

Trips Booklet 2025-2026




DOWNLANDS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

About our trips at Downlands Community School

At Downlands, we are incredibly proud of the variety of different trips we offer our students during their time with us. These opportunities contribute to our Character Education which enable all students to build on our important ROCKS characteristics, allowing our students to find their way in the world and build qualities which we believe will help them become well-rounded learners.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide prior warning of these trips so that parents and students can prepare and plan for these. The majority of these trips are well established and have run for numerous years, however some are exciting new opportunities. Whilst we hope this list will be definitive for this academic year, we do anticipate that some additional trips may become available on an ad-hoc basis and we will try to give as much prior warning as possible.

Throughout the year, different departments will offer trips both linked directly to their curricula and to enrich and enhance our students' understanding of these subjects. To help understand the value of our trips, they have been categorised as the following:

1. **Core curriculum** - these trips are **essential** for particular GCSE courses and as a result, all students studying these courses will attend these trips. Funding will be available for PP students to attend these trips.
2. **Curriculum enhancing** - these trips are directly linked to the curriculum but are not compulsory and therefore we would expect as many students as possible to be able to attend these trips, however it is not guaranteed. These trips will be funded 50% for PP students.
3. **Enrichment** - these trips are entirely for enrichment purposes. Whilst we would love for as many students as possible to attend these trips, they are not compulsory, and places may often be limited. Sometimes places may have some funding for PP students.

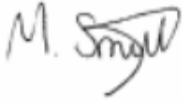
Furthermore, we offer an exciting programme of residential trips throughout the academic year. You will find more information about these trips from page 12. These trips will always be led by a reputable tour company and accompanied by experienced Downlands staff. We hope that these trips offer a wide variety of opportunities and prices. Places on these trips are always limited and often dictated by the availability of Downlands staff to volunteer attending them during their holiday time. You will find a copy of our residential applications policy on page 12.

At the end of the academic year, all students in years 7 to 9 will participate in two days of Curriculum Enrichment Activities (CEA). Further information about this year's CEA will be sent out at a later date but we anticipate another exciting programme with a variety of different trips which have been carefully chosen to interest all of our students. Brief details of the CEA are listed in this booklet.

Finally, following the successful launch of our Character Passport in 2023, we are pleased to provide further details on this. The goal of the scheme is to pledge that **all** students at Downlands will attend a wide range of different cultural opportunities during their time with us. These trips will take place during two designated Character Days in January and May and it is expected that these trips will be attended by all students. All Character Passport trips will be reduced by 75% for Pupil Premium students, these prices are highlighted as PP on the below list. Further information about the Character Passport will be coming shortly but for your reference, they are highlighted in green on the below list.

Throughout our wide range of trips and visits, the safety of our students remains the most important factor. Planning for these trips will always involve inspection visits, full risk assessments and appropriate training for staff accompanying trips. All of our trips will be approved by West Sussex County Council and we will work with them to ensure all important aspects of safety are adhered to. If you would like more information about this, please read our Educational Visits Policy on the school website.

If you have any further questions about our trips, do not hesitate to get in touch.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Smith'.

Mr M Smith
Trips & Character Passport/CEA Coordinator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Clare M Davies'.

