



**LNYDP**  
LONDON'S NEW  
YEAR'S DAY PARADE  
★ AND FESTIVAL ★

# London - 2023

## Tour Information Booklet

*UPDATED AUGUST, 2022*

### **Red & Silver Brigade**

### Overland Park, Kansas



# London -2023

## Tour Information Booklet

This booklet provides an overview of the Blue Valley West Band's planned performance tour to London for the 2023 London New Year's Day Parade to help students and their families make an informed decision as to their participation in this spectacular event and to keep updated with tour information. If you have additional questions, please email our official tour address:

[red.and.silver.london23@gmail.com](mailto:red.and.silver.london23@gmail.com).

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## General Tour Information

**Why Travel?** Members of the Blue Valley West Band Program frequently have opportunities to travel and perform in festivals, competitions, and special events throughout their high school band experience. At least once every four years, our program seeks to offer a significant travel and performance opportunity to our students. We are pleased to share that during the 2022-2023 school year, Blue Valley West Band members can choose to travel to **London, England** to perform in the **London New Year's Day Parade (LNYDP)**.

The decision to offer this performance tour resulted from input obtained from band parents and students through a survey conducted in the Fall of 2021. Subsequently the BVW Band staff sought out invitations for appropriate performance opportunities, and we were beyond thrilled when this very special invitation was presented.

**What is the LNYDP?** Dubbed “**The Greatest Event in the Greatest City in the World,**” the **London New Year's Day Parade** features over 10,000 performers for a live audience of a half-million spectators and a broadcast audience of 600 million people. Performing in the LNYDP and travelling to England provides our students with a once-in-a-lifetime musical, cultural, educational, and social experience.

**How were we selected?** American high school, college, and university marching bands are unique performing ensembles and are quite popular participants in various international events. The LNYDP constantly seeks outstanding marching bands from the United States. Recommended groups are put before a review committee who then issue invitations. Based on the reputation and record of performance of the Blue Valley West Band Program, we were presented with an invitation. This marks the second time the West Bands have been invited to participate in the London New Year's Day Parade – the first was 2010.

**When is the tour?** **December 28, 2022, through January 4, 2023.** See itinerary section for additional details. Date changed in August due to airline availability changes.

**Is participation required?** **No.** Performance tours are designed to supplement and enhance a student's overall experience in band, but participation is not required to be a member of the band program. That said, the more students that choose to participate, the greater the experience is for all involved! We pledge to help every student interested in participating make that goal a reality!

**Who sponsors the tour?** Blue Valley Unified School District #229 does not sanction international travel. This is a private performance tour, and we will officially be traveling as the **Red & Silver Brigade from Overland Park, Kansas**.

- **Mr. Justin Love**, who serves as the Director of Bands at Blue Valley West High School, is the tour sponsor.
- **The Blue Valley West Band Boosters** will be coordinating fundraising activities.
- **Youth Music of the World**, is our travel partner and logistical coordinator.
- **Destination Events** is the United Kingdom based organization which operates the LNYDP.

**Who can go on the Tour?** **Any student** who is a **member** of the **Blue Valley West High School Band** program and **Color Guard** during the **2022 – 2023** school year is invited to attend. Students currently in band in grades 8-11 may begin registering for the trip in late December 2022. Band students will be considered **Performing Members** of the tour.

**What about family members / chaperones / alumni?** Family members may also travel as non-performers on the trip. Band staff and parents will also have an opportunity to serve as trip chaperones. Students who graduated from the Blue Valley West Band Program in the class of 2022 may also participate in this performance tour. Family and chaperones will be considered **Non-Performing Members** of the tour.

For the remainder of this document, both **Performing Members** and **Non-Performing Members** will generally be referred to as **Tour Participants**.

## Tour Itinerary

**Itinerary:** Our finalized itinerary will be provided in December. All trip participants will receive a detailed booklet outlining all activities and other information essential to the tour. Below is a glimpse of the activities and performances planned for our trip.

