

Y8 Holland Trip –An Unforgettable Long Weekend!

The Year Eight Holland trip was certainly a fantastic experience; one of both exciting activities and cultural interest.

We had little opportunity to rest before the trip began. Departing from school at 2:30 in the morning, everyone (including the teachers) were weighed down by lack of sleep. Yet the success of the promised six hours quiet was debateable, as the excitement of it all kept most of us awake, which also prevented everyone else from sleeping at all.

Several stops along the way smoothed out the journey, making time pass easily. Holland arrived quicker than we could have imagined, even when it was interrupted by a few hours of hesitant traffic. Soon enough the coaches pulled up at the youth hostel, and rooms were distributed quickly. Obviously, this was very exciting as we all got to see our rooms for the first time. Bedrooms consisted of friendship groups ranging from around four to seven students.

After unpacking and washing, all of us and the teachers enjoyed our first meal at the hostel, which was comprised of lots of different tasty ingredients. Relaxation time in the rooms proceeded all lights going out at 9:30, and we all (hopefully) settled down for a much-needed rest before the busy day that would soon be upon us.

Saturday was piled high with experiences and detailed memory-making. Everyone sat down to their first delicious breakfast – we were predictably hungry from the prior events and fortunately everyone was on time for their allocated slots. After pack-lunches were made, and people organized, everyone set off on a brief coach journey to the renowned Nemo Science Museum, possibly the most educational element, and definitely one of



the most exciting parts of the trip. Here students learnt about things ranging from sound enhancement devices to how a Van de Graaff generator works (which was personally my favourite aspect), a fascinating machine developed by an American Scientist in the early 20th century which uses a moving belt to gather electric charge. This produces very high voltage but low current levels, which allows it to work. Other displays and interactive machines were very popular, including a pedal-powered lift that was certainly harder than it seemed!

To conclude the museum experience, we were given time on the top deck to eat lunch, which was enjoyed alongside a beautiful view underneath the Sun. We were also given the opportunity to browse in the museum shop which sold scientific experiment kits and other science-related mementos.

The trip to a windmill park promptly followed the science museum. Here, as well as touring a set of souvenir shops, we were lucky enough to be able to see authentic windmills, as well as tour them for a small price. The weather held, and the experience was original.



The next stage of the day was the canal tour, perhaps the most beautiful aspect of the Holland trip.

Following some confusion about the boat's departure destination, everyone was distributed across two boats. We had the opportunity to sit at the windows of the boat or to sit upfront, but either way the views were indescribably picturesque. Rounding the cultural aspect of the trip, all of us gained first-hand views and memories of iconic Amsterdam streets, bridges and bikes as well as many other beautiful landmarks.



By this point, the trip's sightseers were fulfilled and everyone else contentedly tired. Dinner and downtime in the bedrooms followed our return to the hostel, and by the end of the day most of the group were quite ready for bed, filled with happy memories to fall asleep to.



It would definitely be wrong to say that Sunday had a slow start. With short intervals in the bedrooms, everyone had just enough time to prepare themselves after breakfast for the entertaining and

exciting day that was unfolding. Possibly the highlight of the trip for many was the destination that followed our one-hour coach journey – Duinrell Amusement Park. With over 40 attractions, this park had two contrasting sections; the water park and the rides. The day commenced at the water park, where we all had the opportunity to swim in the pool (which included a wave machine) and to have fun on a variety of different water rides. Even some of the teachers went down one of the scariest slides in the water park! After everyone had changed and dried we had some allocated time for lunch, before being given freedom to explore the park. Rollercoasters and rides ranged from relaxing Ferris Wheels and mini-boats to perhaps some of the most terrifying in Europe! Whether these rides were tried and tested was left to the pupils' (and teachers') discretion. Many returned to the meeting point as the day drew into evening feeling a little dizzy.

Time had passed unexplainably quickly, and all too soon the Sun rose on Monday - the day of the school's return. Everyone boarded the coach, and soon excitement levels returned. The journey was divided by a stop in Brugge, a quaint area of Belgium renowned for its delicious chocolate. Predictably, many of us sat down on the coach after the experience with full bags.

Soon the Eurotunnel approached, and everyone disembarked from the coach to eat a meal and to wait for the train. It was thought that the train would be heavily delayed, but this was soon resolved to a shorter wait, and sooner than predicted we were on the shuttle. As the day slid gently into darkness, time seemed to stretch out a little more, and after a few insignificant delays the arrival back at school at around 11:10PM was filled with tired yet contented faces.

What a trip to remember!