



## **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) Regarding Willistown 78's Trip to Switzerland**

(Revised April 2024)

As Willistown Troop 78 prepares for its trip to Kandersteg International Scout Centre (KISC), **July 25 – August 8, 2026**, we've compiled this list of FAQs to assist Scouts and parents in making the commitment to join us:

### **What is KISC?**

Kandersteg International Scout Centre (website: <http://www.kisc.ch>) is the permanent home of the International Scouting Movement's base camp. KISC was dream of Scouting's founder, Lord Baden-Powell, who wanted a permanent camping experience where Scouts from countries all over the world could gather and share good times, camaraderie and experiences. Set in the heart of the Swiss Alps, KISC's beautiful location makes it the ideal place for members of the Scouting movement to gather for a unique and memorable experience.

### **Why go to KISC? Why not take a trip to a closer high-adventure camp, like Philmont?**

The Troop has a long tradition of travel. In addition to our annual visits to Florida and Canada, the Troop has gone to the Virgin Islands, and has gone to KISC five times, most recently in 2022. All who attended found the trip to be an extraordinary event. While Chester County Council does make trips to Philmont and other US high adventure Scouting locations available to its members, these trips are generally arranged for individual Scouts, rather than entire troops. The KISC adventure allows us to experience an international Scouting venue as a troop. Scouts will have the opportunity to do age-appropriate activities at KISC that they might never get to do elsewhere, like climb the Matterhorn, hike a glacier, and stay in an Alpine hut. Meeting scouts from around the world is also one of the favorite experiences of KISC. They will have the opportunity to experience in traditional scout activities as well as share their cultural diversity.

### **How much will the trip cost our family?**

Our goal is to make the trip as affordable as possible, so that as many of our Troop members as possible can attend. Right now, we can't determine the precise costs, because of variables such as airfare, itinerary, and currency fluctuation. We are budgeting a cost of about \$3,750 per attendee. Scout account contributions from our traditional fundraisers (Radnor events, and the spring flower, and holiday wreath & poinsettia sales) over the next 24 months will help to significantly decrease the out-of-pocket expenditures for each Scout. There is also a Troop High Adventure Fund that will match up to \$300 per scout in their scout account that is available to help offset the trip costs for the scout. In keeping with the Troop's long-standing policy, we do not want to deny anyone this



opportunity because of cost. If the out-of-pocket expenditure for the trip will impose a financial hardship on your family, please speak with Mr. D. You can be assured of his discretion. ***However, we expect each Scout to do his best to earn a significant portion of the trip's costs. Each interested family must participate in each of the Troop's fundraisers.*** We recommend that families earmark the proceeds of their sons' Scout accounts to be used for KISC, rather than for summer camp or other Troop events.

### **How many people will Willistown 78 take to KISC?**

We have reserved space for 40 attendees at KISC.

### **What are the eligibility requirements?**

The eligibility requirements for youth are as follows:

- **Age.** Must be at least 13 years of age at the time of the trip.
- **Rank.** At the time of the trip, all Scouts must at least have earned the rank of First Class. The Troop reserves the right to increase the eligibility standard up to the rank of Star. Scouts who are signed up should be focused on increasing their Scouting skills, by attending camping trips, Troop-sponsored events like the First Aid meets, summer camp, and rank advancement. Scouts must also have earned First Aid and Swimming merit badges to attend.
- **Summer Camp Attendance.** Each Scout must attend at least one week of camp at Camp Horseshoe in the summers of 2025 and 2026.
- **Active Participation in Troop Activities, Fundraisers and Meetings.** This trip is a reward and privilege for the Scouts that actively participate in our Troop's meetings and events. We reserve the right to deny attendance to anyone who Mr. D. and the Troop Committee determine does not meet the activity participation expectations.

