



T H E
GLASGOW ACADEMY

Dear Parents

Your son/daughter has expressed an interest in participating in a snow-holing weekend from the 3rd to 4th March. We will be leaving from the Academy at 0600 on the Saturday and returning at approximately 1900 on the Sunday. Pupils will have the opportunity to phone on the way back to Glasgow to indicate a more accurate arrival time.

It is most likely that we will be using an area in the Northern Cairngorms for this activity, but this may change according to the prevailing weather and snow conditions. After a short walk to an appropriate location, the whole afternoon will be spent digging a snow hole into a bank of suitably thick snow. It is intended that the group, pupils and staff, will then spend the night cooking, eating and sleeping in the hole. Due to the nature of the activity, the conditions have to be very good. In the event of less than ideal conditions we will still spend a night out in the mountains, but an alternative type of snow shelter may be constructed or the location may be changed to a remote bothy (a simple shelter with usually just four walls, a roof and the occasional mouse) or to camping. The decision to change to one of these options may take place prior to, or during, the activity.

The equipment required for this activity is detailed below. It would be worthwhile ensuring that the sleeping bag will provide suitable warmth. The temperature in the snow hole is unlikely to drop much below 0°C and a sleeping bag that is rated down to -5/-10°C would be sufficient. It is possible to upgrade the warmth of a sleeping bag by using a fleece liner. These can be purchased relatively cheaply from outdoor shops and this may be a useful option. Pupils should meet in the expedition store at 1310 on Thursday 1st March to collect appropriate equipment and a large, empty bag may be useful for this purpose. Pupils will also receive a lesson on how to use the petrol cooking stoves during this lunchtime.

Equipment list:

Warm clothing including hat, gloves (two or three pairs) and spare fleeces
Waterproof jacket and trousers
Walking boots capable of taking crampons*
Packed lunch/snacks for Saturday and Sunday
Flask with hot drink
Rucksack*
Sunglasses
Ski goggles
Ice axe*
Crampons*
Headtorch* and spare batteries
Sleeping bag*
Roll mat*

Survival bag*

Mug

Spoon

Compass

(* available from the expedition store)

Pupils should provide their own lunches and snacks for the two days. A main course for Saturday evening and a breakfast on Sunday morning will be provided. We will be making use of the Cairngorm Poo Project and all human waste will be carried out of the mountains. Details of the Project, launched in 2007, may be found here: <http://icefactor.blogspot.com/2007/11/cairngorm-poo-project.html>.

The trip will be accompanied by myself and Mr Horgan. As with all Academy trips, a risk assessment for this activity has been completed and can be seen by arrangement in the Administration Centre. The cost of the trip is £30 and this should be given to the Administration Centre marked with Snow-holing Expedition at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or would like any further information about this activity please contact me by telephone via the Administration Centre or by email (enquiries@tga.org.uk marked for my attention). There is no charge for this trip.

Yours sincerely

Miss R Goolden

Head of Outdoor Education