- **Wednesday, December 28, 2022** – evening departure from Kansas City International Airport for London, England – dinner and breakfast provided en-route.
- **Thursday, December 29, 2022** – Arrive in London mid-day. Orientation meeting. Free time in chaperoned groups for sight-seeing / shopping. Dinner provided at the hotel.
- **TBD** – Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Private guided coach tour of London. Afternoon rehearsal for performers at St. John's. Free time for families. Dinner at the hotel. Evening concert performance in St. John's Church.
- **TBD** - Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Boat tour of the River Thames and visit to the Tower of London. Afternoon free time sight-seeing / shopping in chaperoned groups. Dinner in London using meal cards.
- **Saturday, December 31, 2022** – Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Bus ride to Oxford to tour the town, university, and some free time to explore / shop in chaperoned groups. Dinner in the hotel followed by New Year's Eve Celebration.
- **Sunday, January 1, 2023** – Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Perform in the 37<sup>th</sup> annual London New Year's Day Parade. Dinner in London using meal cards and free time for sight-seeing in chaperoned groups.
- **TBD** – Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Full Day Tour to Windsor Castle. Evening sight-seeing in chaperoned groups and dinner using meal cards.
- **Wednesday, January 4, 2023** – Full English Breakfast in private meeting room. Depart London for Kansas City. Lunch and afternoon snack served en-route. Our return flight is scheduled to arrive on January 4, 2023. We will miss the first day of classes of the Spring Semester of 2023.

**Additional Dates:** These are additional dates that all participants need to mark on their calendar. Please note that our rehearsal schedule has changed due to equipment shipping deadlines.

- **September 1, 2022** – Final deadline to pay and register for the LNYDP Tour.
- **October 1, 2022** – Trip Information Form Due (Passenger details and Passport information required)
- **November 1, 2022** – Final Trip Payment Due and Rooming Preference Lists Due
- **November 12, 2022** – LNYDP Performer Rehearsal – times TBD – **REQUIRED FOR PERFORMERS**
- **November 17, 2022** – **LNYDP Tour Participant Meeting – REQUIRED FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS**
- **December 10, 2022** – LNYDP Performer Rehearsal – times TBD – **REQUIRED FOR PERFORMERS**
- **December 10, 2022** – LNYDP Equipment Packing – **REQUIRED FOR PERFORMERS**
- **December TBD** – Official Chaperone Meeting (prior to leaving)
- **December 13 – 16, 2022** – Instruments, uniforms, and equipment collected and shipped to London
- **January 16, 2023** – Approximate return of instruments, uniforms, and equipment from London

**Trip Inclusions:** As stated previously, our tour includes the following. Information below provides additional details and will be updated continuously as we move closer to our departure date.

- Round-trip airfare from Kansas City to London, England – ***Flight details released in October.***
- 6 nights accommodations in a central London hotel – ***Novotel London West – see below for details***
- Transport of all instruments and equipment to and from London – ***See additional details elsewhere in this document***
- 1 checked bag / 1 carry-on / 1 piece of hand luggage or personal item – ***Packing details provided in November***
- Daily buffet breakfast in our hotel – ***See details below***
- 3 dinners in our hotel plus a meal card useable in a wide range of restaurants and pubs in London – ***See details below***
- Pizza party on New Year's Eve – ***Includes meal, soft drinks, and a DJ!***
- Sack lunch on parade day for performers
- Coach transportation to and from all tours and performances – ***We will also utilize Public Transport for free-time sight-seeing***
- Priority booking for the grandstand for non-performers at the parade and tickets to our gala concert – ***Orders taken in October***
- Special souvenirs from the trip for parade and tour participants – ***Stay tuned for details!***
- Tour assistant for the duration of our tour – ***Local guide that stays with us in the hotel***
- Comprehensive [trip insurance policy](#) – click the link to view the policy

**Hotel:** Our hotel in London has been confirmed. We will be staying at the **Novotel London West** located in Hammersmith West London. You can learn more about the hotel here: <https://www.novotellondonwest.co.uk/>. Hammersmith is a town that served as the basis of one of composer Gustav Holst's most celebrated Wind Band Works. The hotel is a short walk from shops, eateries, and the tube (Underground) which will take us into Central London and Westminster.



**Transportation:** Throughout our tour we will use several modes of transportation. For certain sight-seeing activities we will use chartered motorcoach. During free-time tour participants will use Transport for London's famous **Red Buses** and the **London Underground**. Tour participants receive a pre-loaded **Oyster Card** which pays for trips from our hotel into Central London and to sight-seeing destinations around the city. Public transport in London is clean, safe, and a highly reliable.

**Please note that there will be a significant amount of walking during all of our tours and excursions.** Tour participants with mobility concerns can absolutely be accommodated, please speak with Mr. Love regarding any questions or concerns.

