



Christ Church CE Primary School

 Learning  Listening  Living

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Headteacher: Tracey Cansdale

8th May 2018

Dear Parents

Outdoor Education Opportunities 2018-19

I am writing to you as a parent of a current child in Y2 to Y5 to let you know what outdoor education opportunities will be available to your child next year, when they are in Y3 to Y6.

Outdoor education is one of our five 'curriculum drivers' (building blocks that we think are important when planning learning). This is because it gives children the opportunity to use problem-solving skills, apply knowledge from the classroom and learn to work in teams – all important skills. Research also shows that it is good for children's mental health to be outside as much as possible and that children who take part in outdoor adventure learning make more progress across the curriculum. We plan outdoor learning opportunities in all subjects, particularly as we have such wonderful school grounds. However there are two specific opportunities to take part in residential outdoor adventure learning coming up in the next year which I would like to let you know about.

Arthog Outdoor Education Centre – Wednesday 9th to Friday 11th January 2019

We have taken trips to Arthog for many years as a school and can testify to the fun, engaging and safe opportunities that children have to challenge themselves and try new activities. Their website <http://www.telford.gov.uk/aoec/> will give you a taste of what happens on a residential but we normally fit in kayaking, gorge walking, orienteering and team building challenges.

We have provisionally booked 24 places and envisage 2 groups of 12: a lower KS2 group (Y3 and Y4) and an upper KS2 group (Y5 and Y6) who will work as a team, each accompanied all the time by an Arthog instructor (who has all appropriate safety training etc) and two members of school staff. Teaching staff likely to go are Mr Kennedy and Mrs Cansdale with two teaching assistants attending as well. Children not going will be taught in a mixed Y3-6 class by Mrs Douch back at school.

Arthog is in a beautiful part of Snowdonia and the centre is fully equipped with all the equipment children need for exciting activities. We have done a winter trip many times before, as it lowers the cost for families and Arthog provide many layers of warm waterproof equipment to make sure children are comfortable all the time. There are evening activities too, and school staff supervise children till they are asleep which happens surprisingly easily as they are so tired. If anyone is nervous/upset/homesick (which can happen as for some children it is their first trip away from home) we sit with them till they are okay – as parents ourselves, we know the standard of care we would expect if our child was on a trip. The sense of achievement that children feel having done a residential is incredible and we feel it really builds independence and self-confidence.

The cost of the residential is £152 per child which includes the transportation to and from Arthog. There used to be a reduced rate offered by the Council for families whose children were in receipt of Free School Meals or Tax Credits but this is no longer the case and the cost is the same for everyone. Schools receive no additional funding for offering residential activities: staff give up their own time to take part in them because they believe they benefit the children. However we do not want cost





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to be the factor which prevents a child from going and we are able to offer parents who need it, the ability to spread payments over a longer term. Please let us know if this will be a factor for you.

CPAS Venture Weekend at Pioneer Centre, Kidderminster – Friday 22nd – Sunday 24th March 2019

This is a new opportunity for us as a school, although Mrs Cansdale has been a leader on a Venture holiday before so knows the organisation. The Pioneer Centre is an outdoor education centre relatively near us at Cleobury Mortimer (used annually by Shropshire Music Service)

<http://www.acuk.net/pioneer-centre> and offers a great range of outdoor learning and adventure.

CPAS is a charity, which is part of the Church of England, and this opportunity is open to us as a Church School. CPAS School Ventures are two-night residentials for clusters of CE primary schools. Children would be meeting other children their age from two or three other primary schools in the Hereford Diocese, who they would be working with (total group size of 45). In this way, School Ventures enhance pupils' RE experience and contribute to CE schools' Christian ethos, all within the context of a fun and safe residential which gives children the opportunity to try some adventurous activities such as raft building, high ropes and abseiling and indoor caving.

This residential is subsidised by CPAS (likely cost will be about £80 including transportation), and will run from Friday to Sunday. Our school can book a maximum of 10 to 15 pupils on this course and it would only be open to Year 4 and 5 pupils (current Y3 and Y4). Children from our school would be accompanied by Mrs Cansdale and Rev Sarah Hare, over the weekend.

We plan to hold an information meeting about both opportunities early in September but at this stage we are asking every parent to let us know their level of interest (please still send the form back if you are not interested, so that we know the letter has reached you!). Booking places requires school to pay deposits and whilst an expression of interest now does not commit you to booking your child into one of these visits, it does help us to book the correct number. Your child is welcome to attend both residentials if they are current Y3 and Y4, if you wish. Current Y2 and Y5 only have the Arthog option.

Please can you let us have the attached form back by Friday 18th May. I am happy to answer queries, either at the door at drop offs/pick ups, by phone or email.

Kind regards
Tracey Cansdale

Name of Child: _____ Current Year Group: _____

I would be/would not be (delete as appropriate) interested in my child attending Arthog Residential on Wednesday 9th to Friday 11th January 2018.

I would be/would not be (delete as appropriate) interested in my child attending CPAS Venture weekend at Pioneer Centre on Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th March 2018.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

