



WILDERNESS ACADEMY

WELCOME PACK



SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE ALONG THE WAY

WELCOME

Thank you for making a booking with Entrust Outdoors. We are absolutely committed to making sure your experience with us is the best it can possibly be. We want you to feel inspired and for you to see a real and lasting difference made, as we journey with you along the way.

This Welcome Pack should contain most of the information you need at this early stage of your journey, but if there is anything else you require then just get in touch, either by e-mail to oec@entrust-ed.co.uk or on **0300 111 8030**. We'll be more than happy to help.

We won't actually look to finalise much of the detail around your course until about two months before the visit starts, but there's still plenty we can do to support you as you plan your visit, launch it to others and answer all those questions that will no doubt pop up as we go.

Once we get nearer the time, we'll start working with you on the finer details of your course, and that's when our great staff will start bringing everything to life, ready for the best part of the journey to begin - as you embark on the adventure itself.

We have four fantastic centres here in Staffordshire, with one team of like-minded souls for whom exploring is a way of life. We've got great activities that will form part of your course, and wonderful places to visit with highly trained and well qualified instructors. Take a look at our website and watch our short film – it gives a real flavour of what we're about, and should be a useful resource for you. See it and find out more at www.entrustoutdoors.co.uk

ABOUT ENTRUST OUTDOORS

Entrust Outdoors has a fifty year pedigree of providing high quality outdoor education for children, young people and adults, with the skills and expertise to deliver a wide range of outcome focused activities.

With four exciting residential centres spread across Staffordshire and with ready access to a range of stunning natural locations throughout the UK, we encourage all our visitors to take on our 'Explore and Inspire' theme and follow their own path of discovery and adventure.

All our activities are led by highly qualified, passionate, and active outdoor practitioners with great experience and some of this country's leading professional awards and training.

We have recently embarked on the next stage of our own journey, with the launch of our non-Centre based External Programmes, including Base Camp expeditions, Explorer Quest outdoor teambuilding days, classroom-based Explorer Workshops and, of course, Wilderness Academy residential. These programmes offer an excellent introduction to a life of adventure, whilst also serving as the perfect vehicle for practising key life skills, including teamwork, communication and decision making.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

By now you will have signed and sent back your booking confirmation form, so your journey is well under way. We will keep in touch with you between now and your visit, just to make sure everything is going well and to see if there's anything we can do to support you.

Hopefully, the guidance in this pack is going to be a useful resource for you, but do remember our Customer Service team are only ever a phone call away on **0300 111 8030** (option 2) or via oec@entrust-ed.co.uk.

How do I amend a booking?

We always seek to be as flexible and accommodating as we can with any booking. Changes to dates are often difficult to make, particularly during our busier periods, but changes in the numbers of participants and staff are usually easier to manage, as are most other changes. All we typically need is plenty of time to make the necessary adjustments.

It's important for us to make sure we've got the right level of resources for you, and we also want to avoid you having to pick up any unnecessary cancellation charges, so it's important if there are any changes that we get them out in the open early.

Please do note there will be a 60% charge for any reductions in participant numbers made within 60 days of the start of the course. If you would like to amend your participant numbers, please do so in writing to: oecbookings@entrust-ed.co.uk

How do I pay for a booking?

Paying for a booking is straightforward. A non-refundable deposit of 30% of the overall cost of the course will be due 30 days after we have received your signed confirmation. Final Payment (the remaining 70% plus any supplementary charges) will be due 30 days after the completion of the course.

We typically offer one free staff place for every ten course participants, with additional staff chargeable at the standard trip rate. For additional members of staff wishing to join the group, for some or all of the stay, there would typically be a charge of £20 B&B per night (subject to availability). Additional meals will be charged at £5 per meal if required (ie. a full 24-hour stay would be charged at £30 inclusive of meals).

What are the Terms & Conditions?

A copy of our standard terms and conditions is included along with this Welcome Pack. If you want further copies then please download them from our website.

