

Adventure Learning
- A New Design for Schools
In wildness is the preservation of the world – Henry David Thoreau

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Mountain Heritage Trust
Lakes School, Cumbria

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David Hopkins

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The Nature of Adventure

If adventure has a final all-embracing motive it is surely this; we go out because it is our nature to go out, to climb the mountains and sail the seas, to fly to the planets and plunge into the depths of the oceans. By doing these things we make touch with something outside or behind, which strangely seems to approve our doing them. We extend our horizon, we expand our being, we revel in a mastery of ourselves which gives an impression, mainly illusory, that we are masters of our world. In a word we are men, and when man ceases to do these things, he is no longer man.

Wilfred Noyce

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Adventure and Education

Adventure education has a long and distinguished tradition. Think of Homer's *Odyssey*; Plato's *Republic*; and Rousseau's *Emile*.

The notion of personal development occurring through challenge and adventure resonate with every one of us. So much so that *experience* has become the central block for many educational philosophers and psychologists such as Dewey, Piaget and Bruner.

Adventure education has an enduring relevance in a wide variety of educational contexts.

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Life Scripts and Adventure

We all have life scripts, some of us chose to develop it others are forced to do so. Life scripts evolve as the individual confronts direct experience and adapts and assimilates it with their self. Adventure as the purest form of direct experience has the ability to develop 'life script' in the most immediate way. 'Adventure leaders' create situations where others can develop their own life scripts.

As Mahatma Gandhi said – 'You must be the change you wish to see in the world'

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Lord Hunt on Bonington and Leadership

Everest imposes enormous emotional strains on the climber. Upon no one was the stress so great and prolonged as on the leader of the expedition. His was the original decision to make the bid; his the choice of companions, the general strategy, the supervision of the whole complex plan and its unfolding on Everest. His was the responsibility for the lives of more than 70 men, exposed to risks of many kinds and for a considerable time ... On the leader would be heaped the chorus of criticism, if this expensive venture were to prove to be yet another failure.

John Hunt

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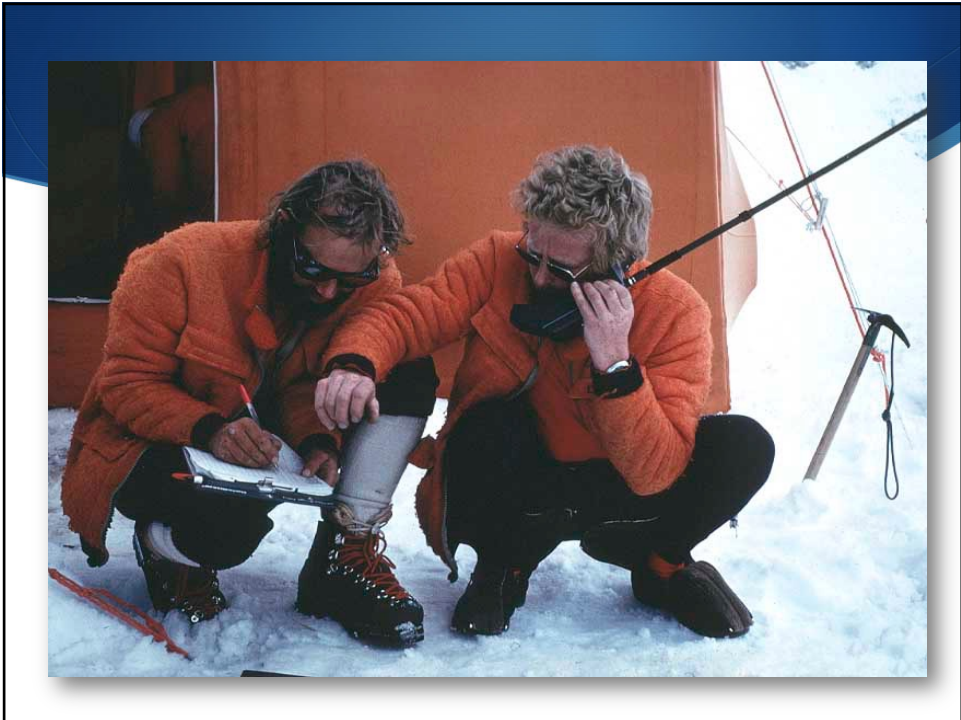
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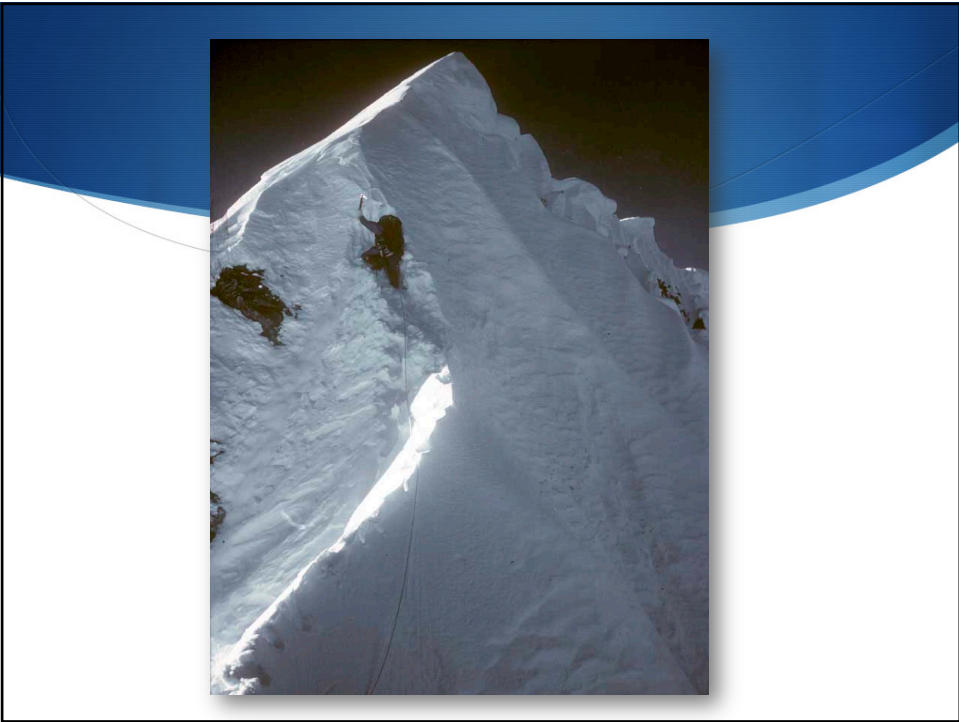
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The Adventure of Leadership