Adults who have signed up must be registered with the Troop by January 1, 2025 and at the time of the trip, must be current with the following training

- Required
  - Annual Youth Protection Training\*
  - PA Volunteer Background Checks\*
  - Scouting Safely\*
  - What is Scouts BSA\*
  - Safe Swim Defense\*
  - Hazardous Weather Training\*
  - CPR^



\*all of these training courses can be taken on-line at [www.cccbsa.org](http://www.cccbsa.org) or [www.my.scouting.org](http://www.my.scouting.org),

^The Troop hosts a CPR training certification class each February.

Adults attending the trip are expected to serve as leaders and advisors. Adults will be required to abstain from the consumption of alcohol during the trip – including on the flights to and from Europe - and those who use tobacco must do so in accordance with Scouting regulations. **The use of tobacco by adults on the KISC trip is highly discouraged, and of course is absolutely prohibited by youths!**

### **What is the next step in committing my son and me for the trip?**

We only have 40 spots reserved, so to secure your spot, a \$250 deposit must be remitted for each committed participant by September 6, 2024. The first payment of \$500 from each committed participant must be remitted to the Troop by November 1, 2024. Checks should be made payable to Willistown Troop 78. Your son can bring the payment to the Scout meeting that evening or prior. Or mail to Troop 78 – 2026 KISC Trip, PO Box 22, Malvern, PA 19355. If two or more members of any family are going on the trip, payments can be remitted in a single check, but the amount is \$500 per person. Please list all names of scouts or adults on the check. Scout account funds cannot be used for the November 1st installment but can be used for all Scout payments (but not payments for adults) after that. Additional installments are payable based on the schedule listed below:

#### **2024**

- September 6, 2024 - \$250 Deposit
- November 1, 2024 - \$500

#### **2025**

- March 7, 2025 - \$750
- June 20, 2025 - \$750
- November 7, 2025 - \$750

#### **2026**

- February 6, 2026 - ~\$700 Approximation. (Final payment will be calculated based on final itinerary, airfares, exchange rate)

*We are currently estimating the total trip cost for KISC 2026 at \$4,000.00*

### **At this point, is my son/am I bound to go on the trip?**

To make this trip work, we need a firm headcount, and commitments from those who will be going. A deposit is required to secure a spot on the trip. We only have reservations for 40 scouts and adults. Anyone who is committed to going to KISC must remit the \$250 deposit by September 6, 2024. If your son is “on the fence,” or if you as the father aren’t certain, you should let Kipp Happ or Mike Simms know NOW. We are here to answer any



questions or concerns you may have. Once you remit the November 1st payment, you are making a commitment to go on the trip.

### **Can I get trip insurance in case my son needs to cancel?**

As a Troop, we will obtain cancellation insurance. This insurance will cover cancellations due to health issues and a limited number of other exceptions. It will also cover most medical expenses for evacuating ill individuals back to the US. It will NOT provide coverage if you simply terminate this trip for convenience. Again, if you are uncertain about you or your son attending, now is the time to let us know!

### **Europe is so far away – can't you plan a side trip to another location?**

One of the options for attendees will be to take a side trip to Stresa, Italy. Stresa is in the Lago Maggiore region of Italy. It is beautiful and well worth the side trek. We will also offer a side trip to Jungfrau, which is the highest train station in Switzerland. And of course, we will have trips to the Matterhorn region of Switzerland. Unlike past trips, we will not be going to another country in Europe ahead of our visit to KISC. We found that there is enough to fill our agenda in Switzerland. In fact, to the extent that we received any negative feedback on the 2016 & 2022 trips, it was that Scouts wanted to spend more time at KISC, getting to know other Scouts from around the world. So, in 2026, we will be accommodating that request.

### **Will my son need any special equipment for this trip?**

Yes – we will have some special equipment requirements. For starters, all gear will have to be packed in a gear duffle bag, that has wheels or backpacking shoulder straps. We will be taking full uniforms with us, so adults that do not have a uniform will need to purchase one. Everyone will need a good 20L to 30L day pack, which will be used as a carry-on on the plane and used for day hikes. Participants will need two Nalgene-type one-liter water bottles. We will not be carrying camping gear, such as stoves and pots, because if we cook, we will be cooking in established kitchens. We will be putting out a "recommended packing" list that will include lightweight, hand-washable items, when we get closer to the departure date. We do not expect the costs for any special personal gear to be significant.