Mrs C Davies
Assistant Headteacher i/c trips and EVC

Our Trips 2025 to 2026

When?	Where?	Who?	Department	Cost (Estimated)	Cost (Pupil Premium)	Type	Detail
September	GCSE Fieldwork	Year 11	Geography	£10	£0	Core Curriculum	To collect data for Paper 3 of the Geography GCSE in an urban environment. Location varies between Brighton, Croydon or Lewes
October	Community Reward Trip	Year 8-11	Character	£20	£0	Enrichment	All students in the winning community will have a reward trip to Chessington World of Adventures
October	London Theatre Trip	Year 10	Drama	£40	£0	Core Curriculum	London theatre trip (depending on what is showing at the time) to prepare students for the live theatre component of the GCSE
October	London Dance Show	Year 10	Dance	£50	£50	Curriculum Enhancing	GCSE Dance Students will attend a workshop at Pineapple Dance Studios and then watch a West End Show.
October Half Term	Football Tour	Year 10 & 11	P.E	£1400	£1400	Enrichment	See further detail about our biennial and Football Tour on Page 12. (Next trip running in October 2025 and then 2027)
November	Glyndebourne Opera	Years 8, 9 & 10	Music	£20	£20	Enrichment	Trip to Glyndebourne opera to experience a performance of Mozart's Don Giovanni.
November	Natural History Museum	Year 10	Art	£20	£10	Curriculum Enhancing	Primary source visit

December	Burgess Hill Xmas Hamper Project	Years 7, 8, 9 &10	International Schools	£0	£0	Enrichment	Students attending the Global Ambassadors Focus Group will offer their services to work alongside volunteers to prepare Xmas Hampers for our local community
January	London West End Show	Year 7	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£36	£9	Passport	All of Year 7 will attend a matinee performance of either The Lion King or Wicked
January	London Museum Trip	Year 8	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£20	£5	Passport	All of Year 8 will attend a trip to either the Science Museum, House of Parliament or Tower of London.
February Half Term	Ski Trip	Year 9 & 10	Character	£1800	£1800	Enrichment	See further details about our annual Ski trip to Obertauern on page 13. (Runs annually)
February Half Term	STEM Trip to Paris	Year 10	Science	£750	£750	Enrichment	See further details about our annual trip to Paris are on page 14. (Next trip in February 2027)
February	Southern School Book Awards	Years 9 & 10	English	£0	£0	Enrichment	Students chosen to take part in a celebration of reading event where they meet a range of authors.
February	Brighton Sealife Centre	Year 10	Technology (Photography)	£25	£12.50	Curriculum Enhancing	A trip with Photography GCSE students to photograph sea life creatures

March	London Theatre Trip	Year 11	Drama	£50	£0	Core Curriculum	Trip to a London Show and for a meal beforehand to prepare students for the Live Theatre component of the GCSE
March	Revision Weekend to Truleigh Hill	Year 11	Geography	£75	£37.50	Curriculum Enhancing	See further details about our annual Year 11 Revision Weekend on page 16. (Runs annually)
Easter	Iceland	Year 10	Geography	£1400	£1400	Enrichment	See further details about our annual trip to Iceland on page 15. (Runs annually)
April	Duke of Edinburgh Practice Weekend	Year 10	Character	£380 (for practice and final expedition in June)	£240	Enrichment	See further details about our Duke of Edinburgh Scheme on page 17. (Runs annually)
May	Volunteering in our Community	Year 7	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£10	£2.50	Passport	Students will undertake a range of volunteering opportunities such as a Beach Clean, Age Concern and others to be confirmed.
May	Sustainability Day	Year 8	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£25	£6.25	Passport	A visit to Wakehurst Place or Knepp Re-Wilding to learn about what they are doing to be sustainable and transfer those skills back to life at Downlands.
May	Sussex University	Year 10	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£10	£2.50	Passport	A taster day at Sussex University to introduce the prospect of Higher Education and raise aspirations.

