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Head teacher: Mrs Vicky Dangerfield BSc Hons GTP Primary

Friday 21st March

Dear Parents & Carers,

Residential information - Morfa Bay Adventure

Contained in this letter is lots of information for both parents and children with regard to the upcoming residential for years 3,4,5 and 6. If you have further questions please do come and ask us.

If there are questions and answers that will be helpful to everyone then we will send out a further FAQ's document to you. No question is too silly - just ask.

Where are we going?

After another successful trip last year we are going once again to Morfa Bay Adventure near Pendine in Wales. You can have a look at the website, link below:

www.morfabay.com

The address is Morfa Bay Adventure, West Park, Pendine, Carmarthen SA33 4PJ

Morfa Bay also has its own Facebook page where there are lots of photos of the start of this school season.

Why Morfa Bay?

This will be our fourth year going to Morfa Bay. Morfa Bay is once again fully booked for its school sessions for the entire season and is a popular centre. Having been before, we've experienced the site in action, seen children participating in all activities and have seen all of the safety features, staff training and risk assessments. All relevant paperwork with risk assessments have been sent to us at school again this year for perusal.

The site is clean, tidy, secure, efficiently organised and smaller in size compared to other residential sites, with a maximum of 3 schools on site at any one time (at PGL Osmington Bay there were about 15 schools when we went in 2020). All activities are centred around the main buildings, so it is only a short walk between activities or back to the base rooms and dormitories.

The maximum group size for any activity is 12. Every activity has at least one or two members of the Morfa Bay team and at least one member of the Sheepscombe Team.





We also take extra Sheepscombe staff with us to go where the need is greatest on the day. Sea activities have greater ratios of staff to children. There are Morfa Bay team leaders on site at all times and the owners/managers live on site too and are available 24 hours a day. Every member of staff employed is first aid trained and lifeguard trained. The site is gated and the gates are locked every evening. There is CCTV on site covering all outdoor areas and the site is well lit. The location is rural in a small village at the top of the hill above Pendine Sands.

Can I contact anyone during my stay?

We will keep you regularly updated about how the children are doing via photos and text messages.

If you do need to contact staff during the time your child is away then please contact Mr Gardner, who is running the school office for these 3 days (as Mr Dangerfield is coming on the trip), in the first instance, between 8.30 a.m. until 4.00p.m and he will get hold of one of us on the residential site.

If you need to contact us on site at Morfa Bay or outside of school hours then Mrs Dangerfield's mobile number is 07717473568. A text or WhatsApp initially is easiest as the phone signal may vary depending on where I am. If you are unable to get hold of me then please email head@sheepscombe.gloucs.sch.uk and also copy in admin@sheepscombe.gloucs.sch.uk. I check emails regularly between activities and in the evening.

Please be assured that we will contact you if we have any concerns about your child, we take all contact details with us.

Which staff are going?

Morfa Bay allocated 4 adult spaces based on the number of children we are taking, as all activities are fully supervised by Morfa Bay staff. Our preference is always to take more than is required (we have done this for every residential trip) and so we have increased this to 8 adults for this year. Adults going are:

Mrs Dangerfield, Mrs George, Mrs Kyte, Mr Crocker, Mr Ringer, Mr James Dangerfield, Lucy Arnsby-Wilson - (Parent - Arlo's Mum) and Seth Johnson (Parent -Lars' Dad). We may also possibly have a student teacher with us, as they start this same week in school.

When are we going?

Our residential takes place from Wednesday 9th to Friday 11th April.

We plan to leave Stratford Park by 8.45 a.m. at the latest on Wednesday, by coach, after loading up luggage. You will need to bring your child to Stratford Park to meet us. We will therefore arrive at Morfa Bay in time for lunch. Children and parents can arrive any time from 8.15 a.m. at Stratford Park where staff will be on hand to meet you. Siblings who need to be dropped at school can arrive at school from 8.00am that day and join breakfast club or, for this day, are permitted to arrive late to school if they wish to wave off a sibling on the trip or if logistically this works better for you.