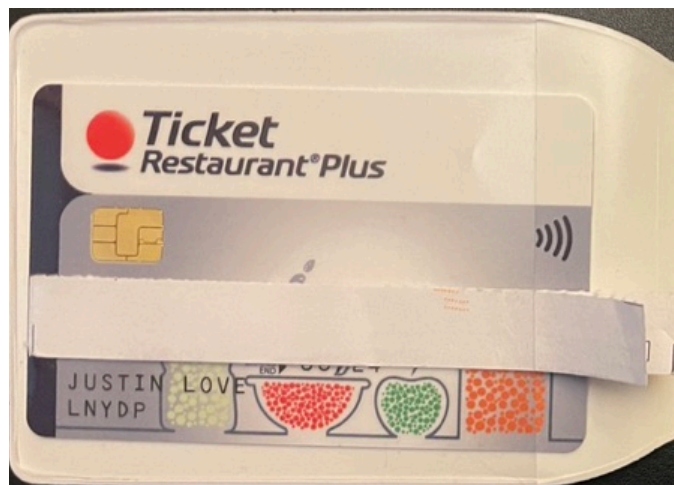




**Meals:** A Full English Breakfast is provided in our hotel every day. A full English Breakfast includes which various meats and sausages; breads and pastries; oatmeal; yogurt; fruit; cereal; coffee; tea; juice; etc.)

Several dinners are provided in the hotel, others via meal cards that work in every restaurant in London. Lunches and snacks are on your own throughout the day. Our hotel provides specialized offerings for allergies and specialized diets including gluten-free and vegetarian options.

London is a culinary melting pot with opportunities to sample food from every part of the world. You can also find American fast-food staples such as McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken. Bottom line – you will not go hungry on our trip!



## Miscellaneous

The following information is provided to help ensure a positive and enjoyable trip experience. This will be updated as questions arise.

**Passports:** Please check passport requirements [HERE](#).

**Money:** Tour Participants will want to have money for souvenirs, lunches, snacks, and potential extra sight-seeing excursions. ***It is important to note that many places in London are cashless.*** Credit cards or pre-paid cards are the best route to take. Visa and Master Card are the most widely accepted cards. If participants wish to bring cash a small amount is recommended, and remember that the United Kingdom uses the British Pound as currency. The easiest way to obtain pounds is to use an ATM upon arrival in London. You will pay a small transaction fee, and remember that the pound is generally more highly valued than the US dollar – in other words 1 pound will cost you approximately \$1.30.

Tour participants should check with their credit card providers to review the process for international travel notifications to avoid having their card locked with a fraud alert, and to understand any potential transaction fees that may occur when making purchases internationally.

**Cell phones:** Cell phones will be essential for using maps and check-ins during our tour. Tour Participants should check with their provider regarding international plans and travel passes. Cell phone coverage and compatibility range wildly.

That said, Free Wi-Fi is quite readily available throughout London. It is recommended to keep your phone in Airplane mode unless accessing Wi-Fi to avoid large charges and rapid depletion of data plans.

**Chargers:** The United Kingdom uses a 220-240 volt system. A specialized adapter is required to plug in chargers, computers, etc. Adapters can easily be obtained through Amazon and other retailers. [This page](#) provides examples of the types of plugs that can be purchased. We recommend carrying these in your carry-on luggage.

**Instruments / Luggage:** Each Tour Participant will be allowed **1 checked bag, 1 carry-on, and 1 personal item**. Detailed packing instructions will be sent later in the fall. All band uniforms and instruments larger than a trumpet will be shipped via an international shipping company. Flutes and clarinets will be packed in either checked or carry-on luggage.

**IMPORTANT:** Instruments shipped to London will leave in mid-December, and not return until mid-January. Students who are anticipating they will audition for the KMEA All-State Bands will be provided a school instrument to ship to and use in London as those auditions occur before our instruments return.

**Concert / Parade Tickets:** Non-performers and individuals travelling to London apart from our official party may obtain Grandstand tickets for the parade. Tickets are \$60 each and will be purchased in the fall. We will also have a block of tickets for our concert at St. John's Church.

**Chaperones:** Adult non-performer Tour Participants may be asked to serve as chaperones. Chaperones have minimal responsibilities. They will assist with room checks in the hotel, and with check-in during free-time excursions as outlined in our itinerary. If you are interested in serving in a chaperone role please contact Mr. Love.

## Tour Costs and Registration

**Registration Link and Deposit:** Registration sign-up and payment options will become available on **January 5, 2022**. A **deposit of \$200 per participant** is required to register for the tour. Registration is due **January 15, 2022**.

Performing members and non-performing members may continue to register after January 15, however the total deposit owed will be adjusted upwards to the current minimum total payments owed at time of registration.

**Tour Cost:** As of **12/1/2021** the estimated cost of participation in the tour will be between **\$3600 and \$3800** per participant. Tour costs will be locked within that range. Final tour package costs are dependent on the following:

- Cost of airfare at time of booking
- Valuation of the US Dollar relative to the Pound Sterling at time of initial deposit

**Payment Schedule:** Participants are encouraged to make regular payments to spread costs out over time. The **Minimum Total Payments** is the minimum amount that **MUST** be in each tour participant's account by the specified date. Accounts that are not current by the payment date will be dropped from the tour minus applicable fees under the refund policy.

