

Beam House FAQs for parents

What will my child learn on a PGL Trip?

Children overcome a series of challenges in the great outdoors to develop resilience, confidence and the motivation to succeed. The residential experience itself brings a whole range of additional benefits to the personal development of young people. Children will be sharing living and sleeping space, eating together and tackling the day's adventures together, which encourages respect for others, tolerance and better self-awareness.

Many of PGL's study-based and language courses have specific links to the curriculum too. Developed alongside the Party Leader to meet specific learning objectives, many of our study and language courses combine adventure activities with cultural excursions or classroom-based teaching, to inspire a passion for learning and improve motivation when children are back at school.

We are continually developing our courses to offer the best learning opportunities for young people and we work with organisations such as the Council for Learning Outside The Classroom and the Real World Learning Campaign Partnership to share expertise and ensure standards are kept consistently high.

What do they need to take with them?

For outdoor adventure courses in the UK, a detailed kit list will be provided by your Party Leader, but in general we recommend old clothes - so it doesn't matter if they get dirty or muddy! *You can view a kit list under the Beam House page on our school website.*

Can they bring valuables?

Valuables such as mobile phones, computer games, jewellery etc. will need to be left at home. We realise most guests will want to bring their mobile phones with them, but please be aware that mobile phones are not covered by our insurance.

Does my child need to bring any pocket money?

Children are welcome to bring some pocket money with them for their stay. Our centres provide gift shops where they can purchase branded and non-branded goods, including stationery, T-shirts, caps and confectionery.

What activities will my child be doing?

All PGL's adventure activities take place under the instruction and guidance of specially trained PGL instructors who prioritise safety above all else. Activities take place on land, on the water and in the air (for our rope-based challenges), so each brings a different (and fun!) way for children to challenge themselves in a friendly, safe and supportive environment. The final activity programme will be agreed with the Party Leader a few weeks before travel but you can see a full list of activities on each centre page, along with a full description and photos.

For some of our larger centres, we also have 360-degree virtual tours available on each centre page where you can click on an activity symbol to read more about it, see more photos and even watch videos for some

activities. The virtual tours are a great way to familiarise yourself with where each activity takes place and get a feel for what it's all about.

How safe are the activities?

All our activities meet the highest levels of safety standards. Formal risk assessments are completed at the start of each season and following any significant changes, for every centre.

Can PGL cater for special diets?

At PGL centres, we are able to deliver catering provision for many dietary requirements as specified by culture, religion and medical concerns. We regularly provide meals for a wide variety of needs including coeliac, diabetic, food allergies and vegetarian/vegan. Whilst we are unable to cater for more specific requirements such as organic-only diets or weight management programmes, we do request that you speak to your Party Leader to discuss any concerns you may have regarding dietary requirements as soon as possible. We may occasionally ask parents to provide items that are hard to get hold of locally, particularly overseas. While we will do our best to cater for special diets, it may not always be possible to meet all complex requirements.

Information relating to complex dietary requirements should be provided at the time of booking. Groups must state any individual dietary requirements on final forms/names list. We may not be able to make arrangements at short notice.

There are freshly-prepared hot or cold options available at every mealtime and a self-service salad bar for children to help themselves to as much salad as they like at lunch and dinner. Homemade soup is available most days and there is plenty of bread and fresh fruit available, as well as hot and cold drinks.

Fussy Eaters

We know that some children are very particular about what they eat and if the menu doesn't suit, we can provide alternatives to ensure no-one leaves the dining room hungry. We do often find, however, that children are more likely to try new things at PGL that they wouldn't normally eat at home - it's all part of the PGL experience!

You can find a sample menu on the Beam House page of the school website

What is the accommodation like?

Why not see for yourself? Click on the link below to access a fully interactive virtual tour of the Beam House site.

<https://www.pgl.co.uk/Files/Templates/Designs/PGLCore/res/swf/virtual-tour/beam-house/tour.html>

Are your centres and hotels inspected?

Yes, health and safety is our number one priority and all our centres and activities are subject to inspection by the relevant authorities.

Can I contact my child while they are away?

Ladysmith Federation

For many children, part of the learning experience is about being away from home, sometimes for the first time. We would ask parents to allow their children to settle in and enjoy the experience.

In the case that you need to contact your child, please contact the teacher or Party Leader in charge of the trip on the emergency number they have provided you with.

My child can't swim, can they still take part?

Water confidence is adequate for some activities and where it is not we will make alternative arrangements so that your child does not miss out.

It is my child's birthday whilst they are away, can you help them celebrate?

If the Party Leader is aware of this, we will be happy to arrange a birthday card and a VIP sticker entitling the birthday boy or girl to special privileges throughout the day; for example queue jumping for meals and activities. Happy Birthday will be sung during the day in an appropriate place.

Insurance

We include insurance for UK based schools for all our trips. Please refer to the Party Leader for further information about insurance cover.

Are your staff DBS checked?

Yes, for all staff the Disclosure and Barring Service* (DBS) 'Barred List' is checked and an 'Enhanced' check is applied for.

Non UK residents are subject to the equivalent checks in their home country.

*Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme in Scotland

Are your activity instructors qualified?

Yes, all our instructors are carefully selected, highly trained and meet the requirements laid down by national governing bodies, including The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA), The British Activity Providers Association (BAPA) and the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC).

Is my money safe with PGL?

Yes, PGL is a well-established company and we are members of ABTA and ATOL* holders.

Can my child access Wi-Fi during their stay?

No - we provide Wi-Fi in certain areas of our centres for Party Leaders and supervising adults only.

Teachers often use the Wi-Fi for sending updates to parents and the school.

We would strongly recommend that mobile phones are left at home as these are not covered by our insurance policy and their use is prohibited in many areas of the site.

COVID

What changes can I expect to see at PGL centres?

Our Safety and Standards Team have been working hard to make sure that we comply with government guidelines and can create the safest environment possible for you and your group.

Summary of changes implemented

Social distancing measures

- Signage
- One-way systems
- Screens at reception
- Floor markers
- New arrivals procedures
- Use of PPE
- Revised room layouts
- Removal of furniture and other items

Enhanced hygiene measures

- Use of hand sanitisers
- Not entering guest rooms to clean during a stay unless requested
- Increased hand washing routines
- Use of viricidal mist, deep clean treatments for all accommodation between stays
- Additional staff training

Reducing contact

- Staggered use times in our shops and dining rooms
- Maximum guest numbers set in communal spaces/ rooms
- Encouraging guests to bring their own drinks bottles to use for refreshments