Year 5 Residential Trip Wednesday 8th to Friday 10th Sept 2021

Alton Castle Soli House Residential Retreat: Our Mission

WHY VISIT ALTON CASTLE?

10 Reasons to come and visit Alton Castle...



REASON 1

ENCOUNTER GOD, SPENDING TIME IN PRAYER AS A COMMUNITY

On retreat, visiting groups encounter God in many ways. The most special way in which we encounter God is through the celebration of Holy Mass



REASON 2

LEARN ABOUT FAITH OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM



At Alton Castle, our visitors have the opportunity to learn about their faith, whilst doing outdoor adventurous activities in a beautiful place.

REASON 3

SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS AND MAKE NEW ONES

Our retreats, with their activities relying upon teamwork and collaboration, are perfect for encouraging our visitors to build on their friendships and to make new ones.



REASON 4

LEARN ABOUT YOUSRSELF



On retreat, our visitors spend time in reflection and on activities. These times allow them to learn more about themselves, their talents, and to learn more about their relationship with Jesus.

REASON 5

DISCOVER WHAT YOU WERE MADE FOR

Once you've learnt more about yourself and your relationship with Jesus, you can become more aware of your unique purpose and what you were made for. Our visitors can learn more about their calling from God.



REASON 6

SPEND TIME IN GOD'S WONDROUS CREATION



Alton Castle is situated in Alton, Staffordshire, perched at the top of the Churnet Valley. On our activities, our visitors get to venture out into God's beautiful countryside.

REASON 7

MEET INSPIRATIONAL YOUNG ROLE MODELS

The Kenelm Mission Team, who lead retreats at Alton Castle, are inspirational young role models, modelling a deep prayer life and enthusiasm for their faith.



REASON 8

WORK AS A TEAM AND DEVELOP YOUR INDEPENDENCE



On activities, our visitors develop their teamwork skills as well as becoming more independent.





Encountering Christ through creation, community and challenging activities...

It is our aim that every young person who visits us will grow closer to God, encountering Christ in many different ways. We know that the most special way in which we encounter Jesus is through mass, through being with him in prayer and in the sacrament of the Eucharist. All of our residential retreats provide young people with many opportunities to pray and reflect, including small group night prayer where young people are invited to prayer openly each night, and the celebration of mass on the second evening. These times of prayer, where our retreatants can come together as a community, are truly special moments where they encounter Christ.

The castle's beautiful setting, perched at the top of the Churnet Valley, provides an opportunity for the young people who visit to experience God's wondrous creation and the beauty of the world in which we all live. They have opportunities to go out into the countryside, encountering Christ through creation.

Our residential retreats are unique in the way the experience of creation, and times of community prayer, are woven through challenging activities. Retreatants are pushed to trust in each other, to work together, and to conquer challenges as the encounter Christ in each other and in the activities they take part in.

What we offer



Here at the Castle we offer a residential retreat programmes for Years 5 and 6. The programme combine times of prayer, meditation and reflection, with outdoor adventurous activities. Young people who visit us get to spend two nights in our breath-taking 19th century castle, taking part in a range of challenging activities, and encountering Christ in many ways, particularly through the celebration of mass together in our beautiful church.

We have enclosed a typical timetable and a kit list.

Discipleship

The theme for our KS2 retreats is: 'discipleship'. On retreat, young people will reflect upon the qualities they need to have as a disciple, and how they can be more like Jesus in the way they act. Within each of the activities we do, we pause for a time of meditation where retreatants think about the qualities a disciple needs to be a good follower of Jesus. We link these with Jesuit Pupil Profile virtues used by Birmingham Diocese schools, to draw connection between the retreat experience and school/everyday life.

Activities

On every retreat we offer just a selection of these activities, suited to the age range of the young people on the retreat.

The typical activities are: abseiling, crate stacking, archery, trekking, nightline, mountain biking, team building, survival, climbing, orienteering .

FAQS

How many people does the castle sleep?

The castle comfortably sleeps 75 young people and their accompanying staff/adults.

What facilities does the castle have?

Inside the castle there are dormitory style bedrooms spread over four floors. We also have a large dining room, two meeting rooms, two games rooms, a tuck shop and a chapel in the crypt on the lower ground floor.

Will I need to bring a sleeping bag?

All young people visiting us will need to bring a sleeping bag. The dormitories have bunkbeds, and although we provide pillows, sheets and pillow cases, we do not provide duvets for young people. All visiting adults/school staff will however have a duvet provided.

Who leads the activities?

The activities are predominantly lead by our exceptional Mission Team Volunteers. They receive training in all of the activities they lead and will be on hand throughout the retreat to help you out.

What happens to lost property?

