

17th November 2008

Dear Parents

I am writing to ask you for some feedback with regard to some changes to our forthcoming Sports Tour to Australia and Bali in 2009. I am being forced to look at some variations on the original itinerary and costs owing to a variety of factors outside the control of both myself and Edwin Doran – our Tour Company.

I have been in close contact with Marion Robinson, our tour co-ordinator, following problems with Qantas Airline who are no longer operating the scheduled flight that we had booked to take us to Bali for our rest and relaxation finale to the tour. This has forced us to look at alternative destinations at the end of the tour. One possible choice was Bintan close to Singapore but I was not too impressed by the hotel offered and asked for further options. Fiji looks a great alternative and our group would be staying at the Warwick Resort. The hotel and facilities are excellent and I think our girls would thoroughly enjoy this as an alternative to Bali.

However there are several cost implications not only with this change in itinerary but also as a result of huge fuel surcharges imposed by the airlines and the fall of Sterling against the Australian Dollar. When making our original booking the provisional nature at that time meant that there could be potential slight date changes and also potential surcharges passed on to us which it is recommended to allow for at a possible rate of 5% per annum. When setting up the Tour in 2008 I did factor this into the price for travel in 2009 which would take costs to £3230.00. The Tour was put out to you at £3250.00.

In order to fly to Bali we would have to fly with another company and the costs would be astronomical! Our flights with Qantas are on a Round The World airfare and so to keep the costs as low as possible, we need to keep our flights with Qantas. This has meant that I have had to look at a range of alternatives for us which have now been narrowed down to four possible itineraries which I would like you to look at:

Option 1 – 20 nights hotel/hosting

Australia as originally planned but including 1 night Singapore & 3 nights Bintan (DBB) instead of 4 nights Bali (DBB)

£3368.00 - I am not keen on the hotel/resort having done some further research.

Option 2 – 20 nights hotel/hosting

Australia as originally planned but including 4 nights Fiji (B&B) instead of 4 nights Bali (DBB)

£3469.00 - The hotel on Fiji is the Warwick Resort which I think would be perfect for our group.

Option 3 – 18 nights hotel/hosting (shortened tour - itinerary to follow)

Australia only with stay in Cairns extended to 4 nights and in Sydney to 5 nights (3 nights hotel & 2 nights hosting)

£3050.00 – This option would mean the loss of the rest and relaxation finale to the trip.

Option 4 - 16 nights hotel/hosting

Excluding Melbourne but including 4 nights Fiji (B&B)

£3348.00 - The Round the World fare would remain the same even with Melbourne removed from the itinerary. The airline automatically include three sectors within Australia in the fare and this would not change if we have only two. The only saving would be the hotel and transportation costs in Melbourne but the downside is that we would have a much shorter tour, lose two sets of fixtures and not have the opportunity of staying with Toorak.

I wanted you to see all alternatives that I have looked at, but in reality, I would like you to just consider **Options 2 or 3** because I am not keen on the resort on Bintan and missing out Melbourne would shorten our tour and miss out two sets of fixtures.

So, please could you consider **Option 2** - a 20 night tour to include **Australia and Fiji** at a cost of **£3469.00** (this is an additional cost of £219.00 per person) **or Option 3** - an 18 night tour of **Australia only** at a cost of **£3050.00** (this could be a saving of £200 but, subject to your agreement, I would probably add the saving into the fund raising account to pay for additional meals, day trips, kit etc).

I would like to give you the opportunity to meet with me and each other, to discuss the two options and then make a decision, but I need to give the Tour Company a decision by the end of next week. With that in mind, if you are able to do so at short notice, please could you come to a Parents' Evening on Wednesday 19th November at 6.00pm in the Gym at MTGS?

If you are unable to attend, please could you let me know by email at jonese@merchanttaylors.com, or by letter, what your thoughts are? We will go with the majority but if the decision from amongst all of our parents is very close then the staff will make the final decision for the group.
Please could you complete the reply slip below and return it to me tomorrow (Tuesday 18th) so that I have an idea on how many parents are able to attend.

Yours sincerely,

Erica Jones
Head of PE & Tour Manager

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SPORTS TOURS PARENTS MEETING REPLY SLIP TO MISS JONES

Daughter's Name:..... Form.....

I/We are able/unable to attend the Sports Tour Parents Meeting on Wednesday 19th November at 6.00pm in the Gym at MTGS.

Signed.....parent/guardian