



**St David's College**

— Est. 1965 —

*Outdoor Education Department*

Handbook and Useful Information



## *About The Department*

The provision of outdoor education is part of the founding ethos of St David's College, with an aim to allow pupils to develop social and life skills through the medium of outdoor adventure.

The department provides forward thinking, current and innovative outdoor learning. This learning has real meaning, with cross-curricular links to various departments within the school, and varied learning outcomes relevant to the group and the learning environment, both long and short term.

The department is recognised nationally and internationally as being ground-breaking in its

approach to outdoor learning within schools, and is staffed by qualified teachers in order to maximise the impact our outdoor learning can have on the holistic education of our pupils, and ensure the best possible personal and social learning.

These teachers hold high level outdoor leadership and coaching awards across various outdoor and adventurous activities, to ensure that the pupils stay safe whilst also having the opportunity to learn in a variety of environments relevant to the group, from basic skills through to more challenging locations.

# *The Outdoor Curriculum*

## **Years 5 and 6**

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given the opportunity to take part in a series of enjoyable and safe introductory lessons in the outdoors, allowing them to explore in their groups and begin looking at themes continued in later years. The outdoor education delivered in these years sets a good foundation from which to build on in year 7.

## **Year 7 and 8**

Pupils in years 7 and 8 will receive a day learning in the outdoors every other week. They will rotate through a series of activities at a basic level, and will have the opportunity to take part in kayaking, canoeing, sailing, climbing, mountaineering, trekking, gorge walking, orienteering, bushcraft, and caving/mining. These activities are used as a medium to introduce and develop life skills such as improving personal confidence, trust, support, communication, co-operation and working with others, along with picking up the skills required to keep themselves and others safe in a specific activity.

The National Outdoor Learning Award is used as a way to introduce a number of these life skills during the first few weeks of Year 7. Year 7 and 8 pupils will also take part in various cross-curricular lessons in conjunction with the school chaplaincy and academic departments, mainly during the winter months.

## **Year 9**

During Year 9, pupils will revisit some of the activities undertaken in previous years, although often in a more challenging location, in order to progress in the personal development skills introduced in years 7 and 8. Pupils in year 9 are also introduced to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, and complete the John Muir Discovery Award. Please see the Duke of Edinburgh's Award section for more details on the award.

## **Year 10**

Year 10 pupils will rotate through a final series of activities, revisiting and reinforcing previous learning outcomes but also as an introduction to what the activity would entail in an expedition setting.

After this rotation of activities, year 10 pupils will choose to focus on an activity, before undertaking a series of lessons preparing them for the week long Year 10 expedition towards the end of term.

These expeditions serve as a culmination to the outdoor education pupils receive at St. David's College, and have proved to be powerful, memorable and enjoyable learning experiences for pupils.







## Expeditions

Expeditions are a big part of outdoor education, and have a rich and varied history at St David's College.

Year 10 pupils all get the opportunity to attend a week long expedition in a chosen activity, which has included canoeing, sea kayaking, mountaineering, climbing, caving, trekking and whitewater kayaking. These expeditions have made use of many locations both in the UK and Europe. Further details of these expeditions are sent out to all Year 10 parents.

The department also runs various expeditions over weekends during term time with longer trips during school breaks. These expeditions are advertised through school and direct to parents, and have included surfing, winter mountaineering, caving, whitewater kayaking, climbing, sailing, Husky sledding and scuba diving to name a few.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

The department offers extra-curricular activities on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the term. These activities are open to all pupils, day and boarding, and give opportunities to work towards awards in various activities, get better at a certain activity, or simply get away from school and have some fun.

These weekend lessons could be basic lessons, or could allow more advanced pupils to enjoy some of the more challenging environments North Wales has on offer, such as whitewater kayaking, winter mountaineering, or multi-pitch climbing.

Signing up for these activities on a Saturday is done through the school pupil hub, while Sunday sign up is done through the outdoor education department.

Keep an eye on facebook and notice boards to find out what is going on, activities are also announced in house assemblies.

# *Awards & Qualifications*

## **BTEC Outdoor Education**

In the 6th Form, the outdoor education department offer the opportunity to study towards a Level 3 BTEC Diploma in sports and activities for active leisure (outdoor education). This BTEC has been designed for individuals wishing to pursue a career in outdoor and adventurous activities, or someone who has a strong interest in the subject and wishes to improve their knowledge. The course consists of 6 modules delivered over two years, covering water based and land based activities, along with an expedition module, and a module looking at alternative pursuits in the outdoors.

The course is predominantly practical in nature, but has regular classroom theory lessons to underpin knowledge and cover the academic aspects of the modules.

The course aims to deliver as many personal competency awards in outdoor activities as possible, such as Canoe Wales star awards and safety training, RYA sailing and powerboating awards, NICAS climbing awards and UKMTB climbing and hill walking awards.

