

GHYLL HEAD

Outdoor Education & Activity Centre

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Thank you for choosing Ghyll Head Outdoor Education & Activity Centre

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES LICENCE DETAILS

Ghyll Head is a large country house set in seventeen acres of its own grounds, with extensive views to the Coniston and Langdale Fells. It is situated on the east side of Lake Windermere, about three miles south of Bowness. Down at the lake shore, there is a barrier free boathouse with jetty and launching facilities. The house is centrally heated and pleasantly furnished following our recent £1.5 million investment.

Accommodation includes a lounge, games room and dining room together with student's bedrooms of sizes varying from four to eight beds. Rooms are en-suite or with shared bathrooms, again all newly refurbished to high standards.

As an essential part of the learning at the centre - students are required to help with routine tasks around the Centre, e.g. keeping rooms tidy, washing dishes, laying and clearing tables, cleaning and taking care of any equipment loaned to them etc.

The Centre accommodates forty-four students and up to six accompanying staff, so visiting groups usually have exclusive use of the house. If there are thirty or less students, then the centre maybe shared with another similar school and similar levels of qualified and checked staff will accompany them as well.

Male and female bedrooms and bathrooms are separate and accompanying staff rooms and bathrooms are also separate but between student rooms. This allows student access to staff through the night.

FOOD

On arrival day students and staff are asked to bring their own packed lunch. A hot or cold drink is available at the Centre.

All meals and packed lunches are homemade and prepared freshly at Ghyll Head. The Centre aims to provide each student with an additive free diet and a minimum of five portions of fruit or vegetables each day and there's plenty of it!

Please make sure you talk to the party leader well before the courses starts so we can prepare. You may also speak directly with the Housekeeper if you have particular concerns. The Centre will cater for all types of medical diets such as nut free, dairy free, coeliac and diabetic diets or liquidised food where necessary. Vegetarian, kosher and halal meals are readily available. Please refrain from supplying too many sweets, cakes, crisps and biscuits as evening snacks.

If your child requires a special diet for which you receive a prescription, please make sure that your child brings the relevant products for their diet.

SAFETY

We take the safety of your child very seriously. Accompanying staff have a thorough briefing at the beginning of the course with regard to securing the building at night, the fire drill and procedures to cover all eventualities. The students have a similar briefing and all have a fire drill before they start any activities on the first day. Students are expected to listen to instructional staff and follow safety instruction. If student behaviours are unsafe, distracting or disruptive then offending students will be removed from activities.

All instructors are experienced and picked for their caring nature and enthusiasm. They are first aid trained, DBS checked and group sizes and staff ratios always reflect good practice. The centre is licensed to deliver adventurous activities and has an exemplary safety record.

THE COURSE

Enjoyment and learning through the medium of adventure activities. The course can be seen as an introduction to outdoor adventure activities but in effect it has much broader aims. Young people will discover new strengths and abilities from within themselves. By taking on appropriate exciting challenges in the outdoors, the sense of achievement gained, contributes a great deal to increasing confidence and self-esteem. In addition to personal challenges, there is a strong emphasis on caring, sharing and working as a team. Throughout the course, students experience the countryside and can develop their understanding of the natural environment. Challenge is by choice and no one will be forced to do anything they don't want to. There is a focus on: Teamwork, Challenge, Respect and Responsibility, this is a thread that runs through all our courses.

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MEDICAL

In order that staff at the Centre are aware of any additional special needs for your child and have access to emergency contact details please ensure that you complete the information/medical form provided and return it to the organising teacher as soon as possible. These might include diabetes, epilepsy or restricted use of a limb etc.

If your child needs regular medication, then please talk to the party leader so they can take care of the drugs/medicine and have written instructions from you as to the administration of it.

THE ACTIVITIES

A provisional programme is planned in advance, but the final choice of activities is arranged each day to suit the needs of the group and make best use of the weather.

During the course, the students will take part in some of the following activities:

- Hill walking
- Gill scrambling
- Orienteering
- Ropes course and adventure activities in the grounds.
- Problem solving team exercises
- Rock climbing/abseiling
- Caving
- Environmental Study
- Zip wire
- All Aboard & Trapeze
- Archery
- Mountain Biking [Secondary]
- Canoeing
- *Kayaking/Sit on Tops
- *Raft building
- *Sailing

**These activities take place on Lake Windermere. During the winter months there is only a limited amount of water activity when the weather conditions are ideal. If the student is a non-swimmer they should make themselves known to the instructor and accompanying staff. All sailing, canoeing, rafting and kayaking activities require a buoyancy aid to be worn by everyone.*

EMERGENCY CONTACT

In order to contact the Centre in an emergency: Office hours 8.45 – 16.45 phone 015394 43751

Outside office hours – talk to your group leader to see if they are taking a group mobile. Ghyll Head can provide a mobile for out of office use.

KIT LIST

Please use the personal kit list provided. **There is no need to buy expensive designer outdoor clothing.**

Outdoor equipment is issued free of charge by the Centre on the first day, e.g. waterproof jacket, over trousers, walking boots, wetsuit, helmet and rucksack. Students having their own outdoor gear may bring it with them.

The Centre has a good drying room, but as much of the time will be spent out of doors, at least three complete changes of old, warm clothing are essential.

Please don't let your child bring an expensive camera. We recommend a simple disposable camera. If your child wishes to bring a mobile phone, please check the school's policy. We do not allow mobile phones to be carried during activities. The instructors have their own mobile phones for use in emergency. At the Centre mobile phone reception is poor. Our experience would suggest that contact with home through the week can aggravate home sickness. If there is an issue, then accompanying staff will have a procedure to contact you.

We hope to have fun and inspire young people about the great outdoors, get them to work together, face challenges and trust each other to look after themselves. We believe it will boost their self esteem and self reliance and be one of the most memorable experiences of their school career. For some students these activities will become lifelong passions, hopefully keeping them fit and inspired through adult life. Thank you for allowing your child to stay with us and giving them this opportunity.

The Team at Ghyll Head

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