

24 January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Sixth Form Rewards Trip to New York - March 2024

As we draw closer to the much-anticipated New York trip, please note the following details.

Accommodation

We are staying at the Freehand Hotel :-

Address: 23 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10010, United States
Phone: +1 212-475-1920
Website: <https://freehandhotels.com/new-york>

With support, students are currently organising themselves into rooms. Each student has their own single bed as part of a bunk bed, in either a sharing room for 4 students (4) or 2 students (1).

Travel Documents

Travelling to the USA no longer requires a visa for UK nationals, but does require an ESTA.

ESTA: For UK passport-holders an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation) is required and you will need to complete an online application for your child and pay the fee of \$21 per application.

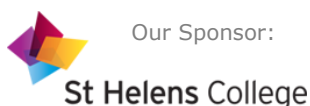
Please apply online by Friday 16 February at: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta>.

As UK passport-holders; passports should be valid for the proposed duration of our stay. We do not require an additional period of validity on passports beyond our return date. I have asked all students for a picture of their passport so I can pass the details onto the travel company this week.

Could you please complete all of the details requested on ParentPay, by Wednesday 31 January.

Please ensure that ESTAs, passports and GHIC cards are brought into the academy by Tuesday 20 February. I will then conduct a check against our records, and store these in the academy safe. This will ensure there are no last-minute worries before we travel.

Staff will look after all travel documents, and they will then be returned to students once we return to the academy on the Tuesday morning.



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Any students under the age of 18 during the time of the trip will need parental evidence that they are allowed to attend as in line with USA boarder control. I will provide a follow up letter to those applicable, to be signed and dated by yourselves to cover this entry requirement.

Further details listed here: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/usa/entry-requirements>

We have comprehensive travel insurance provided by Aviva, and are ATOL protected via the travel company; Absolute Travel and Tours Limited.

Luggage

All students have the following baggage allowance:

- Cabin baggage: 1 item per person, maximum weight 10kg, maximum size 56cm x 36cm x 23cm
- 1 small bag per person (handbag/laptop)
- Check-in baggage: 1 item per person, max weight 23kg, max. dimensions 90cm x 75cm x 43cm

For further details please see:

<https://help.virginatlantic.com/gb/en/baggage/check-in-baggage-allowance.html>

Students have been advised to pack light and appropriately for a short trip. Any baggage that does not comply with the above allowance requirements, may incur a fee that students will need to pay at the airport.

Students should bring suitable clothing and shoes for being outdoors most of the day. The weather is forecast to be similar to the UK, generally between 0-10 degrees Celsius. Warm clothing such as a waterproof coat, hat, gloves, scarf and a couple of pairs of sensible, comfortable shoes is advised. Wearing layers is also advisable, as much like here, the weather can change throughout the day. Night time is generally the coldest part of the day, and we will still be out visiting tourist venues and dining for our evening meal. A small back pack or bag is advisable, to hold extra warmer clothing such as hoodies, for when they are required. Having a couple of disposable rain ponchos often proves invaluable, to ensure that students are prepared for unfavourable weather. Sleep wear and toiletries will need to be brought also.

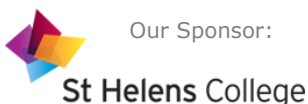
Once students arrive at Sixth Form on the day of departure, there will be a quick bag check to avoid any delays or issues at check in.

Further details from the USA government regarding luggage can be found here:

<https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanbring/all>

Travel Money & Personal Items

Students should have their means of payment (cash/card) kept in a safe place at all times, with access to both US Dollars and GB Pounds. Students are advised to limit the personal items and belongings they bring with them. Students are not permitted to bring electronic gaming devices that are bigger than handheld in their entirety. Students are responsible for the safety of their own items.



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Student Mobile Phones

Prior to departure, please check with students' phone providers regarding access to services and charges whilst they are in New York. This will be the best way to contact your child whilst they are on the trip.

Emergency Contacts

In case of an emergency, parents and carers can contact staff on the trip using the following phone number: 07511 825849.

