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School

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Millthorpe School
Krakow Trip
12th-15th February 2026

FAIRNESS

HARD WORK

AMBITION



Millthorpe School

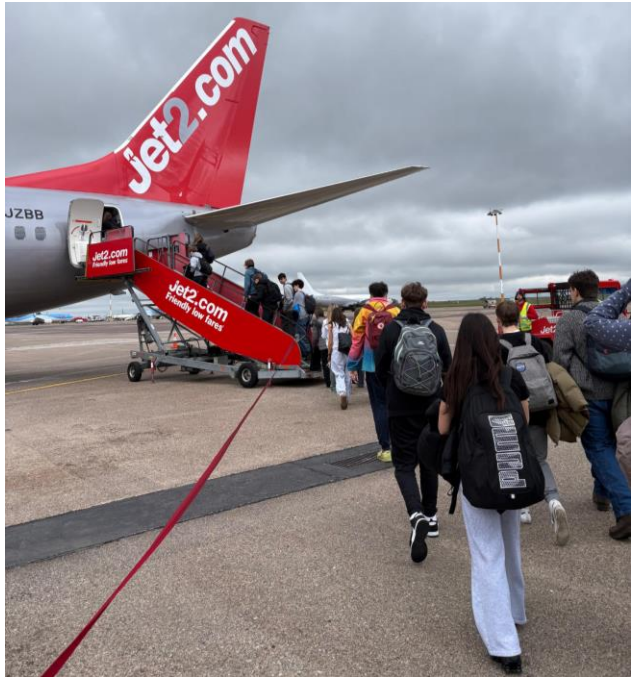
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The trip began at York Racecourse at 8.20am and we departed for East Midlands Airport promptly. Thank you to all students and parents for your prompt arrival.

At the airport, students and staff relaxed and had some lunch before excitedly boarding our plane to Krakow.

We then made our way to Hotel Vienna Easy by Wyndham, and after checking in, we headed to No 7 Restaurant in Krakow Main Square for our evening meal: tomato soup, followed by a traditional Polish meal of goulash and potato pancakes, and chocolate cake with cherry mousse for dessert. It went down a storm! We then returned to the hotel to get a good night's sleep ahead of a busy first day in Krakow.

After a hearty breakfast, we had a leisurely 30 minute walk to the Galicia Museum where we browsed the collection before meeting two Holocaust survivors.



One of the survivors, Anna, explained how she was moved to Rabka, 23 miles from Krakow, in order to avoid persecution. In 1942, she and her sister were smuggled out of Rabka by her Uncle's friend, after being listed for collection by the Nazis. He was a member of the Polish resistance and his name is Marian Sikorski. He saved her life. She was taught Catholic prayers to try to convince the Nazis that she was not Jewish. They spent 3 years undercover.



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Sadly, more than 500 Jewish people were murdered in Rabka, so Anna had a very lucky escape. They were walked to mass pits by their own family before being executed. Anna's 2 grandmothers were two of the 500+ victims. The Kommandant of the camp in Rabka, Wilhelm Rosenbaum was sentenced to life in prison in 1968, but only served 9 years due to ill health. Anna now funds the education of a blind boy in Rwanda to pay back the same kindness shown to her by Marian Sikorski in 1942. Anna's key message to the students was to pass on what they have learned on this trip and in lessons at school to the next generation, and always to challenge Holocaust denial.

Mr Baybutt's Year 9 class were very envious of their Year 11 peers who were getting the chance to meet a Holocaust survivor so they wrote letters for him to pass on. You can see him hand over the letters to Anna in the picture above.

After a pizza lunch, we arrived at Schindler's factory, where students learned about the impact of the occupation on Krakow, and how Oskar Schindler, a once devoted Nazi, was able to save over 1,000 of his Jewish employees.



And the day was not finished there! We then made a short coach journey to Wieliczka Salt Mines. The students were not sure what to expect but we all loved it. After descending



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hundreds of stairs, we arrived deep into the mine where we explored, learned and tasted the salt...by licking the walls!



After the Salt Mines, we visited U Filipa O Restaurant for our evening meal where we enjoyed chicken soup, roast ham with honey and mustard glaze and mashed potatoes, followed by swiss roll.

On Saturday 14th February, we were up early for breakfast before boarding the coach to Auschwitz-Birkenau at 7.30am. Despite the early start, the students were great and listened intently as Mr Baybutt and Miss Webb gave them a talk about how the camps came to be established.

