



# THE DOWNS SCHOOL

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Deputy Head: J Preston, BA



1 November 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

## **Year 7 Bushcraft Trip 12 – 14 July 2017**

I am very pleased to be able to offer your son/daughter the opportunity of an adventurous trip to Cholmondeley Castel Estate, Cheshire next July. The trip is run by an experienced company called 'The Bushcraft Company' who are a leading provider of outdoor education, offering a range of real outdoor adventures. <http://www.thebushcraftcompany.com/brochure>. The trip will leave school at 6.30am on Wednesday 12 July 2017 and return at approximately 6pm on Friday 14 July.

The trip includes:

- Full board and accommodation in safari style tents
- Return coach travel with a reputable company
- A three day itinerary of supervised activities (a sample itinerary is attached)
- Trip t-shirt
- Insurance

Please note, there will be down time in the evening, students will be supervised directly and will be expected to follow the rules laid out by the staff of The Downs School, and those of the Bushcraft Company. There will be a Code of Conduct issued which will need to be signed by both the student and parent.

### **Payment & Places**

We are asking for a voluntary contribution of approximately £253. The trip is subject to there being sufficient funds available to cover the costs, otherwise it will not go ahead. This amount is non-refundable unless the trip is cancelled by the school. FSM/EVER6FSM or LIFT students have already been identified.

This amount is based on 50 students going on the trip, if fewer students take part the price will have to increase and you will be informed of this. *Please note, if there are fewer than 40 students, the trip may become unviable or the cost may rise slightly depending on the number of interested parties.* By booking a place through paying the non-refundable deposit of £60 you agree to pay the full cost of the trip.

If oversubscribed, places will be allocated by a random draw of names from a hat. If your son/daughter is unsuccessful in gaining a place the deposit will be refunded to you. Please note that students who are unsuccessful in gaining a place on this trip may be prioritised for places on other trips of a similar nature should they wish to apply.

Payments (on the current basis) will be required in 3 instalments as follows:

<b>Deposit payment due by Friday 18 November 2016 3.00pm</b>	<b>£60</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> instalment by Monday 27 February 2017</b>	<b>£93</b>
<b>Final instalment by Friday 28 April 2017</b>	<b>£100</b>

**Payment of the non-refundable deposit must be made by Friday 18 November 3.00pm to be entered into the draw for a place.**

Payment should be made using ParentPay. If you do not wish to use ParentPay then please put cheque payments (payable to The Downs School) in an envelope marked "Year 7 Bushcraft Trip 2017" with your child's name and tutor group on the back, taking care to complete and enclose the slip at the bottom of this letter. Your child is then responsible for putting this into the secure, finance office post box. Following the Government pupil premium funding arrangements, LIFT, FSM and EVER6FSM students can receive a contribution of £100 towards the cost of this trip (if they obtain a place). The initial deposit must be paid in full.

As already mentioned, if you are unsuccessful in being allocated a place, your deposit will be refunded. In all other circumstances, deposits are non-refundable. By requesting a place you will be under an obligation to pay subsequent payments (if your child is successful) and cancellation charges will apply on a sliding scale should you withdraw from the trip at a later date. Full details of these are available on request. The school's decision as regards place allocation is final.

You will be notified in writing whether or not your child has secured a place with the first payment then being due on 27 February 2017. Successful students will be invited to an open evening on 29 November. There will be a reserve list and you will be notified if your child is on this list. Deposits for students on the reserve list will be refunded.

The trip is open to all year 7 students. **I must stress that students' behaviour and attitude records will be taken into account over the next year** and we reserve the right to refuse to take those students whose poor behaviour may tarnish the good name of The Downs or whose actions may put themselves or others in danger. We also reserve the right to withdraw any student whose behaviour at school deteriorates between now and the departure date. In these circumstances the amount of refund will depend on the cancellation arrangements. Refunds may not be possible in the event of a student having to be withdrawn from the trip for the above reasons.

The school has personal accident and travel cover insurance for school trips. Full details of the policy are available from the Business Manager on request.

We very much hope that your child will be able to participate in this exciting trip we are offering. If you would like any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

*J Gordon*

Mrs J. Gordon  
Tour Leader

**(PAYMENT VIA PARENTPAY.COM IS PREFERED BY THE SCHOOL)**

**Year 7 Bushcraft 12 - 14 July 2017**

**Request for Place – Cheque payments only**

**Please return to the Finance Office post box no later than  
Friday 18 November 2016 3.00pm**

Name of Student (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my son / daughter to take part in the trip as set out in the letter and I confirm that I would like her / his name included in the draw for a place. I understand that this means that if successful I will be required to pay the remainder of the cost of the trip in instalments

**I enclose the non-refundable cheque deposit of £60. (This will only be refunded if you do not secure a place).**

I accept that the decision regarding the allocation of places by the school is final.

Signature of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Itinerary

### **DAY ONE**

10:00 Arrive

Introduction to Camp

Our instructors will discuss the key elements of Bushcraft and explain what the students can realistically achieve living in the wild. They will then have a safety briefing and familiarise themselves to their new surroundings.

Fire Workshop

The students will learn the basic principles of fire and the fire triangle. They will be shown a variety of ways fire has been made over the years, and put this knowledge in to practice, lighting fires in tribes using these methods.

12:30 Lunch

Camp-Craft

This is a chance for the tribes to develop a tribal identity, building a comfortable and functional camp that will include a wood-store, seating area and drying rack, as well as making fun tribal flags and necklaces.

Shelter Building

The students will learn why we need shelter when we are living outside and the types of shelter from different societies and nationalities across the ages. Tribes will build their own shelter, using natural woodland materials.

18:30 Supper

Night-time Routine

The students will settle in to their safari-style camp and around the campfire exchange stories and songs. They will be provided with hot chocolate and marshmallows to roast over the open campfire.

Sleep in shelters

### **DAY TWO**

07:30 Breakfast

Camouflage and Concealment Exercise

Students will take part in a fun camouflage and concealment exercise, employing team tactics and making the most of their surroundings to camouflage themselves and evade capture.

Fresh-water Swimming

The students will be able to swim in one of our stunning fresh-water lakes, play games, and relax on the banks of the lake with their friends.

12:30 Lunch

Wild Food Workshop

The students will be taught the importance of finding food in remote areas and how this has been achieved over the ages. Our instructors will demonstrate trapping methods, before each tribes designs and builds their own trap.

Cutting Tools Workshop

Students will learn about the different tools used in the field of Bushcraft, both primitive and modern, and reasons for their use. They will be taught safe handling techniques and to understand how to effectively manage risk.

18:30 Supper

Night-time Stalking Games

The students will embark on a series of exciting night-time stalking exercises through the forest, challenging them to use the full range and scope of their senses and to work collaboratively in an unfamiliar setting.

Sleep in shelters

### **DAY THREE**

07:30 Breakfast

Wilderness First Aid Workshop

The students will learn basic skills to cope with a medical emergency in the wild, including how to construct a simple stretcher from the items you have on you, and how to improvise an effective splint.

Bushcraft Tournament

The teams will participate in a series of fun but challenging initiative exercises that will really put them to the test, both mentally and physically. This is a great team-building activity and demands trust and communication.

12:30 Lunch

Leave No Trace Procedures

The students will learn the importance of leaving their environment as they found it, understanding the impacts human activity can have on the natural landscape. They will be asked to strike camp and leave no trace.

15:00 Depart