**Parent/Carer Information for Residential Trips**

Your child has expressed an interest in taking part in a residential trip. It is important that the following information is read before you make a final decision about them taking part and/or start paying for the trip.

**Risk/Benefit**

Residential visits, whether in the UK or abroad, provide rich learning experiences for young people and are a valuable part of the curriculum we provide. However it is important for you to be aware of, and accept, that every trip will have specific risks associated with them. Examples of this would include travel to and from the venue, the activities that the young people will be taking part in or health/security risks. However parents/carers should be reassured that every residential visit is assessed on an individual basis to ensure that the risks are minimised and acceptable.

It is the responsibility of trip leaders to give parents/carers detailed information about a trip, and highlight any particular risks that might not be obvious, so that you can make an informed decision about your child taking part. **However you also have a responsibility to ask about anything you’re unsure about.**

**Finance**

Once parents/carers have signed their child up for a trip, and paid the deposit, this commits them to paying the full cost of the trip in line with the payment plan. The following points are important to consider:

* If you or your child changes their mind about taking part you would be liable for the full costs unless their place can be filled
* Trips will only be cancelled if the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is advising against travel to that area – in which case all monies paid would be reimbursed or an alternative opportunity provided
* In some circumstances (e.g. medical reasons or a bereavement) a claim would be made through Falkirk Council’s insurance to recover monies paid

**Terrorist/Health risks**

Situations that we have no control over may well occur in the lead up to trip that would cause concern for you or your child. The most recent examples of this include terrorist attacks and the Ebola and Zika outbreaks.

As a local authority we keep close checks on, and follow, the advice being given by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and travel companies. We also have access to valuable information from other schools and local authorities. The safety of our young people is our main concern and parents should be reassured that each individual trip is assessed in the initial planning stage, and regularly in the run up to the trip, to ensure that we are not putting pupils or staff at unacceptable risk.

However parents making a commitment to a residential visit may still find themselves in the situation where they no longer feel comfortable with their child taking part. As outlined above you would be liable for the full cost of the trip if you choose to withdraw your child and **it is important to ensure that you are comfortable with this risk and accept that responsibility.**

Please consider the above information carefully and if appropriate complete the attached form to enable your child to take part.