



Media Release

For immediate release

Date: 26/05/2020

All off-island school visits until the end of 2020 cancelled or deferred.

All remaining States' school off-island visits planned for 2020 will be cancelled or postponed, the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture has decided.

Local residential – overnight - school trips for the remainder of this academic year will also be postponed or cancelled. The position will be reviewed before September based on the public health advice at the time.

The difficult decision regarding off-island trips has been made in light of the coronavirus pandemic's ongoing impact around the world, resuming external travel being the last part of Guernsey's Lockdown Exit Strategy.

Deputy Richard Graham, Vice-President of the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, said:

“While we know many students, parents and carers alike will be disappointed that the pandemic has led to trips they were no doubt looking forward to being cancelled, in light of how the pandemic is unfolding and the island's lockdown exit strategy, we hope they can understand our decision was made in the best interests of students and parents/carers. Guernsey can be proud of how well it has tackled coronavirus, but other parts of the world are in more precarious positions, and we must ensure that, in addition to protecting the health of those who might have gone on these visits, we also minimise the potential financial exposure of parents, carers and others who fund these visits.”

As things currently stand, in some cases postponement of planned trips can be a better way to secure monies, however because of the uncertain travel market, it is not guaranteed financial loss can be avoided in this way. Postponement will not always be possible or realistic and in some cases cancellation may be the most appropriate way to minimise losses.

The Committee is aware parents and carers have invested money in these school trips and are likely to be facing losses as a result of them not going ahead as planned.

School staff are already working hard to try and recover monies where they can, and in some cases are working with insurers to see how much money might be recoverable.

Deputy Graham said:

“We are very aware of the monies parents and carers may have tied up in these trips, and will want to know as soon as possible how much they can recover. Staff are pursuing various routes to try and secure refunds. Since no financial recoveries are a certainty, the Committee has decided to wait until it has all of the information before making any further decisions.”

The deferral of this decision also means the Committee will wait to decide how to deal with losses parents/carers have incurred through the cancellation of local residential stays.

Deputy Matt Fallaize, President of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, removed himself from all consideration of this matter, as he felt conflicted because his children were both due to go on school visits this year.

Ends

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