



South Dartmoor Community College

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24 January 2024

Dear Parent / Carer

Geography Field trip to Arran

I write to you to confirm the excellent news that the school is able to majorly subsidise this important field study course. We thank you for your contribution of £133 but will require no further payments. Those parents who did pay more than this initial instalment will be contacted by the school to arrange repayment.

I also write to confirm the timings of the trip now that tickets have been bought and modes of transport have been synchronised. Thankfully, there hasn't been any need to alter any of the planning but a subtle change in bus departure time from north bound Drumbridges roundabout means that we need to be all in place ready to board the Falcon bus at **02:45 on Thursday 22 Feb** (not 02:47!). Joking aside, drop off and collection from the trip at Drumbridges may be slightly problematic due to the VERY limited drop off parking. Dropping off will need to be a swift drop and go (probably to the relief of our teenage students) with no hanging about to wave hankies as the bus will need all the bus stop bay to pull in. Even though at that time of the night traffic will be light, we will bring at least a dozen vehicles in quick succession.

Our return will be more problematic, as I doubt you will want to circle the roundabout like a Heathrow holding stack, so I suggest we use the Stover Country Park carpark to wait and, once we have arrived, we walk as a group to the carpark where tearful reunions can carry out unhindered by traffic.

The rest of this information has been sent to you already, but it never hurts to have it again.

The trip outline:

Thursday 22 February: Leaving from Drumbridges North Bound bus stop on the Falcon Express to Bristol Airport very early morning (**2:45am**)
Flying to Glasgow Airport (dept **07:00**)– 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 13:15) flight.

A more accurate time of arrival at Drumbridges will be possible the closer we get to home but is likely to be between 17:30pm – 18:30pm.

Study Plan:

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

Saturday 24th February Glaciation Landscape morphology and management

Sunday 25th 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. **I will take dietary requirements from the consent information completed via ParentPay but please can I ask that you ask your son/daughter to remind me via Teams asap.**

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 **small under seat bag** (dimensions available on easyjet.com) **and a 15kg hold bag**. 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 for 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.**

Kind regards

Chris Hodges
Head of Geography
South Dartmoor Community College

Lochranza What to bring



A number of the activities/options you do will result in getting wet at some point. It is therefore useful for you to bring your own waterproof clothing and footwear with you. The weather on the Isle of Arran is notorious for providing all seasons in one day, so planning ahead and packing appropriately makes a big difference.

Kit List (all groups)

Take plenty of clothing in case of wet weather. Clothing should be old.

- Walking Boots, with ankle support
- Waterproof jacket, with taped seams and integral hood
- Waterproof overtrousers, with taped seams, ideally with leg zips for ease of removal.
- A day rucksack with two straps, lined with a plastic bag
- Walking socks, several pairs
- Outdoor trousers to go underneath waterproof trousers – NOT JEANS – preferably comfortable and quick drying
- Zipped Fleece/Microfleeces for underneath layers – they're warm and they dry out quickly
- Thick warm fleece/quilted jacket/underlayer to waterproof/jacket as emergency layer
- Woolly hat and gloves
- Large thermos flask/water bottle (Note the centre will supply one bottle of water on arrival, to conserve use of plastics and generation of waste, tap water is then used to fill this up).

General (all groups)

- Medication you will need for your stay
- Clothes for wearing around the centre in the evening
- Dry shoes for travelling, evenings and wearing around the centre
- Underwear
- Suitable nightwear
- Wash bag (soap, shampoo & toothbrush etc)
- Large towels
- Sun cream, sun hat and midge repellent for summer
- Small torch
- Labelled plastic bag/bin liners (for wet items)

Study course groups

- A field notebook. (Waterproof notebooks are excellent and can be bought at the centre for around £4 - £8)
- A classroom exercise book or file paper in a folder
- Pens, Pencils, Ruler, Protractor and Calculator – A limited supply is available from the centre
- Wellingtons if doing seashore / rivers options.

Activity groups / Families

- Swimming Costume - Watersports only
- Old trainers – Watersports only
- Old towel for wet activities

Field Studies Groups

Waterproof clothing – The essential clothing for all days in winter and summer is a thick, waterproof jacket with a hood and a good pair of waterproof over trousers (lightweight jackets will soak through and ski/puffer jackets are very bulky and heavy when wet).

Footwear – Wellingtons must be worn for work in the river and at the seashore. Walking boots with thick walking socks must be worn at all other times. Trainers, Dr martens and Caterpillar boots are NOT suitable and will not be permitted. Walking boots should have proper ankle support and a good tread. Walking trainers will not give full ankle support. Check the fabric boots are waterproof. Make sure that boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. A limited number of wellington boots and walking boots can be borrowed from the centre.

Do not bring:

Expensive clothing or electronics or Jewellery

Lost Property (Students items)

Everything your group brings should be labelled – indelible felt tip pens are useful for this. Pupils are responsible for their own belongings – it may be useful to provide a list of items packed. Lost property is hard to track down after a visit and there is a small charge for returning items.

Centre Kit Hire (Free for Family Active)

Note: the Centre does have a kit store and can hire out the following items if you have not got them. These charges are levied for your entire stay if you require any of these items.

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Waterproof jacket | £2.50 |
| Waterproof trousers | £2.50 |
| Walking Boots | £2.50 |
| Rucksacks | £2.50 |
| Wellingtons | (free) |
| Max Charge | £7 |

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