## **The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme**

St. David's College encourages all pupils to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, from starting the Bronze award in year 9, through to undertaking the Gold award in the 6th form.

The award consists of 3 levels : Bronze, Silver and Gold, and within each award there are 4 sections to complete : expedition, volunteering, physical and skill. There is also a residential aspect to complete at gold level.

In year 9, pupils are guided through the Bronze award, with the expedition and volunteering sections covered as part of the outdoor programme. Pupils are encouraged to find their own physical and skill based activities to complete the award.

Pupils in higher years are given opportunities to complete expeditions in canoe, sea kayak or trekking at silver level, and trekking and sailing at gold level. They are expected to find their own activities to fulfil the remainder of the awards, although guidance is always available from the department.





# *Clothing and Equipment Requirements*

While the department is able to provide all the necessary safety and technical equipment required (wetsuits, waterproofs, helmets, etc), pupils are required to attend with the correct clothing to keep themselves comfortable for a day in the outdoors, appropriate to the weather conditions. Pupils attending wearing jeans, or clothing unsuitable for the conditions may not be able to take part. The school provides a packed lunch, but pupils are expected to bring their own reusable water bottle.

## **For Water Based Activities**

(Canoeing, Kayaking, Sea Kayaking, Gorge Walking, Sailing etc)

The following equipment will be required:

- Warm clothing (Fleece tops (mid-layer), thermal tops (base-layer))
- Swimming costume / shorts
- Old trainers or wetsuit boots (not Crocs or flip-flops)
- Towel
- Warm Hat

## **For Land Based Activities**

(Climbing, Walking, Caving etc)

The following equipment will be required:

- Warm clothing (e.g. Fleece tops (mid-layer), thermal tops (base-layer))
- Track suit / outdoor type trousers (quick drying – not cotton or denim)
- Waterproof top and bottoms
- Walking boots
- Gloves
- Warm hat

For warmer days we recommend sun hat, sun cream and sunglasses.

All members of the Outdoor Education staff will be happy to offer advice on clothing or equipment if required. All necessary equipment can be purchased through any outdoor equipment retailer.



# Meet the Team

## Ian Martin (Head of Department)



Ian Martin can usually be found on a mountain top or cliff face. He is a qualified teacher with a first class Degree in Outdoor and Environmental Education and is an Accredited Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. He also holds the MIC (Mountain Instructor Certificate) and IML (International Mountain Leader) awards, which represent the highest qualifications in climbing and mountaineering. He has worked at St David's for 12 years, before which, he led expeditions in the Alps and remote parts of South America and Africa. He is currently planning the next St David's College adventure.

## Aled Edwards



Aled is most at home on the water, in anything that floats! He has a BSc in Underwater Science, a PGCE in Biology and Outdoor Education, and is an Accredited Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. He also holds a selection of outdoor leadership and coaching qualifications to go exploring on the water, in the mountains and underground. He has worked for St. David's College for 12 years, before which he worked for a variety of outdoor education centres in the UK and France.

## Chris Jowett



Chris has been working for St. David's College for many years, both in the science and outdoor education departments. Chris' main love is exploring the world beneath our feet, either in the form of caves or mines. He has led many trips underground for our pupils both in the UK and abroad. Amongst other outdoor leadership qualifications, Chris holds the Caving Instructor Certificate (CIC), which marks the highest qualification available in underground exploration. Chris is also a keen sailor and lover of the environment, a love which has led to Chris becoming an accomplished falconer and all round knowledgeable guy in all things environmental.

## Kelly Delaney



Kelly holds a degree in outdoor education and has worked for St. David's College for many years. Previous to her work at the school, Kelly worked on the Hebridean Islands, where she developed a love of sea kayaking which she was able to bring with her to St. David's. She holds the BCU Level 4 sea kayak coach certificate, alongside other outdoor leadership qualifications allowing her to teach out pupils in a wide range of activities.

## John Tatam



John is an all-round adventurer, happiest making use of whatever conditions mother nature sends his way. He has a BSc in Environmental Studies, a PGCE in Outdoor Education, and is an Accredited Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. He also holds the MIC (Mountain Instructor Award) alongside other qualifications to enable him to lead and coach groups in a variety of locations. He has taught and explored in many settings and locations around the globe prior to starting at St. David's College and as a result is a hugely experienced teacher who truly enjoys passing on this enjoyment of the outdoors to others.

## Sara Beesley



Sara is an Old Davidean, who showed a love for adventure while a pupil at the school. She has returned to us as a residential assistant in Augusta House, and also put her love of adventure to good use working as a very capable assistant leader on many outdoor education lessons within our local area, and also further afield as part of our expedition programme.



## **St David's College**

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**[www.stdavidscollege.co.uk](http://www.stdavidscollege.co.uk)**