Promoting the Visit

Our Entrust Outdoors website, particularly the parents evening Power Point presentation and the short films therein, have been developed with a view to helping you promote the trip in school. These resources should prove to be useful for encouraging that all important early engagement with participants and parents alike. Please visit the following website to download the Power Point presentation and view our short films: www.entrustoutdoors.co.uk.

What's my role and what are my responsibilities?

The principal areas which school staff are asked to take responsibility for are in the pastoral care and effective overnight supervision of their group. We run all of the daytime structured activities, but do find that course aims and objectives are most successfully achieved when school staff play

an active role in supporting their delivery. School staff know the individuals and the group and this knowledge is of huge importance in helping steer activities so as to maximise the benefits to those individuals and to the group as a whole.

Settling groups at night and maintaining good behaviour throughout the course are key roles for school staff. Course Leaders and instructors will not usually go to the tented accommodation areas at night unless there is a need to do so, but will always be available to provide support and give first aid if required. School staff are responsible for dealing with any pastoral problems such as homesickness, and for contacting parents and/or the school in the event of an accident or illness. School staff will also typically be responsible for administering medication.

School staff are always separately accommodated and close to their group overnight, so as to be immediately available if needed, which should reassure parents.

What information and documentation will I need to gather beforehand?

Around 2-3 months before your visit the Wilderness Academy team will be in touch to help you pull together all the final detailed information on your course, including an agreed activity programme and accommodation allocations showing who is staying where etc.

At this point you will need to start gathering all that vital information on the course participants, making sure you've got signed parental consents and, nearer the time, up to date medical and health information. Blank parental consent forms and medical forms are downloadable from our website, together with kit lists and other useful bits of information. Please go to www.entrustoutdoors.co.uk and look under 'Get in touch' and then 'Downloads for Leaders.' Alternatively, hard copies (which can be photocopied and distributed to parents) are also included at the end of this Welcome Pack.

The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel have produced some excellent and very comprehensive guidance on the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom, which can be viewed at www.oeapng.info.

Safety

Safety is our number one priority. All our staff are DBS(CRB) cleared and have undergone extensive and rigorous training in all aspects of safety management relevant to their roles. We will also always have a trained first aider on-site when residential groups are with us.

Medication

School leaders need to ensure necessary medication is brought by anybody who needs it and they should, where necessary, take charge of it. If someone suffers from hay fever, asthma, epilepsy, or diabetes, it is essential that medication is brought, even though it may not be required. Parental approval should be gained to dispense any prescribed medication.

Food Allergies

All our centres and sites are nut free and our catering team are highly competent in advising on and providing for a wide range of special dietary requirements and allergen avoidance. Please advise dietary needs in plenty of time before your course, ideally with 4 weeks notice if possible to oec@entrust-ed.co.uk.

Accessibility & Inclusivity

We try to be as inclusive as possible and will go to great lengths to try and make sure all course participants are treated respectfully and fairly, with every chance to meaningfully participate. Course staff have undergone specific training in supporting people with a wide range of abilities.

Risk Management

It's what people do that is important, not necessarily what is written down, and we are expert in what we do. We employ a sensible, proportionate and dynamic approach to risk management, ensuring we use our expertise to maintain the highest standards. Risk assessments and operating procedures, both specific and generic, shape and inform our practice and our culture.

The benefits to people of engaging in outdoor learning are at the heart of our risk management processes. Where there are risks identified, these will be managed effectively, but it is often the case with some adventure activities that a degree of risk remains in order for the activities and the intended outcomes to have value, worth and meaning.

Risk assessments are available on request, although it should be noted that much of their content is quite technical and not likely to be readily appreciated without a level of activity specific knowledge. That's one reason why we have looked to a variety of independent agencies for independent inspection and accreditation, such as the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, from whom all our centres have received a 'Quality Badge'. Recognising such nationally accredited provider assurance schemes not only reduces unnecessary bureaucracy but is often more meaningful to an employer than simply gathering in risk assessments.

Overnight arrangements

We will always have a first aid trained member of our staff on-site when there are groups staying with us and they'll always make sure you know where to find them in case you need them during the night.

