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6th March 2020

Dear Colm

As you are well aware, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) news is flooding the media. There are lots of variables depending on travel dates and destination however we have been working hard to find solutions within our control and answer the many questions being asked by school management, group leaders and parents. As we are currently dealing with so many unknown factors and it is impossible to know what is going to happen in the future, we wanted to inform you of your current options.

We are trying to be as proactive and fair as possible and we have been working closely with our suppliers to calculate what we can recoup if you choose to cancel. As you are now so close to departure your tour falls into the 100% cancellation, strictly speaking your group is not entitled to any refund. However, if you decide to cancel your tour before 9th March, we are pleased to confirm that you will definitely receive some form of refund. We can offer this because we have already been able to agree partial refunds with our suppliers without breaking our contracts. Should you not cancel by 9th March, we will have to pay our suppliers as we are contractually obligated to do and our cancellation policy from our terms and conditions (included below) will have to be strictly adhered to. It is a very lengthy process for us to calculate exact amounts and it will take some time for suppliers to arrange refunds so please bear with us while we confirm the total refund due.

In all cases overpayments, where applicable, will be refunded in full. It is important to note that students who have not paid the correct amount will only be refunded pro rata amounts.

Under these uncertain circumstances it would not be advisable to reschedule your tour right now as further costs would be incurred with no guarantee the situation will improve in the coming months and in this matter we feel that we would be doing you a disservice. Please note that the figures above are only applicable if the whole group cancels, our normal cancellation policy applies if individuals choose to cancel. Recent updates from The Department of Foreign Affairs does not influence the insurance policy which does not cover this unfortunate situation of epidemic outbreak.

I have attached our FAQ sheet to answer any further questions regarding your tour relating to the Coronavirus.

As a parent myself, with children who have travelled on school tours for many years, I have huge empathy for all of you who have been affected by these unfortunate circumstances. My staff and I are working tirelessly to ensure a positive outcome for all. However, we have an enormous number of groups who are still travelling, and thousands of students affected by this outbreak. Each group must be looked at individually and suppliers contacted for possible refunds and this is hugely time consuming

Please be assured that we have your best interests at heart during this challenging time. We very much appreciate your patience and assure you of our best attention.

Please let your tour operator know how you would like to proceed.

Kind Regards,

Gráinne Quinn
Managing Director



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6. Cancellations

The group leader must advise the Company by email, fax or letter as soon as they receive a cancellation.

Cancellation of a booking is effective only once it has been received in writing to the Company from the group leader and any cancellation charges will be calculated from this date. Deposits are non-refundable but can be transferred to a replacement passenger, where an applicable name change fee may apply.

Our cancellation charges are as follows:

29 – 56 days prior to departure – 80% of the tour price.

28 or less prior to departure – 100% of the tour price.

Please note that cancellations could increase your tour price if it affects the student/teacher ratio and other shared costs.



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COVID-19 (Coronavirus) FAQ's

Cases of Covid-19 (Coronavirus) have been reported in specific locations in a number of countries throughout the world. Although the overall volume of reported cases is very low, with the majority in China, some destination authorities have introduced enhanced health measures, so it is very important that travellers follow the public health advice relating to a local destination that they are travelling to. Travellers should also keep up to date on local advice during their visit.

Travellers are advised to read the DFA travel advice for the country they are travelling to. Enhanced health screening procedures have been put in place at arrival and departure areas in many countries. Travellers should comply with these processes and take relevant preventative measures to reduce the risk of exposure.

Q. I am afraid to travel with my group due to the Coronavirus. If I cancel the group, what are my options?

A. If you cancel your tour, we will do our best to recoup as many costs paid out as possible. This amount will vary depending on your original tour inclusions as well as how close you are to the date of travel.

Q. Will we be able to claim on insurance for any money lost?

A. If you choose not to travel on your tour, this will count as "disinclination to travel" and you will not be covered. This stands even when the reason for cancelling is fear of an epidemic or pandemic, including in the event of government advice not to travel.

Q. I have read about "travel disruption cover" in some other insurance policies, can we add this as an extra to our policy?

A. No. Travel disruption applies to known risks and cannot be retroactively applied to cover the Coronavirus outbreak.

Q. What if the Department of Education issues a notice saying that school trips are to be cancelled?

A. In this event, unfortunately flights will still be operating as normal and therefore will not offer any refund. We will of course endeavour to recoup as many costs as possible from suppliers, but a full refund will not be possible.

Q. I see that airlines are starting to cancel flights. What does this mean?

A. Airlines are responding to a drop in bookings and loss of revenue and are adjusting their schedules accordingly. This does not mean that there has been government advice to cancel, or that it is unsafe to travel to these destinations. The airlines are trying to save as many costs as possible by cancelling or changing their current schedules.

Q. What if my flights are cancelled?

A. If your flights are cancelled, then we will inform you by email as soon as we receive written confirmation from the airline with further details.

Q. What if I am still happy to travel with my group, but lots of individuals from my group cancel?

A. If you are proceeding with your tour as planned, but you have individual cancellations, our normal cancellation policy will apply. If there are many cancellations, we will have to re-calculate the tour price which is likely to lead to an increase, as shared costs are divided amongst less people.

Cancellation deadlines are as below:

- 56 days or more prior to the tour departure: loss of €250 deposit
- 29 – 56 days prior to the tour departure: loss of 80% of the tour price
- 28 days or less prior to the tour departure: loss of 100% of the tour price.



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Q. If I proceed as normal with my tour, can you guarantee that all visits will be open, and my itinerary will not be affected?

A. No, we can never guarantee this due to unforeseen circumstances. As always, in the event of not being able to attend a specific activity or attraction we will work with you to rearrange your itinerary.

Q. What happens if we are quarantined while on tour?

A. The School Tour Company will work with you to rearrange your transport home. There are many unknowns about such a situation and the appropriate response would depend on instruction from local authorities.