### **Can other family members go on the trip?**

One of the Troop's basic tenets is boy leadership with qualified adult supervision, in a structured Scouting environment. For 95 years, this philosophy has served the Troop members well, particularly during our camping experiences in Philmont, Florida and Canada. As we ascertained in 2022 when we last visited KISC, the nature of this type of trip requires that we limit attendance to registered Scouts and male Scout leaders. Family



trips are great – but the fun of Scouting is to be with other Scouts – and we plan to carry out the Troop’s camping tradition for the KISC trip.

**Can I pay for my airfare with my frequent flyer miles? Can I meet up with my family for a family trip that couples with this trip?**

We are traveling to Switzerland as a group. To get our group airfare, everyone needs to travel together. So, we are purchasing our tickets and are not able to allow anyone to use frequent flyer miles for their airline tickets.

Similarly, we need to keep our schedule as a group. We cannot be in a position where we are trying to get members to an airport, or a train station, to meet up with family members. If you would like to take a family trip, that’s fine – but do not commit to the KISC trip with the intention of pairing it up with your family vacation. This is a Scouting trip – let your son go with his Troop.

**Who is selecting the activities that my son will participate in on the trip?**

We will be putting together a focus group from the Scouts signed up for the trip. There will be a group of scouts for whom this is a first-time experience – as well as a group for whom this is their second trip. A group from the adult Trip Committee will let the boys know what activities are available to them, based on age-appropriateness, high adventure/low adventure, budget, and days events are offered. That focus group will help us build our KISC itinerary around certain set activities. For example, August 1 is Swiss Day. KISC has great events planned for that day, and we’ll all participate in those events. We’ll all go on the alpine slide and swim in a glacial lake. We’ll have hiking options in Zermatt, either on the Matterhorn or in the beautiful valleys surrounding it. The bottom line is that your son or his peers will have a lot of input into what activities we schedule at KISC.

**What paperwork will be involved in signing my son up for the trip?**

Each Scout and registered leader will need a current Annual Health and Medical Record Form (each is valid for 12 months) completed and signed by his physician. This form can be downloaded at <https://scouting.org> . We will also need a notarized permission slip, signed by both parents, including any non-custodial parent (we will have an affidavit available if one of the parents has passed away, or there are extraordinary circumstances that would preclude the parent from signing) for each Scout. Every attendee will need a current passport. The process for applying for a passport (including the download form and the applicable fees) can be found at [http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first\\_832.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_832.html) . We recommend that you apply for a passport for your son now if you think he might be going on the trip. Your passport must be valid for 6 months past the trip dates. Check your expiration date. Each youth and parent will also need to sign a Code of Conduct, committing the Scout to behavior



becoming of a Boy Scout in general, and a Scout in Troop 78 in particular. In that form, the family agrees that, if the Scout's behavior is problematic in the view of the Assistant Scoutmaster(s), the family is responsible for traveling to Europe and taking the Scout home. A draft copy of the Code of Conduct is attached to this FAQ document. ADHERENCE TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT IS A FUNDAMENTAL TENET OF PARTICIPATION IN THE KISC TRIP.

### **What if I have other questions?**

You can contact either Kipp Happ cell: 610-247-2364 / email: [edhapp@verizon.net](mailto:edhapp@verizon.net) or Mike Simms – cell: 610-806-6203 / email: [msimmsscouter@gmail.com](mailto:msimmsscouter@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Mr. D. has made several visits to KISC, so he's a good source of information, too. There are also families in the Troop who will be making their second visit to KISC. They'll give you the straight scoop on the trip. Feel free to speak with these families regarding their sons' experiences on the 2016 or 2022 trips.