Duties

An important part of camp life is making sure we all look after one another and that the site is kept neat and tidy. To this end we ask most groups to help by carrying out certain simple 'duties' that are allocated to them. There are many wider benefits to this approach, such as developing life skills, community action and teamwork.

Lost property

Although children and young people are encouraged to look after their own belongings during their stay, we do ask for all the help we can get in ensuring nobody leaves anything behind. Labels in clothing and initials on torches and shoes are really useful. Should anything go missing, we advise parents to contact the school first and if that fails to email a description of the lost item(s) to oec@entrust-ed.co.uk, indicating the dates the visit took place and the school details. Lost items are only kept for a few weeks before being recycled or given to charity.

Communications and contact

Part of the joy of being in a wilderness setting is that there are precious few screens and not much call for participants to stay tied to their phones. For safety reasons we ask that access to phones is tightly controlled, and advise that for most participants phones are best off left at home. To enable effective communication between school staff visiting Wilderness Academy and those back in school, however, we do recommend that at least one mobile is brought with you.

WILDERNESS ACADEMY – COURSE DETAILS

Itinerary overview

Wilderness Academy offers young people the opportunity to immerse themselves in the outdoors, camp in the woods, learn new skills and take part in a range of exciting activities with their friends.

Based at a purpose-built campsite set deep in the woods, and working in teams, pupils spend their time learning basic bushcraft skills and survival techniques, including shelter building, firelighting, bush Tucker cooking, navigation, campcraft skills and wilderness first aid. Campfire sessions, woodland games and forest treks meanwhile introduce more light hearted elements into the programme, whilst teambuilding tasks and reviewing sessions allow individuals to practise and develop key life skills, such as communication, decision making and teamwork.

Wherever possible, and to the extent that it is safe and practical, participants are encouraged to make their own decisions as a team and take responsibility for their actions. In this manner, young people can participate in an exciting outdoor activity programme with their friends and potentially spend their first night ever under canvas, whilst simultaneously undertaking basic personal development training.

Exact timings for the Wilderness Academy programme can be tailored to fit around your likely arrival and departure time, but for a typical itinerary see Annex A.

Logistics (pre-course)

Your Entrust Business Development Manager (either Paul, Richard or Paula) may have already discussed with you much of the logistics outlined below, most likely during their initial visit to the school. As a follow-up to their visit, you will also receive a phone call from us approximately 60 days in advance of the course to talk through the finer details. Should you require specific information prior to this, however, please do not hesitate to contact us, either via your Business Development Manager, by emailing us at oecbookings@entrust-ed.co.uk, or by calling us on **0300 111 8030**.

When we contact you in the weeks leading up to your course, you will be asked for the male-female split amongst pupils and amongst adults, so that an appropriate accommodation plan can be created in advance of your arrival. At this stage, you will also be asked whether there are any specific medical issues or dietary requirements amongst the group (see Annex C for documents to assist you). You will also be asked whether any pupils wish to borrow items of outdoor clothing or equipment from us.

Wilderness Academy is an outdoor activity programme, and although there are wet weather plans in place, we try to spend as much time as we can in the fresh air. The intention wherever possible is for pupils to be outside all the time and so they should be advised to dress accordingly.

A kit list is attached at Annex B. Given the non-technical nature of the programme, it is usually best for pupils to use their own clothing and equipment. However, if there is a particular item that they do not own (eg. a sleeping bag), please inform us in advance and we will ensure that we have sufficient items that can be loaned out.

Logistics (during the programme)

Wilderness Academy is based in the extensive woodland surrounding the village of Consall, on the edge of the Staffordshire Moorlands. Coach/vehicle access to the site is via Consall Scout Camp, whose address is: Consall Scout Camp, Blakely Lane, Dilhorne, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PS.

You should aim to arrive between 10.00am and 10.30am on Day 1, so that a full day's worth of activities can be enjoyed on the first day.

Team sizes will usually be in the region of 10-14 pupils, depending on the size of the overall year group. Teaching staff are usually best suited to decide on team composition, given that they will understand the dynamics of putting certain individuals together. We would also ask that you please bring a list of attendees with you on the course and pass it on to the Wilderness Academy coordinator upon arrival.