	Suggested Payment	Minimum Total Payments
<b>January 15, 2022 – Registration Due</b>	\$200	<b><u>\$200</u></b>
February 15, 2022	\$350	
March 15, 2022	\$350	<b><u>\$600</u></b>
April 15, 2022	\$350	
May 15, 2022	\$350	
June 1, 2022 – <b><u>Fundraising Applied</u></b>	\$350	<b><u>\$1000</u></b>
July 1, 2022	\$350	
August 1, 2022	\$350	
September 1, 2022	\$350	<b><u>\$1800</u></b>
October 1, 2022	\$350	
November 1, 2022 – <b><u>Fundraising Applied</u></b>	\$350	<b><u>Remaining balance</u></b>
Total Payments	<b>\$3700</b>	<b>\$3700</b>

**Refund Policy:** Refunds for cancellation are provided on the following schedule:

- On or before **February 22, 2022**: All payments less \$100.
- On or before **May 1, 2022**: All payments less \$100.
- After May 1, 2022: No refund except for reimbursement under cancellation terms of the insurance policy.

**Credit / Debit Cards:** You may pay deposits using a credit / debit card through Venmo.

**Fundraising:** An aggressive fundraising campaign will be held throughout the spring and summer open to current band students in grades 8-11. Fundraising earnings for both individual and full group cost reductions will be applied on June 1 and November 1 (prior to the final payment.) Fundraising activities may include, but are not limited to:

**Sponsorship Letter Drive**  
**Grocery Sacking**

**Mattress Sale**  
**Rent a Band Member**

**Program Ad Drive**  
**Practice-o-thon**

**Scrip:** Trip participants can utilize the BVW Band Booster Scrip Program to earn funds as well. Tour participants can request excess scrip earnings from their accounts to be applied to any tour participant payments.

**Discounts:** It is not possible to offer discounts or reduced package costs for families with multiple tour participants. Non-performing packages are the same cost as performing tour packages.

**Insurance Policy:** Included in the tour package cost is a comprehensive trip insurance policy. Most importantly it provides full refunds in case of cancellation due to quarantine prior to or during the trip. Copies of the Insurance Policy can be provided upon request.



## Tour Policies

**Trip Rules and Regulations:** While the Blue Valley School District and Blue Valley West High School have no liability, responsibility, or supervision of this tour, understand that we are still representatives of our country and school community. Expectations for behavior and general decorum for **ALL** tour participants will be the same as for any other school associated trip.

**Passports & Visas:** All tour participants must have a valid passport to enter the United Kingdom. To travel internationally passports must have an expiration date at least 6 months after your schedule date of return to the United States. **It is strongly recommended that passports have an expiration date of July 1, 2023 or later to safely comply with this requirement.** Tour participants without a valid passport will be provided with information on how to obtain or renew their passport. Tour participants will be required to show their passport by September 1, 2022 to book airline tickets.

To apply for or renew a passport, please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>

Please note the additional following conditions for tour participants:

- United States citizens only need a passport to travel to and from the United Kingdom.
- Non-US Passport holders may also need to obtain a visa. The United Kingdom Government Foreign Office website provides a list of required entry documents for citizens of various countries. Our tour host will assist with the visa process for any performance tour members in this category.
- Tour participants who are Green Card Holders in the United States should also check with the US Department of Homeland Security to clarify any additional steps that may need to be taken to ensure re-entry to the United States.
- ***Tour participants without a valid passport should begin that process immediately after trip registration. Failure to have required documents by the date of travel is not covered for compensation under the trip insurance policy.***

**COVID and Travel to the United Kingdom:** While COVID testing, vaccination, and quarantine requirements differ from country to country and could change between now and December of 2022, tour participants are advised of the following information:  
**(UPDATED 4/5/22)**

- The United Kingdom no longer requires COVID vaccinations, testing, or quarantine for international visitors. There are no mask mandates in force in the United Kingdom.
- Individuals will **NOT** be required to show proof of COVID vaccination to participate in this tour.
- Currently the United States requires a negative rapid antigen test taken 24 hours prior to departure to return to the United States. This requirement may or may not still be in place when we travel, and information will be updated as policies change. In the event a rapid test is required, our Travel Partner will provide the tests free of charge.
- The [travel insurance policy](#) provided by our tour partner does provide some protections in the event a tour participant is unable to travel due to illness or quarantine. Please reference the travel insurance policy for additional information.
- There always remains the possibility that mitigation protocols such as mask wearing, distancing, and occupancy limits may be imposed by airlines, hotels, and tourist venues. Compliance with these protocols is required of all trip participants.