All lost property is kept for 1 month. After this time, if it has not been claimed, it will be re-homed. We suggest that anyone visiting the castle labels their belongings so that nothing gets lost.

How much tuck shop money should I bring?

We recommend that you bring £10

What is the food like?

Our catering team cook delicious, healthy meals. We always have great feedback about our food, and have a wide range of meals, so there's sure to be something you'll like.

Departure and arrival information:

The children travel by private hire coach from Saint Thomas More School on Wednesday 8th September, leaving at 9:00am to arrive at Alton Castle at 11:00am.

Children will return to Saint Thomas More School on Friday 10th September between 3:30 and 4:00pm depending on traffic (the children are due to leave Alton at 2:00). We will keep you updated via text.

Please keep up with the payments on ParentPay and ensure you have paid in full before the trip. If you are having any concerns regarding payment, or about the trip generally, please do call the school.

Children do not need all new items for their kit, some things are bound to get muddy/lost!

Deadline for confirmation of attendance is Wednesday 30th June.

RESIDENTIAL RETREAT KIT LIST

YOU WILL NEED:

- [ ] Sleeping bag
- [ ] Personal toiletries (including toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.)
- [ ] Pair of pjamas
- [ ] Money for tuck shop (recommended £10)
- [ ] Towel
- [ ] Sun cream
- [ ] Sun hat (summer retreats)/woolly hat, scarf and gloves (winter retreats)
- [ ] 4 t-shirts
- [ ] 3 pairs of loose fitting trousers(leggings or joggers)
- [ ] 2 warm long-sleeved jumpers
- [ ] 1 thick fleece/jacket
- [ ] 1 waterproof coat
- [ ] Waterproof trouser (if possible)
- [ ] 2 pairs of walking socks
- [ ] Pair of wellies or walking boots (there are some wellies available to borrow if necessary)
- [ ] 5 pairs of underwear
- [ ] 1 pair of old trainers (to be worn outside - they will get muddy)
- [ ] 1 pair of indoor shoes (trainers are ideal)
- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] Torch (optional)

PLEASE NOTE:

We advise that personal electronics are not brought on retreat - all electronics are brought at owners' risk . Electronics, such as hairdryers and straighteners, cannot be used on retreat. Each visitor will have to carry their bag to their room - this may involve walking up many flights of stairs so please pack a bag that you can carry.

ALTON CASTLE RESIDENTIAL TYPICAL TIMETABLE

DAY 1

11:00am Early Start Arrivals
Welcome, introductions and a chance to find your way around.

12:30pm Packed Lunch

1:15pm AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

3:40pm Break

4:00pm Non-Early Start Arrivals
Welcome, introductions and a chance to find your way around & move to bedrooms

4:30pm Welcome Meeting

5:00pm Staff Meeting

5:00pm Contracts for YP

5:45pm Dinner

6:30pm Tuck Shop
Please supervise Games & De Verdun Rooms.

6:50pm Fire Drill

7:00pm 1st Evening Carousel

9:00pm Night Drinks
Meet in the Dining Room

9:15pm Night Prayer

9:30pm Bedtime

DAY 2

7:40am Team Morning Prayer
Please join us in the Crypt Chapel

8:30am Breakfast
Meet in the Obviam Corridor at 8:25am

9:00am Morning Prayer

9:30am FIRST ACTIVITY

12:30pm Lunch
Meet in the Obviam Corridor

1:10pm Tuck Shop is open
Please supervise Games & De Verdun Rooms after lunch.

1:30pm SECOND ACTIVITY
Meet in Pugin Room Corridor

4:00pm Free Time
A chance to get clean and showered

5:15pm Music Practice Part 1
Meet in Pugin Room Corridor

5:45pm Dinner

6:45pm Music Practice Part 2

7:15pm Holy Mass
Walk across to Church together.

8:30pm Entertainments in DC

9:30pm Night Drinks in Dining Room

9:45pm Night Prayer

10:00pm Bedtime

DAY 3

Before Breakfast, all bags and bedding must be removed from bedrooms (your programme leader will have given instructions).

8:30am Breakfast
Meet in the Obviam Corridor at 8:25am

9:00am Morning Prayer

9:30am THIRD ACTIVITY

12:30pm Lunch
Meet in the Obviam Corridor

1:00pm Teachers' and Young People's Evaluation
Teachers' evaluation will take place in the staff room.

1:30pm Thank You Service
Meet in Pugin Room Corridor

2:00pm Goodbyes

2:15pm Coach leaves site...
Safe journey home, full of the Holy Spirit!

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO COME HERE - MAY YOU & YOUR FAMILIES BE REALLY RICHLY BLESSED.