As a general rule, we like to involve the teaching staff as much as possible and there are plenty of opportunities to join in with the activities, should staff members wish, although there is obviously no pressure to do so.

For Day 1 of the expedition, pupils and teaching staff should bring a packed lunch with them. From the evening of Day 1 onwards, all food will be provided. Evening meals tend to be expedition-style rations and there is usually a choice of stews, casseroles, pastas and curries. Breakfast is served hot (sausage and beans or something similar), although cereal is also available. Lunches tend to be picnic-style meals. Water is available throughout the course.

The Wilderness Academy site is a combination of small clearings (for camping in) and vast areas of woodland (for taking part in activities). Pupils are accommodated in 5-metre bell tents, with 6-8 pupils per tent, depending on the exact team size and the male-female split in each group. Teaching staff, meanwhile, are accommodated in slightly smaller 3-metre bell tents. Depending on the number of school staff attending and the male-female split, teachers *may* have a tent to themselves. It is more likely, however, that staff will be asked to share a tent with one other person (ie. one of their colleagues).

A key element of Wilderness Academy is that pupils are able to immerse themselves in nature and develop a genuine connection with the natural world. And whilst teams will find themselves living in a wilderness setting, there is of course a civilised infrastructure also in place.

Running water, hot showers and flushing toilets are all available throughout the course, and instructors will also be permanently on hand to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between adventure and comfort.

A medical declaration and parental consent form is attached at Annex C and we would ask that all parents complete and sign this form in advance of the course running. The Wilderness Academy coordinator will wish to see this documentation on the first day of the expedition and will discuss with you any existing medical conditions amongst the group.

Annex A: Sample itinerary

At Wilderness Academy we offer both 2-day and 3-day programmes.

A typical 3-day itinerary looks as follows:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
<p>Arrival and welcome.</p> <p>Site brief and tent allocation.</p> <p>Ice breakers and energisers.</p> <p>Getting to know your surroundings (Capture the flag)</p> <p>LUNCH</p> <p>Afternoon of fun and exploration in the woods. E.g. shelter building.</p> <p>Settle into camp.</p> <p>EVENING MEAL</p> <p>Woodland Games.</p> <p>Bedtime.</p>	<p>Wakey Wakey</p> <p>BREAKFAST</p> <p>Forest Trek to include Navigation, Countryside code, first aid and conservation.</p> <p>LUNCH</p> <p>Afternoon of fun and exploration in the woods. E.g. Fire Lighting and Bush Tucker cooking.</p> <p>EVENING MEAL</p> <p>Water Purification.</p> <p>Bedtime.</p>	<p>Wakey Wakey</p> <p>BREAKFAST</p> <p>Morning of fun and exploration in the woods. E.g. Tracking skills and man hunt tasks.</p> <p>LUNCH</p> <p>Pack up camp.</p> <p>Review and conclusion.</p> <p>Depart.</p>

Meanwhile, a 2-day programme typically looks as follows:

Day 1	Day 2
<p>Arrival and welcome.</p> <p>Site brief and tent allocation.</p> <p>Ice breakers and energisers.</p> <p>Getting to know your surroundings</p> <p>(Capture the flag)</p> <p>LUNCH</p> <p>Afternoon of fun and exploration in the woods.</p> <p>E.g. Tracking skills and man hunt tasks.</p> <p>Settle into camp.</p> <p>EVENING MEAL</p> <p>Water Purification.</p> <p>Bedtime.</p>	<p>Wakey Wakey</p> <p>BREAKFAST</p> <p>Morning of fun and exploration in the woods.</p> <p>E.g. shelter building and fire lighting and Bush Tucker cooking.</p> <p>LUNCH</p> <p>Pack up camp.</p> <p>Review and conclusion.</p> <p>Depart.</p>

Annex B: Suggested kit list

Whilst no specific type of clothing is needed for a Wilderness Academy expedition, we would advise pupils to wear clothes that are warm, comfortable and appropriate for conducting light physical activities. We would also suggest wearing clothes that pupils do not mind getting a little bit dirty (mud, grass stains etc.)