Who are we travelling with?

We are travelling with Taf Valley Coaches who we used in previous years and have requested the same driver, if he is available. They carry out a lot of the transport for Morfa Bay Adventure and will drive over in the morning to pick us up. We will make a short stop at a services en route. Children may bring a book to read or a sensible, quiet game to play on the journey. The journey takes around 2 hours and 40 minutes.





When do we get back?

We return on Friday and expect to be back at Stratford Park at approx. 3.30 p.m. but Mr Dangerfield will keep you updated. We will keep in touch with you and let you know when we arrive and leave. Siblings at school can be picked up early on Friday to allow you time to travel down to Stratford Park for 3.30p.m.

Will you let us know how things are going?

We will send photographs out to parents when we can to give you regular updates as to what the children are doing.

Travel sickness

If your child gets travel sick, or has ever been travel sick, it is really important that we know this and that you provide them with travel bands or they take a travel sickness pill if necessary - whatever you usually do - and please let us have anything they need for the return journey. Also, these children should have some spare clothes and a plastic bag in their day bag, just in case.

Can my child bring sweets for the coach or for residential?

Children are not permitted to bring or eat sweets on the coach or to the residential to eat in their free time - please do NOT encourage your children to do this without our knowledge - we are very aware that this happens even though every year we ask that it doesn't happen - any sweets found will be removed and you will have put your child in a difficult position. We are wholly reliant on parent and child honesty about this. Things were much better last year at Morfa Bay, so thank you for this.

Children eating in their rooms (or on the coach without our knowledge), should they choke or have an allergy to an ingredient, is a risk and your child's actions, should they share their sweets that you have provided without our consent, may adversely affect another child. We can't stress enough how much we want you to take note of this.

Can my child have a morning snack on the journey?

Yes. Children can bring a morning snack and we will tell children when it is time to eat their morning snack on the journey, which should be as usual a fruit, vegetable or suitable carb type snack. Children must NOT share food. Please no nut products at all.

Packed lunch for Wednesday

Children must bring a packed lunch from home and drink in a refillable bottle for the Wednesday as the first meal provided by Morfa Bay is dinner on the Wednesday evening. We will eat the packed lunch once we have arrived at the centre. We will also take plenty of spare fruit/snacks (as we always do) should we feel the children need an extra energy boost in any afternoon - though having seen the kitchen and food at Morfa Bay we likely won't need this. Drinks bottles can then be re-used for the other days.

Food at Morfa Bay

There is a choice of food at all mealtimes so there will be something for everyone. A variety of fresh fruit is provided at every meal. We will keep an eye on what your child eats and if they eat very little we will contact you for advice. As mentioned, we do always take some extra fruit and snacks with us just in case. The lead cook at Morfa Bay has been there for 19 years and loves her job. She makes as much as she possibly can home-made with her team.





All of the vegetarian meals are also vegan and the kitchen caters for dietary requirements at every meal - please ensure your forms that Mr Dangerfield has about this are up to date before we leave.

Tuck shop money and ice cream money

There may be the opportunity for children to buy an ice-cream at the beach after their sea activities, though this is not guaranteed (and we've never yet done this). There is no 'tuck shop' on site at Morfa Bay but in the entertainment lounge there is a vending machine from which children can purchase a snack in the evening if they wish to. This worked well last year. Morfa Bay recommend that children are only allowed to purchase a maximum of one item per day from the vending machine and one ice cream when they go to the beach (if available). Sheepscombe Staff supervise this.

If you would like your child to be able to have the option to do this then you need to take a maximum £5 (this should be plenty) in £1 coins to Mr Dangerfield in the school office by Tuesday 1st April. Mr Dangerfield will label individual envelopes for children. Staff then look after this money for the children and give it to them at a suitable time.

Room allocations

The room allocations are as last year. We have two dormitories/bunk houses allocated to us on the site for children to sleep in. These are adjacent to each other and directly next door to the staff lodges for our staff.