May	GCSE Fieldwork	Year 10	Geography	£17	£0	Core Curriculum	Fieldwork practice day at Seven Sisters Country Park
May	Tate Modern	Year 10	Technology (Photography)	£15	£7.50	Curriculum Enhancing	A trip to the Tate Modern to be inspired by artist/photographers work
June	Battlefields or Opal Coast Trip	Year 9	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£285	£70	Passport	All students will have the opportunity to travel overseas for one night. Either to visit the battlefields of Somme or to immerse themselves in the culture of The Opal Coast
June	South of England Country Show	Year 10	Forest Schools	£0	£0	Enrichment	Experiencing agriculture, forestry, crafts and trades showcasing different careers opportunities
June	Local Theatre Trip	Year 10	Drama	£25	£0	Curriculum Core	Trip to a local theatre (Brighton, Worthing, Eastbourne etc – dependant on what is showing) to prepare students for the Live Theatre component of the GCSE
June	London Theatre Visit	Year 9	Dance	£50	£50	Enrichment	Year 9 Gift and Talent Dancers and Year 10 Dance Captains to go on a 'treat trip' to London to see a musical and have a meal as a celebration of all their hard work within the year.
June	Duke of Edinburgh Final Expedition	Year 10	Character	£380 (for final expedition and practice in April)	£240	Enrichment	See further details about our Duke of Edinburgh Scheme on page 17.

July	Visits to local primary schools	Years 7, 8, 9 & 10	Music	£0	£0	Enrichment	The Brass Band will be taken to perform at Albourne & St Lawrence Primary Schools
July	Year 7 Camp	Year 7	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£270	£70	Passport	Year 7 will spend 3 days camping in Hampshire at YMCA Fairthorne Manor. Find more information about this on page 20.
July	Character Enrichment Activities (CEA)	Year 8 & 9	CHARACTER PASSPORT	£0-120	Tbc depending on activity	Passport	A range of different activities will be available including Thorpe Park, Airsoft, Brighton Pier, Escape Rooms and many more to be confirmed.
July	India Partnership Visit	Year 10	International School	£1750	£1995	Enrichment	Find more details about our biennial visit to our partnership school in India on page 19. (Next trip in July 2027).

Residential Visits

Application Policy

All students will have an equal opportunity to apply for our residential trips, however if a trip is oversubscribed, we will follow the below criteria:

- Some trips will only be initially available to students studying a particular subject at GCSE. This is highlighted in the residential trips section of this booklet. Students not studying this subject will be added to the reserve list for this trip.
- All remaining students will be allocated a number and a random number generator will be used to allocate places.
- All unsuccessful students will be added to a reserve list, if a place becomes available the same random process will be used.
- For most residential trips, students from the reserve list must be replaced with the same gender

The school does not make selections based on any other criteria such as age, gender (unless a like-for-like replacement is needed from a reserve list), how many other visits the students have been on or the students' behavior record (unless there needs to be serious consideration given to the current behavior of the student and the impact this may have on the smooth running of the trip and/or Health and Safety of other students and staff).

See a full copy of the trips policy [here](#).

Football Tour



Year Group	Year 10 & 11
Dates	October Half Term
Launch Dates	September of Y9 & Y10
Cost	£1000
Places Available	Up to 80
Applications from	All who play/enjoy football!

Previous trips have visited Valencia FC, Real Madrid FC, Ajax FC, FC Porto, and PSV Eindhoven, and have been fantastic experiences for all involved. For our next tour we are considering revisiting FC Porto in Portugal or travelling to Villarreal in Spain.

The tour is open to all students currently entering Year 9 and Year 10. Ability level is not a factor; the only requirement is an enjoyment of football. The tour will take place this year, during October half term 2025, for 5 days and 4 nights.

NEXT TRIP IN OCTOBER 2025, THEN OCTOBER 2027)

Dance Trip to New York



Year Group	Year 10 & 11
Dates	October Half Term
Launch Dates	Easter of Year 8 & 9
Cost	£1800
Places Available	45
Applications from	Those with an interest in Dance

The PE and Dance department are delighted to offer Year 8 and 9 students the opportunity to visit New York on an exciting Dance Trip. The Dance department have successfully put on multiple shows and professional workshops and now are excited to continue these opportunities in New York.

