

Outdoor Education activity description:

Activity: *Caving*

Description:

General overview of the activity, why we use it, what it offers in terms of student development – holistically and progression within the activity.

Caving is one of our more exciting and immersive activities, the wonder of exploring the living and changing world, that is beneath our feet, gives a real sense of adventure.

Caving is a full body and mind workout; it involves anything from walking down passages as big as a house to crawling through small spaces and climbing. It engages a multitude of muscle groups and builds core strength, it can improve flexibility and boosts cardiovascular fitness in a natural and fun way, that's different every time.

Caving is a personal challenge, which relies on teamwork and communication, it requires problem solving, determination, and resilience. It helps students develop risk management skills and encourages the taking of responsibility for their own safety and that of others. It promotes camaraderie and the building of trusting relationships through shared experience. It provides real life learning opportunities around geology, geography and glaciation alongside developing an appreciation for the natural world.

Heading underground is like going back in time, it is an escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. It offers solitude and immersion in a world that seems to have slowed down and offers a chance to experience the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the formations.

As our student's progress, we can start to offer more complex and challenging cave systems, which will continue to stretch and grow the students, promoting further problem-solving skills, resilience and when the students are ready, we look at developing leadership skills.

Locations:

The Yorkshire Dales is home to some of the finest caving in the country. As a school we carefully select appropriate caves for the students and weather conditions. The caves below are listed to show progression, this list is not exhaustive: -

- *Stump Cross Caverns – Show cave, Nr Pateley Bridge, Nidderdale*
- *Tom Taylors cave – How Stean Gorge, Nidderdale*

A great introduction to caving with a very simple cave passage.

- *Manchester Hole – Nidderdale*

This offers the first true experience of cave exploration with varying levels of challenge, this cave involves walking down a riverbed passage, stooping, crawling and some climbing. We also have the option to extend the journey, which is not for the faint-hearted, which requires a short crawl in water and a very muddy climb.

- *Goyden Pot – Nidderdale*

Goyden is the largest cave system we use and is a labyrinth of cave passages of all shapes and sizes. The main chamber is larger than the school and there are squeezes and crawls that will challenge even the most experienced of cavers. Due to the size layout of the cave, we can adapt what we do and where we go to suit the needs and experience of the group and individuals.

The caves below require more time than that is allocated for a normal Outdoor Education lesson. These caves may be visited but would require a full day or as part of a residential trip. Should we plan on visiting these caves, we would inform parents and carers beforehand.

- *Runscar and Thistle Caves - Ribblesdale*
- *Dow Cave – Wharfedale*
- *Long Churn Caves – Selside, Nr Horton in Ribblesdale*
- *Sun Set Pot - Chapel Le Dale - Ingleborough*
- *Great Duke – Chapel Le Dale – Ingleborough*
- *Crack Pot - Swaledale*

Useful links: [British Caving Association - Underground in the British Isles](#)

[CNCC - Council for the Northern Caving Community](#)