Students will also use this number to contact staff on the trip and receive messages and updates regarding daily activities or notices.

Food & Drink

A boxed breakfast will be provided at the hotel on Saturday 16, Sunday 17 and Monday 18 March.

On one evening, there is the possibility for students to dine for their evening meal at Ellen's Stardust Diner. <https://www.ellensstardustdiner.com/>

This is a popular tourist attraction and provides entertainment as well as American diner food. A payment of £12.00 can be paid on ParentPay by Wednesday 31 January to secure this booking.

All other food and drink will need to be purchased and organised by students. Staff will identify key places during the trip for students to access reasonably priced food and drink.

Students are not permitted to bring, purchase or drink alcohol at any point during the trip. Please reiterate this to students and the need to maintain the laws of the country we are travelling to, as well as keeping to Sixth Form trip procedures.

Student Groups

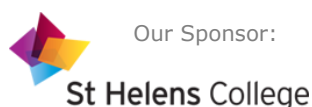
Students must stay in groups of three or more at all times to ensure maximum safety.

Travel Itinerary

We travel on Friday 15 March and return Tuesday 19 March. Where possible, students will be given free time to explore in the airports and certain districts of New York. Pupils will be expected to follow timings, geographical boundaries and stay in groups of three or more. Students are not permitted to use public transport. This will be explained again at the point of free time, all pending the schedule.

Day 1: Friday 15 March

- Students arrive at The Sutton Academy for 8.00am and register in the Community Room, a quick bag check will take place
- Coach transfer from The Sutton Academy to Manchester Airport
- Morning Check in at Manchester for flight to New York.
- VS127 Virgin Atlantic flight departs Manchester Airport at 1.10pm.



- New York JFK Airport arrival at 5.15pm
- Coach transfer to hotel, approx. arrival time 6.00pm
- Evening walk around the hotel's local area, Flat Iron District
- Evening meal
- Return to hotel

Day 2: Saturday 16 March

- Breakfast
- Walking tour including Ghost Busters Fire Station, 9/11 Memorial, Charging Bull, Wall Street and The Battery
- Liberty Island Ferry and Ellis Island Museum
- Return to hotel to rest and get ready for evening meal
- Possible evening meal- Ellen's Stardust Diner
- Walking tour of Times Square
- Return to hotel

Day 3: Sunday 17 March

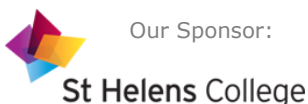
- Breakfast.
- Walking tour including Little Island, Chelsea Market, The High Line, Hudson Yards Mall, Vessel and Macy's
- Return to hotel to rest and get ready for evening
- Empire State Building
- Walking tour including 5th Avenue, Grand Central Station and Rockefeller Centre
- Evening meal
- Return to hotel

Day 4: Monday 18 March

- Breakfast. Check out of accommodation. Luggage left in luggage room at hotel
- Walking tour to central park including lunch
- Afternoon coach to collect group from hotel and transfer to NYC Airport
- Afternoon Check in for flight back to UK
- VS128 Virgin Atlantic Flight Departs: New York JFK at 7.25pm

Day 5: Tuesday 19 March

- VS128 Virgin Atlantic Flight Arrives at Manchester Airport at 6.10am
- Approx. 7.00am coach pick up to return to The Sutton Academy
- Approx. 8.00am arrival at The Sutton Academy
- Students to make their own way home from the academy



Students must return to their studies on Wednesday 20 March.

Further sources of information you might find useful:

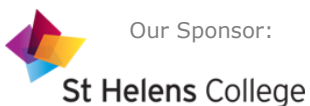
- FCDO Travel Advice: For further information and up to date travel advice, please visit the Government website at <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>.
- Travel Health Advice: Visit the TravelHealthPro website for information and resources of the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

If you have further questions, please feel free to email me at the email address below.

kate.alkarafi@thesuttonacademy.org.uk

Yours faithfully

Mrs Alkarafi
Director of Sixth Form



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