Students will follow a structured itinerary while in New York, where activities will be planned out for their entire time away. Focusing on experiencing all the excitement New York City has to offer whilst growing their love and passion for dance. Included in the overall price, students will experience the below:

- International flights from Heathrow to John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
 - Accommodation at The Gallivant Times Square
 - Breakfast each morning at the hotel
 - Professional Dance Class at Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation
 - Professional Dance Class at Martha Graham Dance Company
 - Tickets to watch a Broadway Show
 - Dinner at The Hard Rock Café
 - Dinner at Bubba Gump Shrimp Company
 - Dinner at Ellen's Stardust Diner
 - Statue of Liberty Cruise
 - Empire State Building experience
 - Paid for travel around New York (including coaches and metro tickets)
 - New York Trip hoodie

NEXT TRIP IN OCTOBER 2027 (CURRENT Y8 AND Y9)

Ski Trip



Year Group	Years 9 & 10
Dates	February Half Term
Launch Dates	October of Year 8 & 9
Cost	£1800
Places Available	Up to 80
Applications from	All students

We will be staying at the Guesthouse Felseralm in Obertauern, Austria, which is a bespoke young person's establishment. www.obertauern.com www.felseralm.at

The trip includes travel from and back to Downlands via coach, full board accommodation, boot, ski and helmet hire, lift passes, 6 full days skiing, 5 - hour ski lessons daily and comprehensive travel insurance. An evening entertainment programme will be organised which may on occasion require additional funding (if required, this will be advised nearer the time).

We do accept **Snowboarders** on the ski trip, however in order for us to be able to do so, the group must have a minimum number with the same ability

RUNS ANNUALLY

STEM Trip to Paris



Year Group	Year 10
Dates	February Half Term
Launch Dates	March of Year 9
Cost	£700
Places Available	40
Applications from	All students

We are offering a STEM trip to Disneyland Paris for pupils in year 10. The trip will be launched in year 9 for pupils to attend in the February half term of Year 10. The focus for the trip is Science and STEM in practice. The Science & STEM Experience immerses students in the practical applications of design and technology at this world-famous theme park resort in a number of different and engaging ways through seminars and workshops hosted by Disney facilitators.

FIRST TRIP IN FEBRUARY 2025, AND THEN ANNUALLY FROM 2027.

Geography Booster Course



Year Group	Year 11
Dates	March
Launch Dates	June of Year 10
Cost	£75
Places Available	45
Applications from	Those studying GCSE Geography

Every year, the geography department offer a weekend residential revision trip in the Spring Term for year 11 students to be supported in their revision for their final GCSE exam. This unique opportunity will give students the opportunity to see geography 'in the field' and get a deeper understanding of many of the concepts on the exam board specification, particularly the more complex physical geography topics that many students find the most challenging to learn. The trip will be exploring the West Sussex coastline, river systems and our local urban areas, with one night stay at a YHA Hostel in Truleigh Hills near Shoreham.

This includes the one night stay at the YHA, two hot meals (dinner and breakfast), a packed lunch for the second day, transport to and from the YHA plus all revision materials.

Iceland Trip



Year Group	Year 10
Dates	First weekend of Easter Holidays
Launch Dates	October of Year 9
Cost	£1,300
Places Available	62
Applications from	Those planning to study GCSE Geography

This trip is during the start of the Easter Holidays (over the Easter bank holiday weekend). This trip will provide a wide range of opportunities for your child, whilst the itinerary is fluid, previous trips have included:-

- A swim in the geothermal waters of the Secret Lagoon
- A thrilling hike (involving crampons and ice axes!) on the Solheimajokul glacier
- Visits to two active volcanoes (Eyjafjallajokull & Hekla)
- A two hour boat trip to (hopefully) watch some of Iceland's whales!
- Observations of unique landscapes including waterfalls, craters, geysers and valleys
- Evening activities including swimming and an escape room.
- Hopefully, a chance to see the Northern Lights.