The following is a suggested kit list for your Wilderness Academy expedition:

Sufficient outdoor clothing for two-three days e.g. T-shirts, jumpers/fleece, trousers

Sufficient underwear for two-three days

Outdoor shoes e.g. Trainers plus either walking boots or wellies.

Waterproof coat.

Pyjamas/nightwear plus a jumper as it may be a little chilly at night.

Towel.

Wash kit. (soap, toothpaste, toothbrush etc.)

Sleeping bag.

Pillow.

Plastic mug or beaker.

Water Bottle.

Personal medication. (e.g. inhalers) as necessary

Torch plus spare batteries.

If the weather is likely to be cooler than usual, we would also suggest the following items for when sitting around the campfire at night:

Warm jacket

Hat

Gloves

Alternatively, if the weather is likely to be warmer than usual, we would also suggest:

Shorts

Sun hat

Sunglasses

High factor sun cream

We have a small number of items in the Wilderness Academy equipment store that can be loaned out to pupils (e.g. sleeping bag, waterproof jacket) should they not have their own. All that we would ask is that you let us know in advance of the course starting, so that we can ensure that we have enough in stock.

Annex C: Medical declaration and parental consent form

A medical declaration and parental consent form is attached overleaf. We would ask you to please ensure that all parents complete and sign this form in advance of the course running. The Wilderness Academy Coordinator will then talk through this documentation with you on the first day of the expedition and discuss any existing medical conditions, medications being taken etc.

MEDICAL DECLARATION

In advance of your child's forthcoming Wilderness Academy expedition, please complete and sign this form and return it to school not less than two weeks in advance of the course starting.
Thank you.

School/Group associated with:

Child's name:

Date of birth:

Address:

Home telephone number:

Name of parent/carer:

Relationship to child:

Work telephone number:

Mobile telephone number:

Name of child's doctor:

Doctor's address and telephone number:

1) Will your child need to bring any medication on the course? YES/NO

2) Has your child suffered from, or been in contact with anyone suffering from, an infectious or contagious disease in the last four weeks? YES/NO

3) Does your child suffer from any of the following?

- a) Epilepsy? YES/NO
- b) Diabetes? YES/NO
- c) Asthma? YES/NO
- d) Allergies (including allergies to any medication and any food)? YES/NO

4) Does your child have any condition that may restrict, or be aggravated by, physical activity? YES/NO

5) Has your child received a tetanus injection within the last ten years? YES/NO

This section is to be completed only if you have answered YES to any of the questions listed above.

1) Please give details of any medical treatment or medication needed during the expedition (eg. hay fever remedies, inhalers). If regular medication is needed, please ensure that your child brings sufficient to last three full days.

2) Please give further details of the nature of the infectious disease and the manner in which your child was affected.

3) If your child suffers from epilepsy, diabetes, asthma or an allergy (including a reaction to certain types of medicine or certain foods), please provide full details below. This should include the severity and frequency of episodes, the approximate date of the last attack and details of any medication taken regularly or kept for emergencies.

4) Please provide further details on any condition which may restrict, or be aggravated by, physical activity

PARENTAL CONSENT

I consent to my child attending a Wilderness Academy expedition. I further give permission for my child to receive, if necessary, medication (at a dose appropriate to their age) as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) For colds causing congestion | Decongestant lozenge (eg. Tunes) |
| 2) For headache | Paracetamol or Calpol |
| 3) For insect/plant stings or bites | Proprietary spray or cream |
| 4) For sore lips | Lip salve or Vaseline |
| 5) For sun protection | Sunscreen |

Occasionally photographs are taken of pupils participating in the various activities and then used in our Marketing materials, including on our website. If you have **no** objection to your child's photograph being used for this purpose, please tick the box.

I declare that I have answered all of the above questions to the best of my ability and have not knowingly withheld any information regarding the health or physical fitness of my child. I undertake to inform the leader in charge of any changes to the above between the date signed and the start of the visit.

Parent/Carer signature.....

Date.....