



# South Dartmoor Community College

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23 November 2023

Dear Parent / Carer

## **Compulsory Fieldwork Studies – Lochranza February 2024**

As you are aware, there is a compulsory fieldwork requirement to the A level exam. This is to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of the enquiry process and field research methodology. This is essential to enable students to carry out their own Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) coursework worth 20% of the final exam.

To formalise the conversations and discussions held in class with students to date, I would like to outline the programme for the Field trip to Lochranza, Isle of Arran.

The dates are **Thursday 22 February – Monday 26 February 2023**

### **The trip outline:**

**Thursday 22 February:** Leaving from Drumbridges North Bound bus stop on the Falcon Express to Bristol Airport very early morning (**2:47am**)

Flying to Glasgow Airport (Prestwick) (dept **0700**)– shuttle bus to Paisley Gilmour Street Rail station – Train to Ardrossan Harbour – Caledonian McBrayne Ferry to Brodick, Isle of Arran – Bus to Lochranza!

Studies in the field and classroom will take place on the following 3 days, **Friday 23 – Sunday 25 February.**

**Monday 26 February:** Reverse of the travel arrangements all the way home. Leaving the Lochranza Field Centre soon after breakfast to catch the first ferry to Ardrossan. This early departure builds in a buffer of time to accommodate any travel delays on the way to the airport before checking in for a late afternoon (dept 1650) flight.

A more accurate time of arrival at Drumbridges will be possible the closer we get to home but is likely to be between 8:30pm – 9:30pm.

### **Study Plan:**

**Friday 23 February** Introduction to field working techniques. The enquiry process and methods of data collection, presentation and analysis.

**Saturday 24 February** Glaciation Landscape morphology and management

**Sunday 25<sup>h</sup> February** Regeneration of rural localities

Each of the working days will be structured around the class/laboratory and the field research. Data will be collected and processed on each day to illustrate the range of techniques required by the exam. The day will end after evening sessions in the classrooms around 8pm. The entire study course will be led by a tutor from the Field Centre who will deliver the specific courses each day and who will be the mountain leader and first aider in the field.

## **Accommodation and Meals**

All food is prepared from local sources and tailored to the students' dietary needs. Breakfast will be hot and/or cold. Lunches will be self-assembled pack lunches and drinks (taking a flask enables tea/coffee or hot squash when in the cold outdoors) and evening meals are seated in the dining room and served to the tables.

Sleeping will be in dormitory style rooms with communal shower and toilets. Naturally these will be single gender and in school units. No room sharing with other schools will be required, although they might share a corridor.

Health and Safety is exceptionally tight and all activities are extensively risk assessed and planned to mitigate the chances of accident. This does rely entirely on students acting responsibly and upon instruction at all times. Equipment listed for "All groups" on the attached "What to Bring" list is essential. Footwear and trousers are usually the most debated by students, but jeans are not allowed to be worn in the field and only walking boots are accepted. Waterproofs must be to a standard the field centre staff accept or renting (cheaply) from them will be insisted on. February frequently sees snow and ice arrive on the horizontal even if it was sunny and warm an hour before!

Travelling on EasyJet requires photo ID and that is easiest by using a passport. We will need to have a photocopy of each one in case of loss and we also need to keep luggage to a cabin locker maximum (dimensions available on [easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com)). Wearing heavier walking boots and heavier clothing might help keep bag weight down, but weight can also be distributed between bags that will be carried on board. All airline security protocols will need to be observed, so penknives, blades, scissors and fluids etc will need to be managed appropriately and not accidentally brought. School pencil cases can carry an alarming number of confiscate-able items such as compasses and scissors. They will be confiscated at Security. As will full water bottles.

Evenings will be free to students after the end of the class sessions and there is a common room with table games and TV as well as a small shop selling snacks and stationary essentials (including waterproof notepads). Leaving site is possible but there are no streetlights or buildings to visit! Signing in and out of site is managed by the centre staff. There is a safe on site to protect valuables and lockers for personal affairs. Please, no unnecessary electrical and electronic products. Bluetooth speakers, for example, are not essential, nor are hair straighteners come to think of it! Throughout the trip ALL school rules will apply towards behaviour, drinking and smoking at all times.

## Finance

As you can appreciate, there is a cost to this type of trip. Sadly, current global and national economic forces have impacted on the costing of this study course by raising prices for so many things. The school has contributed towards tuition fees and staffing costs as much as possible, however, we need to ask for a parental contribution of £400. This will be payable through ParentPay as a single sum or three instalments. In addition, the students and staff will be raising money through several events to contribute to this. Successful funds raised will be deducted from the final instalment. Payment before 20/2/24 would be appreciated. ParentPay also acts as the consent form process too.

Regards

Chris Hodges  
Head of Geography  
South Dartmoor Community College

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