The 5 day visit will be organised by the tour operator Discover the World. The tour will be led by seven members of Downlands staff and an experienced tour guide who will remain with the party throughout each of the planned excursions

Duke of Edinburgh Award



Year Group	Year 10
Dates	Practice: April, Final: June
Launch Dates	June of Year 9
Cost	£380
Places Available	Whole year group
Applications from	All students

Your child has the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, which operates through years 10 and 11. We have run the award for over 20 years now and it represents a fantastic opportunity for young people to discover fresh interests, make new friends and provide service to others. The award is also seen, nationally, as beneficial to those moving onto further education, either at college or university.

The award is achieved by completing a personal program of activities in FOUR sections:

- Community service/Volunteering*
- Skills*
- Physical Recreation*
- Expedition

*Volunteering, Skill and Physical are done over a 3-month period, with one of those sections carried forward for a further 3 months

The vast majority of these activities take place, weekly, during the participants leisure time, with Expedition training/planning taking place over 2/3 weekends. It is therefore important that there is a genuine commitment on the part of each individual to give up the required time in order to succeed. Attendance at expedition training is compulsory. It is of crucial importance therefore that those opting for the Award Scheme do so because they personally wish to participate. Personal commitment and enthusiasm are vital, and joining the award should not be undertaken because a friend is involved, because of parental pressure or just for the camping element.

Battlefields or Opal Coast Trip



Year Group	Year 9
Dates	June
Launch Dates	July of Y8
Cost	£285
Places Available	All students
Applications from	All students

All students in Year 9 will have the opportunity to take part in a one night residential overseas to either:

- The north Central area of France, surrounding the River Somme, saw some of the harshest fighting in the First World War and consequently has numerous memorial and cemeteries dedicated to the men and women who lost their lives. History groups studying WWI will be able to explore the actual trenches, tunnels and battlefields that were occupied by soldiers who were often not much older than themselves.
- A short hop across the channel The Opal Coast is an ideal region for first time visitors to France. Located between Calais and Boulogne-sur-Mer, in the north west of France, the Opal Coast is renowned for picture postcard settings that are rich in tradition and history. Practice French at a local market; discover how chocolates are made at a small manufacturer; learn how to bake bread at a boulangerie; meet the sea lions at Nausicaa Sea Centre.

Both trips will include ferry travel, half board meals (breakfast and dinner) and one night accommodation at a 3* hotel or hostel.

Partnership Visit to India



Year Group	Year 10 & 11
Dates	July
Launch Dates	March of Y9 & 10
Cost	£1995
Places Available	25
Applications from	All students

Downlands has had the unique opportunity of being partnered with Ellen Sharma School in Chennai, India for over 10 years. Every three years, we successfully run a trip to Chennai to further this partnership and immerse Downlands students in a completely different culture.

We will fly direct from Heathrow with British Airways. Throughout the trip to India, we will be staying at Aloft Chennai, a four star hotel. Students will spend time within the school, taking part in workshops and teaching lessons. There will also be some excursions to local temples, arts villages, a crocodile sanctuary and Chennai beach.

This trip is an incredibly valuable experience for student and in the past has inspired numerous students to return to the school in their gap year/after life. However, it is also a huge privilege to be representing the school and with this comes some responsibility. Students going on the trip are expected to engage with the school partnerships both prior to and after the trip. This can include leading assemblies, writing to students in India, writing reports for local press, filming a promotional video and visiting local primary schools in Sussex.

NEXT TRIP IN JULY 2027, THEN JULY 2029

Year 7 Camp



Year Group	Year 7
Dates	July
Launch Dates	September of Year 7
Cost	£270
Places Available	270
Applications from	All students

All of Year 7 will have the opportunity to attend Y7 Camp at YMCA Fairthorne Manor in Botley near Southampton. Each student will stay for two nights in a semi-permanent tent and take part in a range of different activities designed to build their resilience and to work together as a community. These are likely to include activities such as kayaking, climbing, abseiling, high ropes and other team games. There will also be a programme of evening activities including a campfire and team sports. The year group will be split in half, with the tutor groups in each half to be confirmed at a later date.