



KV11AT

July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Geography fieldtrip to Iceland – Monday 14.04.25 to Sunday 18.04.2025

We have managed to secure 50 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 2025 this trip will run during the last part of the Easter Holidays. 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:

Mon 14.04.25 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, then an evening visit to local ice cream parlour even though the temperature may be chilly. Overnight in Reykjavik.

Tues 15.04.25 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. Thingvellir (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. Overnight in Dyrholaey.

Wed 16.04.25 Skaftafell & Jokulsarlón Dyrholaey 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 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. Overnight in Dyrholaey.

Thur 17.04.25 Dyrhólaey and Vik

Morning in the hotel learning about all that we are seeing. Lunch in the hotel and then on to 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 of black basalt columns rising above the black basalt wave pounded sands. Another chance to see the Northern Lights. Evening dinner and pack to leave the hotel in the morning.

Fri 18.04.25 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 for about two hours. Continue the travel along the South Shore. 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 is in the new restaurant adjacent to one of the waterfalls. 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 or a second swim at the outdoor baths.

Sat 19.04.25 Hellisheidi Power Station, Reykjanes Peninsula & Blue Lagoon

Breakfast in the hotel. Visit Hellisheidi 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 Krísuvík 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. Depending on the volcanic activity in this area we 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 (driving over a very recent lava flow) 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 which has recently seen significant volcanic activity. 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.

Sun 20.04.25 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 arriving at school around 1500.

The cost of this trip will be £1800. 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 – the national carrier
- 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 current year 9 students who will be Year 10 in 2025. Priority for the 50 places is given to GCSE geographers with any spare places going to other Y10s in 2025. This is a **non-compulsory** trip and as the trip is partly in the Easter holiday and teachers give of their time freely, we reserve the right as to 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 on this Friday 12 July 2024. It is very difficult to secure flight places at the time of year we are going as Iceland is now such a popular destination. We have managed to secure some places but will need to therefore move very quickly. Further instalments will then be due as follows:

£300 by 10 September 2024
£400 by 31 October 2024
£400 by 28 November 2024
Final balance of £500 by 8 January 2025


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 8 January 2025. 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 'Coast to Coast' fieldtrip (Lake District and NE England) in the summer of Year 10 (2025) at a cost of £150 (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.

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 though we do have some that can be loaned.** Given these weather conditions and the nature of the terrain, participants should therefore have a reasonable level of fitness. We may also 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.