

Ten Tors Parents' Key Information

Please find below a summary of the key information for parents of students involved in Ten Tors training.

Selection

Students have the opportunity to complete training in order to be considered for a place in one of Sheldon's Ten Tors teams. We currently have three allocated teams – two 35 mile – one 45 mile – one 55 mile.

Selection for the teams will be based on the following criteria, with 1. the most important.

1. 6 most likely to complete the event as a team
2. Individual strengths – e.g. Navigation, leadership, fitness
3. Walk attendance (walk importance is in reverse order)
4. Meeting attendance
5. Individual interviews

It is rare that we need to go beyond the first two. However, **please note that once selection has been made it is final and choices are not explained/justified.** If in doubt, please refer to the above selection criteria.

Training

Training is progressive, with walks costed on a walk-by-walk basis. The progression takes the form of walk focus, kit carried, terrain tackled and the autonomy the groups are given. If a student decides not to continue with training, I ask that they inform me so I can as accurately as possible, cost the training.

In school training happens on after school. Please allow until between 4.30pm and 5.30pm for these sessions to finish (please refer to the timetable of training). Whilst some may finish a little earlier, some will need that full amount of time.

Finally, as we move into the camping phase of the Ten Tors training, kit checks will become a feature of the training. The responsibility for this is on the students. Please support them by encouraging them to pack, unpack and clean their kit. The hope is this will help them learn what their kit is, the value of it and, how to maintain it. Kit checks and the kit students carry are part of how we keep them safe.

Therefore, if students do not carry the expected kit I reserve the right to pull them out of a walk and potentially not take them on future walks. Similarly, if they have not shown me sufficient quality kit during a kit check/before departure for a camp, **I will not be able to take them.**

Kit

Please refer to the kit list issued at the parents' information evening for the full list of required kit – if you were unable to attend, **your child can access this list via their teams page**, or see me in school for a hard copy. The list is colour coded to help provide guidance as to what kit is need when and, what kit we have some supplies of in school, which can be borrowed. **A list of the required kit for each walk will also be outlined on each letter home.**

I try to keep the early walks as accessible as possible and no specialist kit is required before January – it will be for the walks in Wales.

Having the correct kit is integral to students' safety whilst out with us, particularly once we are walking on Dartmoor and in Wales. As explained above, not having the correct kit might result in a student

being unable to attend a walk. **Similarly, I reserve the right to final judgement on whether the kit is of sufficient quality to keep the student safe. To that end I would encourage you to check purchases with me before buying anything for your child.**

If you are buying kit for your child, please do not pay full price. You can always find a discount, either online or by asking in store. Cotswold Outdoor and BCH Camping would be my two recommended local retailers. However, if you know the item you want the Go Outdoor Price Guarantee makes their prices difficult to beat (<https://www.gooutdoors.co.uk/price-guarantee>). Alternatively, a lot of high quality kit can be acquired secondhand.

I will go into more detail about the more specialist kit requirements needed for the camping phase at the Parents' Pre-Camping Information Evening (see timetable).

Communication

All communication with parents' will be via schoolcoms in the first instance. All letters for walks will be e-mailed home from the Ten Tors email address. Further information from me may be sent via this address. Each letter will have a payment deadline. **Please ensure you have paid by this deadline as I will be unable to take students who pay after the deadline.** This is to provide me with enough time to have all the paperwork filled in, in order for each walk to take place as safely as possible. I will publish a list of those who have paid the day before the payment deadline.

Students will be able to access any trip letters, forms or information from me via their Ten Tors Teams page. All letters are also published on the Ten Tors section of the school website. Please encourage them to be checking this regularly.

If you would like to get in touch with me at school, please use the dedicated Ten Tors e-mail – tentors@sheldonschool.co.uk

Safety

Ten Tors training is not entirely without risk. Our safety procedures are about minimising that risk. All walks are individually risk assessed, with those assessments reviewed annually, firstly by myself, then a member of the school's SMT before the Learning Outside the Classroom advisor from the LEA.

Kit is a key requirement for the student's safety. The equipment they are expected to carry is picked in order to keep them safe in a worst-case scenario. Please refer to the **training and kit sections** for full explanations of its necessity. In addition, the training itself is a safety element. We introduce students to higher risk walks as we progress through the training. This is supported by the Tuesday school sessions. We are aiming to create a competence in the students that helps to minimise risk.

I would ask for your support in encouraging your child **to check themselves for ticks** when returning from a walk. These are a specific risk when walking and are unpleasant.

Ten Tors training is run under my Mountain Leader Qualification. My personal experience and the experience of the team of volunteers in running successful training equips us to deal with most scenarios. My ML is supported by additional ML, Hill and Moorland and South West Mountain and Moorland Qualifications held by some of the volunteer staff. In addition, most of the volunteers are first aid trained, with 5 of us holding 16 hour outdoor specific first aid qualifications.

Emergency procedure

In the event that there is an emergency you will be contacted by the on-duty member of LT. They will relay any required information.

In the event that there is an emergency you need communicated to your child, please ring the emergency number, which can be found on each trip letter. The on-duty member of SMT will then relay the message to me and I will pass on to your child at an appropriate time.

To that end I ask that whilst students are on a walk they do not spend time on their mobile phones. Please remind them of this when they are preparing for a walk.

Mobile Phones

Whilst it is useful for students to have a mobile with them during a Ten Tors walk, we do not want the students to be using them during the walks. Part of the appeal of Ten Tors is the opportunity to spend time away from mobile phones. To this end **please do not contact them during a Ten Tors walk**, wait for them to contact you. Letters will always have estimated times back at school, but **students will be asked to call you when we are 30 minutes from finishing a walk**. If it is an emergency, please call the emergency contact number as explained above.

Staffing

Please note that Ten Tors training at Sheldon School is run on an almost **entirely voluntary basis**. Many of the leaders helping to train your children are either ex-students or ex-staff, sometimes using holiday days to assist in the running of Ten Tors. Similarly, whilst the school recognises the time commitment, I make in organising and running the training, it is not my main job and I have limited time to complete the associated admin for Ten Tors.

Whilst this is not something any of the team running Ten Tors training begrudges, I do ask you to recognise that it is secondary to our paid job and run at a cost to our time (and to an extent, finances). Please can I ask that you bear with us if communication is not instantaneous or as quick as you would hope with a regular school matter and, encourage your child to be proactive in checking Teams to see if there is an answer there.