At Morfa Bay children are split for sleeping into boys and girls. Each bunk house can sleep up to 26 children. This year we are taking 21 girls and 20 boys. Contained within each bunk house there is a smaller room that sleeps 6/7 children. The Year 6 children will have the option to sleep in this room. There are toilet facilities and washbasins in each room.

The Sheepscombe staff team are of course on call throughout the night and we will explain to children on arrival what to do if they need an adult during the night. Sheepscombe staff make regular checks to ensure the children are settled and happy during bed time and as the children go to sleep and settle. School staff will nominate older pupils to be a year group leader for each year group, in each bunk house. Children with any worries will be encouraged to tell their year group leader, who will alert staff next door. We will brief the year group leaders how to do this. Entry to the bunkhouses from the outside is via a key code that school staff will be given on arrival so that staff can always get in.

Bedding

At Morfa Bay Bedding is not provided. Children must bring with them a sleeping bag, a single sheet, their own pillow and pillow case. Please see the kit list.

Sun cream and sun hats or winter woollies?

April is a tricky time of year to predict sunshine or showers! There is a very small chance that sun cream could be useful to bring even though it is early in the year. Children may also benefit from bringing a sun hat or cap if the forecast looks warm. We believe, at the point of writing this letter that the forecast is looking hopeful and dry! If it looks cold then warm hats and gloves will be needed! The latest forecast shows predicted temperatures of around 12°C and overcast.



Medication

Any medication your child needs must be in a labelled bag and handed to class teachers, by parents, for safekeeping before they get on the coach. Staff will tick this off on their medication list. The exception to this is asthma inhalers which children must keep with them but we do still need to tick off that they have them with them. Please ensure that your child does not forget their inhaler.

Packing

Please pack your child's bag **WITH YOUR CHILD PRESENT** - this way they know what they have with them and what their own clothes look like. Children often tell us they have no pants/socks/trousers etc. and that Mum or Dad haven't packed them, even if you have! You would also be amazed at how much lost property we end up with as children don't know what's been packed. It is much easier to find things if you **ROLL** their clothes so they don't have to dig through everything. A couple of bin bags or other suitable bags are **essential** for dirty and wet clothes to go in. Also, please be aware that sometimes children choose to wear the same clothes all week and you might just get the whole lot back as you sent them - we will encourage them to wear clean clothes if we always see them in the same things- but also children have to make choices for themselves too and they may well be making a good choice. Children will all participate in the mud assault course - and it is wet and muddy - spare trainers are absolutely essential.

Please make sure your child can carry their own case or bag. Sometimes less is better - the walk from coach to accommodation is less than 30 seconds so we don't see this as such an issue as in previous years.

We suggest that the older the clothes the better and Morfa Bay say the same - your child will at some point, be wet and muddy and these clothes will be coming home! They **MUST** have trainers that can get wet and muddy and that can go in the sea.

For the sea activities all equipment is provided including wetsuits, life jackets and helmets. Staff at Morfa Bay will ensure they fit correctly. Last year the sea activity was body boarding. The type of sea activity is weather dependent. Members of the Sheepscombe Staff will also be in the sea with the children to support them.

Day bag

Children should have a rucksack or similar that they can easily carry the things they need for the session when they are off site - e.g. water bottle, snack, coat, towel, spare jumper etc. Their packed lunch, morning snack and drink should be carried in this for the coach journey to Morfa Bay.

Other things to pack

Children should bring a book to read and /or small game /toys to play if they want to. No electronic devices or mobile phones please. Staff will remove any toys deemed inappropriate such as toys resembling guns etc. Audiobooks with headphones are fine but please let us know if your child is bringing an audiobook. No fairy lights or other devices that light up the room for beds please - a simple torch is fine for under their pillow or a low level book light for reading, there are outside lights on the bunk houses that are always on. We do sometime have difficulties with children who need the room totally dark to sleep and others who totally don't - there is no perfect solution to this and the compromise is that there will be 'some light' filtering in from outside. A teddy or small favourite soft toy is always a good idea! Children enjoy making their bunk beds and setting themselves up with a few favourite things.



