

8th July 2009

Dear Parents

I am writing to give you the dates for the residential visits for the academic year 2009-10:

Year 4 Minstead	12 th - 14 th and 14 th - 16 th October 2009
Year 5 Swanage	4 th - 7 th and 11 th - 14 th May 2010
Year 6 Wales	22 nd - 26 th February and 1 st - 5 th March 2010

At Swanmore Primary School we believe that our residential programme provides these benefits:

- developing key skills such as greater independence, self-reliance, communication, and working co-operatively;
- developing social education and citizenship, eg building relationships, learning to tolerate others and respect each other's views;
- promoting education for sustainable development, eg an appreciation of the natural world.
- promoting health and fitness and a positive use of leisure time.

Our parents have made these comments following our residential experiences this year:-

- "She thoroughly enjoyed the trip. It was great to see her so happy when she came back."
- "He is lucky to attend a school where he is able to go on such fantastic adventures."
- "She was very worried about going as she does not go on sleepovers. She had a fantastic time and felt very safe with her friends and all the staff who went with her."

This year we have been very grateful to the parents and children who have filled in questionnaires to evaluate their residential experiences. We have analysed your responses and will review our practice where appropriate, in the light of your comments. We are delighted to share some of our findings.

MINSTEAD

Parents' Questionnaires: 96% of Year 4 parents who responded made positive comments about the Minstead visit.

Children's Questionnaires: 100% of Year 4 children who responded rated their visit as good or very good. Here is a sample of their comments:



"I loved sleeping in the dormitories with my friends."

"I liked sitting round the fire at night in the roundhouse listening to stories."

"I liked going on adventures in the wild woods with my friends."

SWANAGE

Parents' Questionnaires: 96% of parents who responded were positive.

Children's Questionnaires: 98% of Year 5 children who responded rated the experience as good with 88% very good. Here is a sample of their comments:



"I loved it being in Swanage, especially the kite flying."

"I liked sharing a room with my friends and working together as a team."

"My team won the sandcastle competition and this was my best thing."

WALES

Parents' Questionnaires: 100% of parents who responded were positive.

Children's Questionnaires: 100% of Year 6 children who responded rated the Welsh residential visit as good with 92% rating it very good. Here is a sample of their comments:



"This was my favourite trip out of all the residentials and I will never forget it."

"I loved the feeling of accomplishment when we got to the top of Pen y Fan with my group."

All our residential visits are non-profit making. Our costs include transport (coach for Years 4 and 5 and minibuses for Year 6), accommodation, staffing and instruction, equipment hire (Year 6), catering and refreshments, entry charges to facilities and pre-visit costs.

In response to parental requests we have decided to give advance notice of the approximate cost of each visit to help you plan your financial expenditure for the year. We predict that the costs will be as follows:

Year 4 Minstead, New Forest	£105.00
Year 5 Swanage, Dorset	£155.00
Year 6 Brecon Beacons, Wales	£190.00

Please note that this is an approximate guide as the cost of a visit may vary from year to year according to the size of the year group, varying transport costs or the adult supervision needed.

We have attached a payment card to this letter so that you can make weekly or monthly payment on a regular basis towards your child/children's visits. Please send any payments to school from the second week of next term in the attached envelope marked "Residential Visit Payments". If you would like to pay when the exact costs are known, you will be informed of the details a few months before each visit.

Our residential experiences are an important part of the curriculum and we are keen that all our children have these opportunities. Support is available to families who have financial difficulties. Please contact either myself or Mrs Benton if you need help.

We hope you find this information useful and that your children are looking forward to their residential experiences next year.

Yours sincerely

Rowley Bucknill
Deputy Headteacher