Students will also need a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) which you can order, without charge, via the NHS website.

Some of the students' free time may be unsupervised but they will be expected to follow the rules laid out by the staff at The Downs School, and those of the Tour Company and hotel. There will be a Code of Conduct issued which will need to be signed by both the parent/carer and student.

Although this trip is open to all current Year 7 students, we reserve the right to refuse to take those students whose poor behaviour may tarnish the good name of The Downs or whose actions may put themselves or others in danger. We also reserve the right to withdraw any student whose behaviour at school deteriorates between now and the departure date. In these circumstances the amount of refund will depend on the cancellation arrangements.

An approximate itinerary in terms of timings might be as follows (EXAMPLE ONLY)

Saturday 8 April	Depart school – 16.00 Ferry departs Dover– 21.00
Sunday 9 April	Arrive at resort -10.30 Settle into hotel Meeting for ground rules/expectations FIRE DRILL Evening Activity –e.g. Quiz Night
Monday 10 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Evening Activity – eg. Treasure Hunt
Tuesday 11 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Evening Activity –e.g. Snow Tubing
Wednesday 12 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Evening Activity –e.g. Swimming Party

Thursday 13 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Evening Activity –e.g. Pizza Evening
Friday 14 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Presentation Evening + Disco
Saturday 15 April	Breakfast served in ski lift restaurant Morning – Two hours ski lessons Lunch in mountain restaurant / hotel Afternoon – Two hours ski lessons Evening meal in local restaurant Evening departure – 19.30
Sunday 16 April	Ferry departs Calais– 08.30 Arrival back at school – 12.30

The cost of the trip is £985.00. This is based on 40 students going on the trip, if fewer students take part in the trip the price will have to increase and you will be informed of this. Payments (on the current basis) will be required in 4 instalments as follows:

Non-refundable deposit	£200	Thursday 30 June 2016 3.30pm
First instalment	£265	Friday 9 September 2016
Second instalment	£265	Friday 7 October 2016
Final instalment	£255	Friday 4 November 2016
Total	£985	

This trip is very popular and if oversubscribed, places will be allocated by a random draw of names from a hat and can be secured by making the deposit payment either by paying through ParentPay and ticking the on-line permission box **or** by completing the slip below. If you do not wish to use ParentPay, please put your cheque together with the completed slip below (cheques made payable to 'The Downs School') in an envelope marked "Year 8 Italy Ski Trip 2017" and ask your child to deposit it in the secure box outside the Finance Office.

If you are unsuccessful in being allocated a place, your deposit will be refunded. **In all other circumstances, deposits are non-refundable.** By requesting a place you will be under an obligation to pay subsequent payments (if your child is successful) and cancellation charges will apply on a sliding scale should you withdraw from the trip at a later date. Full details of these are available on request. The school's decision as regards place allocation is final.

Following the Government pupil premium funding arrangements, LIFT, FSM & EVER6FSM students can receive a contribution of £100 towards the cost of this trip (if they obtain a place). The deposit of £200 must be paid by parents/carers to obtain a place.

The closing date for entry to the draw is **Thursday 30 June 2016 3.30pm.**

You will be notified in writing whether or not your child has secured a place with the first payment then being due on **Friday 9 September**. Please note that failure to make subsequent payments by the dates specified could jeopardise your child's place.

There will be a reserve list and you will be told if your child is on this list. Deposits for students on the reserve list will be refunded until a place becomes available. You will need to confirm in writing if you wish your child to remain on this list. When a place becomes available you will be informed and then the payments will be due in line with the payment schedule.

We very much hope that your child will be able to participate in this exciting trip we are offering. If you would like any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

D. Holbrook

Mr D. Holbrook
Trip Leader

Trips/SkiTriptalyYear8 2017

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**Year 8 Ski Trip to Italy 2017
Request for Place – Cheque payments only**

**Please return to the Finance Office post box no later than
Thursday 30 June 2016 3.30pm**

Name of Student (please print) _____ Tutor Group _____

I give permission for my son / daughter to take part in the ski trip as set out in the letter and I confirm that I would like her / his name included in the draw for a place. I understand that this means that if successful I will be required to pay the remainder of the cost of the trip in instalments. I accept that the decision regarding the allocation of places by the school is final.

I enclose the non-refundable cheque deposit of £200. (This will be refunded if you do not secure a place).

My child is FSM / EVER6FSM / LIFT (please circle if appropriate)

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

Name (please print) _____