

11 June 2015



St. Margaret's Church of England Academy

"Achievement by faith and work"

Principal: Mr S Brierley MA NPQH

Dear Parents,

Alton Towers trip, Thursday 2nd July 2015

As you may be aware, there was an accident on the 'Smiler' ride at Alton Towers last week, unfortunately resulting in serious, life-changing injuries for a number of individuals. I am sure you would want to join me in expressing our best wishes to all those affected by what happened.

I understand that whilst Alton Towers has now reopened to the public, investigations into what caused the accident are still ongoing, and that at the moment a number of rides remain closed.

Your son's safety is our top priority and our overriding concern. As you might expect, in the light of last week's events, we have revisited our risk assessments for this year's Alton Towers trip, taking appropriate advice from a number of sources, including a specialist at the City Council. Because of the cancellation clauses in the contracts for both Alton Towers and the relevant coach companies, we have had to make a decision this week about whether the trip should proceed – even though the investigation at Alton Towers has not yet been completed.

Given the advice we have received, at this point I regret to advise you that we have no alternative but to **cancel this year's trip to Alton Towers**. Please be assured that any money you have paid to us for the trip will be refunded in full; in some cases this will mean that your cheques will not be presented to the bank, but in other cases (where cheques have already been paid in), naturally a full refund will be made. As you may appreciate, refunding monies to a large number of families will place considerable strain on our Finance Office, but please be assured that we will process any refunds due as speedily as we can.

I appreciate that, more than any financial inconvenience, a good number of our boys will be very disappointed that the trip is not going ahead. I am in the process of explaining the decision to the boys personally before our Assemblies this week, and I trust that by so doing they will understand the reasons behind our decision, even despite their natural disappointment. Senior leaders at our Academy have been exploring what we could do instead, and a small working party has been convened to plan some in-school activities for the morning of Sports Day (more details to follow).

If you have any questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me by 'phone or by e-mail (admin@stmargaretsacademy.com, with a subject line of "FAO Mr Brierley, re Alton Towers" please), and I will endeavour to respond to you.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Brierley
Principal