*Traditional Boy Scouting in Willistown, Pennsylvania Since 1930*

**WILLISTOWN TROOP 78  
KISC 2026 TRIP CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Scouts and Scouters:**

As participants in the Willistown Troop 78 Kandersteg International Scout Centre 2026 Trip (the “Trip”), we are all required to adhere to this Code of Conduct. Remember that we will represent this Troop, the Boy Scouts of America, and the United States of America. We are ambassadors of goodwill. Our behavior reflects on each of us, our families, this Troop, all of Scouting, and our country.

This Code of Conduct is being provided as a reminder that we are obligated at all times to behave responsibly, rationally and in compliance with the rules and guidelines of this Code. This Code is not intended to be an exhaustive list of behavior that is acceptable or unacceptable – instead, it sets out behavior that is *required* at all times and points out behavior that is *prohibited* at all times.

This Code is and will be in force at all times and for all aspects of the Trip – in our preparation; in our travel to and from points of departure; and throughout our stay in Europe. The Scoutmaster and his designees have the right to enforce violations of the Code, but you, as a participant, are obligated to enforce the Code as well – both with regard to yourself and your fellow Scouts and Scouters. Violations should be reported to the Scoutmaster as soon as possible, and in all cases, without delay. Any questions regarding this Code should be addressed with the Scoutmaster.

**The Scout Law; Adherence to Applicable Law**

We will follow the Scout Law at all times. The requirements of the Scout Law will be in place in addition to, and not in place of, all other applicable laws and regulations of the country or authority having jurisdiction over the Troop and the participants at any time during the Trip. We will adhere to all such applicable laws and regulations during the Trip, keeping in mind that behaviors and actions that may be lawful in one jurisdiction may be prohibited in another jurisdiction.

**Common Courtesy and Respect For Others**

We will be guests in the countries we visit, and throughout the Trip, we will meet people from all over the globe. Some will speak English, and others will not. We are going on the Trip in part to observe the cultures of others – their mannerisms, their way of doing things – and we will be respectful of the differences between us, and work to find our similarities. We will be polite. We will address people in positions of authority by their appropriate titles. We will shake hands, and we will look people in the eye when we



address them. In short, we will be courteous and respectful to everyone we meet. We will also respect one another – including each other’s property. We will keep our hands to ourselves. Fighting – both verbal and physical – will not be tolerated. Those instigating altercations will be accountable and responsible for their actions.

We will be “eco-friendly” and properly dispose of our trash and our recyclables. We will adhere to the “Leave No Trace” principles when we are enjoying nature – leaving only footprints and taking only photographs.

### **Prohibited Substances**

We will at all times refrain from the use of alcohol and all substances that are illegal in the US. Whether we are of legal drinking age in the US or in any country that we visit is irrelevant. To be clear, no person – including no adult, regardless of age - will consume any alcohol whatsoever, whether on the flights to and from Trip destinations, or while in-country during the Trip. No Scouts will use any tobacco products at all. The use of tobacco products by adults (those over 18) must be in strict accordance with BSA guidelines.

### **Adherence to Rules and Guidelines Established by The Scoutmaster**

The Scoutmaster is in charge of the Troop, and at all times we will adhere to rules and guidelines established by the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster has the authority to ban any person – adult or child – from further participation in the Trip because of behavior that, in the sole discretion of the Scoutmaster, is inappropriate, dangerous, or otherwise reflects negatively on the Troop or on the Scouting movement itself. The Scoutmaster has the right to require that a parent or guardian come to any location – whether in the US or in Europe – to escort a Scout home if the Scoutmaster bars the Scout from further participation in the Trip. The costs for housing and transporting the banned individual home, and in bringing the escorting parent or guardian to or from the location from which the Scout is to be escorted, will be borne solely by the banned participant or, if the banned participant is a Scout, the Scout’s parent or guardian.