



Case study

Discovery through Adventure

Finding out about ourselves and others

Robinwood Activity Centre, near Alston, Cumbria



Learning Outside the Classroom

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What are we trying to achieve?

- for pupils from an urban environment to experience the sense of space and wildness of an isolated rural location
- to learn to face challenges, deal with uncertainty and work as a team
- to develop skills and independence
- to advance outcomes of *Every Child Matters*, especially 'enjoying and achieving', 'staying safe' and 'being healthy'.

Cost:

The children paid £110 each for the three day trip, including travel and all activities. The school meets the remaining 50% of the cost through a dedicated budget and fundraising. There is additional help for any families who would find the cost difficult.

Who is involved?

22 Year 6 children, including three with hearing impairment. Three teachers and one support assistant for deaf children accompanied the pupils. While at Robinwood, all activities were led by qualified centre staff.

Preparation:

Preparation included a full risk assessment and the practical planning between the school and activity centre required for such a residential.

How did we organise the learning?

This was a three-day residential with 14 activities undertaken in smaller groups. The experience drew together a wide range of learning experiences and developed many curricular links. From an RE and PSHEE perspective, the extended time together enabled children to reflect on their own experiences and values. The National Framework for RE 'encourages pupils to develop their own sense of identity and belonging'. The nurture of confident and caring relationships is one of the aims of the trip and a key learning point for pupils. 'Being in the same group as my friend meant we could encourage each other and that made our friendship a whole lot stronger. When we got back it made us realise what friendship was all about.'

What was the impact of the experience?

Children's reflections on experiences offer profound perceptions. For children with a religious faith, links with beliefs were apparent. 'When we go to mosque it makes us feel that God is near us. When we face challenges it's like God is next to us and can help us out.' The trip also helped to foster a sense of mutual responsibility, an essential ingredient in citizenship. One pupil described this as, 'I can remember what I've been through and so I know what to say and do to help others.' Facing challenge builds confidence, especially at a stage of transition. One boy remarked, 'When you try different activities you have to face your fear for once in your life. For me, I faced nearly all my fears so I'm not scared any more.'

Follow up:

Individual de-briefs were important for all the children so they could think about what they gained from the residential and how it could make a difference in the future. One girl put it this way. 'You're not by yourself so you're not scared. And now back here it's made my friendships stronger.'