



GAYLE CAMERON

KEMNAY ACADEMY.

Gayle's love of the outdoors and seeing the world began when she purchased a round-the-world ticket with her friend and now helps her students to enjoy those kind of memorable experiences through school expeditions. Her school already had a good relationship with Outlook so when she took over co-ordinating expeditions in the school in 2009, she chose to work with us and has done ever since. So far she has been to Borneo, Ecuador, Costa Rica and Southern India.

Why do you enjoy working with us?

I have continued to travel with Outlook Expeditions because I am happy with the organisation of the company in regards to the build-up process, the portal, training events and support whilst on expedition. I always feel informed and I like their forward planning.

I always know there is someone at the end of an email or a phone call to answer any questions. I also know that the Ops Room process works incredibly well whilst on expedition when a challenging situation arises.

Parents also feel confident in Outlook as the school has had many successful expeditions in the past. In addition, I have confidence in their abilities at selecting leaders as we have had three brilliant leaders in the past who have had a world of knowledge and experience. I can't imagine going on expedition with anyone else.

Why did you want to go on expeditions?

I firstly chose to go on expedition because of my

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passion for travelling. I continue to go on expedition because I get to combine two of my favourite things: teaching and travelling.

All three of my expedition experiences have been unforgettable, some of the best times of my life have been whilst I was on expedition. So many amazing memories and friendships have been made.

I enjoy the build up process, watching the pupils develop into young adults whilst taking responsibility over their fundraising and training events. I enjoy seeing the team come together on the expedition training weekend and seeing them develop into a wee family whilst on expedition. It is great seeing youngsters that I have taught since they were 12 go on expedition, become leaders and more confident and independent individuals. It is nice to see a side of pupils that you don't always see in the classroom and it is also nice for them to see a side of me that they don't see in the classroom either.

What are your top three Outlook Expedition experiences?

1. On my first expedition our trek was Mount Kinabalu in Borneo (4095m), it was a great experience getting all the team members to the summit after their hard training. It was a very proud moment seeing them all at the summit - it is something that

will stay with me for the rest of my days.

2. In Borneo during our orphanage project we stayed with the local families and it really allowed us to see how the people of Borneo truly live and it was nice to become part of their family for a week. We were able to exchange cultures, traditions and food. We were invited to a family birthday party and they made us feel so welcome, it is one of my fondest memories, dancing and singing with the locals.

3. In Costa Rica we completed a challenging trek, Corcovado National Park trek. The sights and wildlife were amazing, beautiful beaches, rainforests, howler monkeys, tucans and snakes to name a few.

What benefits of expeditions have you seen first-hand?

One of the benefits of expedition is seeing the pupils make a difference on a project, whether it is in an orphanage, educating children, planting trees, clearing pathways, making rivers, cleaning out iguana cages, conservation work or just playing with the youngsters on project, it is very rewarding for both the teacher and pupils.

It is great to see the pupils interacting with the locals and learning about their culture. It makes all the fundraising worthwhile. On a personal note it is great to see pupils overcome fears and anxieties whilst on expedition. Pupils have come back more confident and have gone on to become prefects, house captains, head boys and head girls at school which is a huge turnaround for some pupils.

It is great to see the pupils come back more rounded individuals, they appreciate what they have at home more both in regards to friends and family and more

materialistic things. One of the greatest things however has been to see the pupils go on to organise travelling expeditions themselves. I have had a number of pupils that have gone travelling independently as far flung as Australia. It is great to see them put their expedition skills to good use.

Sum up what expeditions are about in three words

Adventure, unforgettable and life-changing.

Where can't you wait to go next?

I would love to go to Africa as it one of the places I have yet to go. Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia - the wildlife, the country and the culture looks incredible. Summer 2019 hopefully!

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