



## **INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

At Adventure Lifesigns we are committed to providing innovative learning that combines adventure and education in a positive and creative environment. Our Overseas Development Programme gives each participant the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and experience, promoting personal development and a global conscience. With the advantage of a reputation for excellence, vision and energy, we are committed to delivering safe, professional exciting expedition programmes to young people. We are well aware that parents or guardians may have concerns about the team working on the other side of the world. This document has been designed to answer your questions and give you some ideas on how you can get involved. If you need to discuss anything else, please do not hesitate to call us at any time on +44 (0)870 979 9000.

### **Overseas Development Programme**

Our Overseas Development Programmes gives students between the ages of 13 and 19 the opportunity to develop their experience and knowledge in some of the most exciting and stunning locations on Earth. This programme is designed to not only offer the travel experience of a lifetime but also to improve on transferable life skills like Communication, Teamwork, Leadership, Problem Solving, Planning and Organisation.

The programme is offered to schools throughout the UK and a minimum of 12 students and 1 schoolteacher (known as the school coordinator) is required to participate on each expedition programme.

Each expedition is led by a highly qualified and experienced Expedition Leader who, together with the School Coordinator from your child's school. The Adventure Lifesigns expedition planning team will be involved with every stage of the programme.

Following a 6-22 month build-up period, participants will spend between 7-32 days in some of the most exciting, challenging and awe-inspiring surroundings the world has to offer, taking part in a wide range of excellent activities.

### **Destinations**

Our expedition destinations cross the world and include some of the most outstanding and diverse places on earth. Our South American destinations currently feature Ecuador and Peru. Our African destinations include Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, Sinai and Tanzania. Our other destinations include Sarawak, Norway, Yosemite, Morocco and Cambodia.

### **Programme Stages**

The programme is made up of various stages; 1-2 UK based training courses, a Final Preparation Day and the Expedition itself. Prior to all of this, there will be an Assembly Presentation and Parents Evening where all participants, parents and staff meet the



Adventure Lifesigns expeditions team and receive a briefing of what's involved in the programme. As a parent, you will be invited to attend a Parents Evening where each stage of the programme will be explained in full.

### **Expedition Itinerary**

It's entirely up to the expedition group to plan the journey and itinerary for their chosen location. From 4x4 wildlife safaris, whitewater rafting on the Tana river and jungle trekking in Kenya to cultural tours, mountain biking, whale-watching and horse-riding. Other activities like high altitude trekking to famous summits such as Mt Kenya, canoeing and kayaking, swimming with dolphins, snorkelling and visiting historic sites are also available. As well as the exciting activities available, there are environmental, community and cultural projects to get involved with, such as forestry conservation, wildlife tracking projects and building work to help local communities. Teaching English in local schools is also an option for those students who want to gain teaching experience. Getting involved with projects like these is an invaluable learning experience that gives you a great sense of group achievement.

### **Our Staff**

Our programmes are delivered by expert instructors who are highly qualified and have extensive mountaineering experience in the UK and worldwide. All our staff have passed our comprehensive vetting process, including enhanced disclosure clearance, are highly experienced and hold a Mountain Leader and wilderness medical qualification as a minimum.

### **Expedition Leadership Team**

Leading an expedition is extremely challenging, it requires commitment and responsibility. Expedition Leaders possess extensive practical knowledge, excellent communication skills and maturity. All ALS Expedition leaders have traveled independently in the developing world. They have proven expedition knowledge, are experienced in working with youth groups in the outdoor environment, are adept at handling challenging situations and are technically competent. All aspirant leaders are required to undergo a rigorous selection and vetting process before being accepted. Adventure Lifesigns takes full responsibility for the duty of care, supervision and Health & Safety of all expedition participants.

### **School Coordinator**

The School Coordinator is an indispensable member of the expedition team. Without their support it would be extremely difficult for the students to work their way through the preparation period. With their involvement, however, the group has someone they trust to help them through the preparation period and the expedition itself. The School Coordinator's continual support and commitment to the programme is essential and



taking part requires not only energy, enthusiasm and a sense of humour, but also dedication to the progress of the students. Adventure Lifesigns offers School Coordinators free training and subsidised expedition wilderness first aid.

The School Coordinator will do his or her utmost to ensure the Health & Safety of the team and to act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances, follow instructions from the Expedition Leadership Team and help with control and discipline (pastoral care). They will also (in conjunction with the Expedition Leader), consider stopping the activity if they think the risk to the Health & Safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable.

### **Expedition Safety**

Expedition safety is a top priority for us. We operate the most effective safety procedures to maintain the highest possible standards at all times. Comprehensive safety briefings are tailored to each destination and occur during training and throughout the expedition. Each Expedition Leader is equipped with a destination specific casualty rescue and evacuation document listing local medical services and have advanced remote medical and safety training. A 24 hour medical rescue service is on hand in the unlikely event of an emergency and a 24/7 link to our UK Operations Room means that constant contact is maintained with expedition teams ensuring rapid and appropriate action.

### **Insurance**

Please see the insurance section on our website for further details.

### **Flights**

All Adventure Lifesigns flights are protected by the ATOL guarantee. Please refer to your booking terms and conditions for further details. We hold our own ATOL license (No. 9303).

### **Parents Evening**

You will be invited to a Parents information evening at your school, to explain the Overseas Expedition Development Programme in full. Our presentation will include: The Development Programme, adventure activities, expedition costs and payments, equipment, insurance and expedition back-up. The evening will conclude with an informal question and answer session and an opportunity to meet and chat with the Adventure Lifesigns Expeditions team.

### **Expedition Costs**

The cost of the expedition is generally spread over four payments: Deposit, EST 1, EST 2 and Balance Payment.

The payment structure has been formulated to cover the costs of the UK based Expedition Skills Training courses (EST) that are associated with the delivery of the Development Programme.



The total amount also covers the cost of flights, insurance, medical cover, group equipment and all associated in-country costs. Each participant will receive advice and instruction on money management as part of the development programme. Should a participant wish to cancel their place on the expedition, cancellation charges will be imposed. For a breakdown of cancellation charges and how they are imposed, please see your expedition terms and conditions..

### **Funding**

Each participant is responsible for funding their own place on the expedition, and there will be a fund-raising meeting during the preparation period covering employment issues, money management, ideas on how to raise money and how to plan fund-raising events. Planning a profitable fundraising event is something that parents can really get involved with. Here are a few suggestions for fund-raising and sponsored events:

- School discos
- Sport events
- Car boot sales
- Sponsored walk or fun runs
- Sponsored car wash
- Sponsored window clean etc.

Please be aware of Health and Safety issues when planning these events – ask the school for advice about this. Adventure Lifesigns staff are also available to advise on this, please contact us on +44 (0)870 979 9000.