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Headteacher: Mr M Warren

RE: Year 9 trip to Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, November 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are pleased to inform you that, as part of the GCSE short course in Religious Studies, which all students study in years 9 and 10, the RE Department has arranged for all students in year 9 to visit the Amaravati Buddhist Monastery near Hemel Hempstead.

As part of this GCSE course, students are required to have an in-depth knowledge of Buddhist ideas and practices. This visit is an important opportunity to experience Buddhism first hand. It will provide an invaluable foundation for their GCSE studies.

The year group will visit the Monastery over two days, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, and your daughter will be informed by her RE teacher which day her class is going. The total cost of this trip will be £17.50, which includes a voluntary contribution for travel by coach, insurance and a donation of around £2 from each student to the monastery. The Monks at the monastery have been very kind in allowing us to make a visit as having a large number of visitors will significantly disrupt their daily routine and they have been very happy to welcome us despite this, even though their usual maximum number of visitors is 30. All girls are expected to attend this trip. In cases of hardship, financial assistance may be available for your daughter. In such a case do state on your reply slip if you know your daughter is eligible for support from the Pupil Premium funding. Please be aware that if insufficient voluntary contributions are received, the trip may not go ahead.

The trip will take place during school hours to ensure students are able to use their usual method of transport both to and from school. Each student will need to bring her own packed lunch. During the visit, the girls will be going in to see the Buddhist temple and will also have the opportunity to experience some Buddhist meditation therefore be sitting down and standing up throughout the day. In view of this, and in order to ensure that we show respect to the Buddhist tradition, and all those living at the monastery, we ask that girls wear their usual school jumpers and shirts, with a pair of loose fitting trousers or dark denim jeans. When entering rooms in the monastery, everyone removes shoes and so slip-on footwear might be suitable, and socks.

Some girls, but sadly not all due to the numbers involved, will have the opportunity to take part in the meal offering (to the monks). This is a key aspect of the monastic life, when the whole community comes together. If your daughter would like to make a small offering to the monks at lunch time, please tick the box on the reply slip; such offerings should consist of a small bag of crisps, dried fruit, biscuits or something similar so that the girls can put a little offering in each of the monks' bowls. If too many opt for this, then we will have to draw names out of a hat; this is the part where numbers are most limited. Lunch for those not making an offering to the monks will be a picnic, in a covered cloister area and so outdoor clothing will be needed, not just for these girls, but for all, as there is an outside shrine, which we may visit (weather permitting).

Please return the reply slip to Mrs Eyre, in a named envelope. Payments can be made via Wisepay and cheques should be made payable to Presdales School. All replies and monies should be received by Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017.



If you have any questions regarding this trip, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours faithfully,

**M**  
**Head of R.E.**

**s S. Straw**

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To be returned directly to Mrs Eyre, School Office

- I should like ..... Form..... to participate in the visit to Amaravati Buddhist Monastery in November 2017 and enclose a cheque for £17.50 as a non-refundable payment / I have paid a non-refundable payment of £17.50 online (please delete as applicable).
  
- My daughter should like to participate in the food offering to the monks: I will provide a suitable contribution for her to give.

Emergency contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical information:

Signed .....Parent/Guardian

Date .....