Groups for activities

Children will be in groups for the daytime activities and all together for evening activities plus break and lunchtime play. They will also meet for all mealtimes as a whole group. There are 4 activity groups and at least one Sheepscombe adult will be with each group. The extra Sheepscombe adults will go where most needed on the day and will be able to support any children who might need a bit of extra help, support or a rest break. The Morfa Bay site is small and most activities are close by the main buildings. Children have plenty of opportunity to see each other as well as to relax in their rooms and/or play.

All daytime activities other than the 'Sea Activities' sessions are onsite. The 'Sea Activities' and the 'Rocky Shore Activity' will take place at Pendine Sands or the cove next to it, about 3 minute's drive down the hill from the centre. Morfa Bay has its own mini buses for transport and two of our groups will be going together at a time for these sessions.

What activities have we been allocated?

Over the course of the 3 days we will take part in:

1. Sea Activities on Pendine Beach
2. Rocky Shore Activity on Pendine Beach
3. Zip Line/High Ropes
4. Archery
5. Climbing
6. Mud Assault course

Please note that these activities may be changed at the discretion of the Morfa Bay team and are sometimes changed slightly on arrival. The Sea Activities will only take place if conditions are safe.

Children are encouraged (but never forced) to have a go at every activity on offer. We will provide support and encouragement but will also look after anyone who might not want to participate or who might want to watch for a bit first.

Evening activities

Morfa Bay staff organise evening activities each night. These are to be confirmed as they depend on the weather but could include things such as a disco, evening walk or bingo.

What if my child is homesick?

We are prepared for this and will offer support and advice to children. If we can't settle your child for any reason we will contact you for advice. In our experience children generally do very well on residential, often better than parents think they will, and the second night is absolutely always easier than the first as things are more familiar.

What time is bedtime?

We endeavour to have children in bed by 9.30 p.m. and lights out by 10.00p.m and staff will be on hand until all children are settled, however long it takes. Sheepscombe staff are also accessible during the night at any time.

Typical timetable given to us by the Morfa Bay team

(Activities begin after a home packed lunch on Wednesday and end after a Morfa Bay packed lunch on Friday):





7.30 – 9.00	Get up, get ready and have Breakfast
9.30-11.30	Morning activities session 1
11.30-1.00	Lunchtime and Play
1.00-3.00	Afternoon activities session 2
3.00-5.00	Afternoon activities session 3
6.00-7.00	Dinner time
7.00-9.00	Evening entertainment and activities
9.00-9.30	Bedtime and relax!

What if my child has a headache or feels unwell?

We will be taking a hand-held forehead thermometer with us and can easily take your child's temperature to check it as a first step. Often the cause of a headache would be if a child has not been drinking enough or is tired. We will try to negate the risk of all of these things as we manage children during the day or to rectify this with some restful time or extra fluids.

We will have a bottle of 6+ Calpol with us which staff can administer in the case of a headache – please advise Mr Dangerfield if you are not happy for this to happen. If you routinely treat things such as headaches in a different way please supply us with the relevant items clearly labelled with your child's name and dosage instructions. This must be handed to a class teacher prior to leaving Stratford Park.

What if my child is stung or bitten by an insect?

Our first point of first aid will be to apply an icepack to soothe any discomfort. In our first aid kit we will have some insect bite cream but we will call you first before applying any.

What if you think my child is seriously unwell?

Of course the usual procedures apply and we would not hesitate to call an ambulance or to call 111 if needed and we would of course contact you immediately. Every member of the Morfa Bay team also has a first aid qualification, as do many of our staff.

Showers

There is a separate shower block on site for children to use at set times of day. This is split into boys and girls.

My child is a bit shy /worried and they might not say if they need help

Please tell your children that all staff are all there to help them, at any time and no problem is too small. We will tell them the same.