We then undertook a 6 hour guided tour of Auschwitz I in the morning, followed by Birkenau (or Auschwitz II) in the afternoon. Understandably, this was an incredibly emotional, moving and challenging experience but we all looked after one another and everyone was exceptionally respectful.





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Below: Birkenau – a purpose built death camp.



After a sombre coach journey back to the hotel, we had a bit of time to shower and pack our cases before heading to our final evening meal at Camino Restaurant: vegetable soup, chicken strips and chips, followed by apple cake. We then headed into the main square for photos before returning to the hotel.



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After our final breakfast and checking out of our rooms (which were left immaculately), it was time for the students to let off some steam, enjoy themselves, and be children. After such an emotionally charged couple of days, we always end this trip by giving the students some time to do something very different. So, we boarded the coach and visited Park Wodny, Poland's largest indoor water park. With swimming lanes, massaging jet streams, Jacuzzis, climbing walls into the water and rides and slides for all levels of comfort, we all had an amazing time, and it was the perfect end to a perfect trip. But we weren't finished yet!

We then returned to Krakow Main Square where students were given a short amount of "free time" to buy lunch and shop for souvenirs. They were encouraged to try more local cuisine rather than McDonalds and not buy any tat. There were mixed results on this!

We then returned to the hotel to collect our luggage and board our coach for the journey to the airport.

After an incredibly busy, emotional and informative trip, we boarded our plane home. Memories to last a lifetime, true understanding of the horrors of the Holocaust, and committed to ensuring that our generation never forgets, but also does everything that it can to avoid history repeating itself.

Our students were repeatedly complimented by members of the public, hotel staff, tour guides and so on. They were a pleasure to accompany on such an important trip and the staff were immensely proud of them.

But what did they take from the experience?

Read on for student reflections on the trip.

These are exceptional, and why we do this trip. You might need a tissue!

"Poland has been an amazing experience. Whilst I knew how bad the Holocaust was, I have realised the pure scale of this tragic event and feel lucky to have been part of this life changing experience and to pay my respects to the people whose lives were impacted by this mass genocide. I feel like this experience has changed my outlook on life and will stay with me forever." - ES

"Poland has been a whirlwind of emotions; from the majestic wonders of the Salt Mines, to the silence of Auschwitz-Birkenau. It has served as a reminder of not only the events that must never happen again, but also of the resilience of humanity in the face of terror." - NW



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“My life has definitely changed due to this trip as I feel like I have developed my empathy and understanding. Furthermore, I feel incredibly honoured and lucky to have been able to meet and listen to the story of Anna (the survivor). The amount of respect I have for her resilience is insane and I feel she is one of the most inspirational women I have ever had the privilege to meet.” - NL

“After this trip, I am clear: we cannot forget what happened and cannot allow this to happen again.” - DO

“The trip has highlighted to me the need for kindness, respect and being vocal to prevent times of hardship to cause hatred and targeting groups of people as scapegoats. It is so important to remember the relevance of these values as time goes on, to prevent history from repeating itself, and to identify seedlings of hatred before they grow into trees of indescribable persecution.” - Anon

**IF YOU HAVE THE
FEELING THAT
SOMETHING IS
WRONG, DON'T BE
AFRAID TO SPEAK UP.**

**It happened, therefore it
can happen again: this is
the core of what we have
to say. It can happen,
and it can happen
everywhere.**

PRIMO LEVI

A final word from Mr Baybutt

“I cannot put into words how proud I am of our amazing students. Their conduct on the trip was excellent, but reading their reflections left me with tears in my eyes. They are a credit to their parents and carers, and to us. You hope, as a teacher, that there are those moments when you feel that you truly make a difference and shape lives for the better. That those under your care go on to be really good people and make a positive impact on the world. After this trip, I know that the wonderful students who attended will do just that. Thank you so much to the parents/carers for their support of the trip, and to Miss Webb, Mr Morris, Ms Stanyon, Mrs Horsfall, Mr Nicholson and Miss Braid for your unwavering support throughout. Thank you also to those ‘behind the scenes’ who made this all possible, including Mrs Brown and Mrs Featherstone, and anyone I have inadvertently forgotten to mention. My final



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thanks is to Natalia, one of our students who came on the trip. Natalia was able to translate for me and speak directly to the Polish tour operators on several occasions to ensure that the trip ran smoothly. Natalia, our GOAT, Dziekuje!”