My child is a mixture of nerves and excitement

Please tell your child this is really normal and sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between the two! Once they are settled on the coach things usually settle down fairly quickly. We know that sleeping away from home is hard for some children, especially on the first night – we are used to supporting this – if you think your child will





be anxious please talk this through with them - some homesickness is usual - we just want to try and stop the whole cupboard of 'things to be a bit sad about' falling out of the cupboard at bedtime so to speak - and so they have the best chance of not being too tired the next day.

Risk assessments

All activities are fully risk assessed by Morfa Bay and there is a comprehensive risk assessment in place by them for each activity. Copies are kept in our school office should you wish to look at them.

Behaviour

We expect children to adhere to the same high standards of behaviour as they do at school and to be respectful of those around them at all times, both within our school group and the wider community at Morfa Bay including instructors and those from other visiting schools. In the unlikely event of poor behaviour that does not rectify after a reminder or explanation, a child may be asked to sit out for a period of time with a member of our staff team. This is in line with our school behaviour policy. Staff will determine how long the child must sit out for and when they can return. Staff decisions are final. We have an excellent reputation for good behaviour on such trips and this will be kept up.

What are the exact drop off details on the day?

We plan to leave Stratford Park by 8.45 a.m at the latest after checking children in and loading up luggage. You will need to bring your child to Stratford Park to meet us. You can arrive from 8.15 a.m at Stratford Park LC where staff will be on hand to meet you. Staff will be there from just after 8.00a.m.

When you arrive at Stratford Park you will first need to come and see Mrs Dangerfield to register your child is present and to handover any medicines etc that you are sending with them (or in the case of asthma inhalers, to confirm your child has them with them).

Next you will need to see Mr Crocker and Mr Dangerfield who will ensure each child's luggage is loaded onto the coach and ask you to confirm that they have a sleeping bag and pillow, packed lunch, morning snack and water bottle with them.

Then your child will be ready to get onto the coach. Mr Ringer and other staff will ensure they are safely seated. Children who get travel sick will be required to sit towards the front of the coach.

We make a scheduled stop at a service station to use the toilet facilities.

We have in previous years taken a staff car to the residential sites we visit, however as in previous years, all staff will travel on the coach. Unlike our other sites, the owners at Morfa Bay are on hand 24 hours a day should we need any assistance that requires a car.

Other commonly asked questions:

Can my child bring a camera? - no this is not permitted due to the potential for the invasion of privacy, particularly in the dormitories. Staff will take photos or short video clips of children doing activities or when on the Morfa Bay site to send back to school. Mr Dangerfield will send these out to parents.





Is there going to be a disco? Yes, we know that on one of the evenings there will be a disco so if your child wants to bring something more 'disco like' to wear this is fine, but by no means essential.

Has my child made their food choices? Yes, children have chosen their evening meals already in school and we will take those forms with us to Morfa Bay. Please ask your child if you do not know what they have ordered.

Can my child bring an MP3 player? Yes, but only for audio books, not to play music in the dormitory.

What if my child needs something? - such as needing a change of clothes or bedding, or support with feeling homesick but is too embarrassed to ask a member of staff? Please, please impress upon your children to just ask one of us - any of us - there really won't be anything that we haven't dealt with before. If one member of staff can't help they'll ask someone who can.

If my child needs a grown up in the night can they get to you? Yes, easily, the staff door will remain unlocked all night and children will know which adults to wake and where they are. We are right next door to the dormitories.

And finally...

We are all very much looking forward to the trip which we encourage you to call a 'holiday' and not a 'residential' as holidays are familiar to everyone! (However, I'm not sure the staff team will ever call it a 'holiday' but it's all part of the fun).

Please try not to worry - we know children can be anxious to begin with but in our experience children enjoy their time away.

Kind regards,

Vicky Dangerfield and the 'Holiday' team
Head teacher
Sheepscombe School

PS No parent is allowed to cry when you wave them off 😊.