On first appearance leading a team up South West Face of Everest may not be similar to leading your school but do you:

- Expose yourself to risk and challenge complacency?
- Have a clear objective, develop a plan then tell the story?
- Carefully allocate roles and develop people within and beyond them?
- Manage core purpose and create the conditions where every learner can achieve their potential and achieve high standards?
- Have clear operating systems, but being open to innovation?
- Set objectives and then trust colleagues?
- Cultivate the energy that direct experience and trust generates?
- Open yourself up to awareness, adventure and challenge?

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Adventure in Leadership

'Vision, values, determination and uncertainty are all to be found in the best leaders. Good management skills are essential, but can also leave one in the comfort zone. Good leadership should be a bit scary and is what we need most in our schools.'

Sir Alan Steer

"Never fully knowing how much further you can go; how much more can be achieved alongside the adults and young people you lead and share leadership with; and where any path may take you, but being open to all the possibilities along the journey."

Vanessa Wiseman CBE

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Adventure in Leadership

'The adventure of leadership is the challenge of releasing the potential of others.'

Sir Dexter Hutt

'The adventure comes from challenging the process, from taking small risks and sometimes questioning received wisdom if you are convinced there is a better way to meet students needs. It's about not having all the answers at the beginning but pursuing the goal with 'confident uncertainty', sure that celebration will follow!'

Michael Wilkins

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The G100 Communiqué

A group of 100 principals from fourteen countries (G100) met at the National Academy of Education Administration (NAEA) in Beijing, China 16-19 October 2006 to discuss the transformation of and innovation in the world's education systems.

They concluded their communiqué in this way -

We need to ensure that moral purpose is at the fore of all educational debates with our parents, our students, our teachers, our partners, our policy makers and our wider community.

We define moral purpose as a compelling drive to do right for and by students, serving them through professional behaviors that 'raise the bar and narrow the gap' and through so doing demonstrate an intent, to learn with and from each other as we live together in this world.

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The Moral Purpose of Schooling

I know what my learning objectives are and feel in control of my learning

I get to learn lots of interesting and different subjects

I can get a level 4 in English and Maths before I go to secondary school

I know what good work looks like and can help myself to learn

I know if I need extra help or to be challenged to do better I will get the right support

My parents are involved with the school and I feel I belong here

I can work well with and learn from many others as well as my teacher

I enjoy using ICT and know how it can help my learning

I know how I am being assessed and what I need to do to improve my work

I can get the job that I want

All these whatever my background, whatever my abilities, wherever I start from

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A Framework for Adventure 1

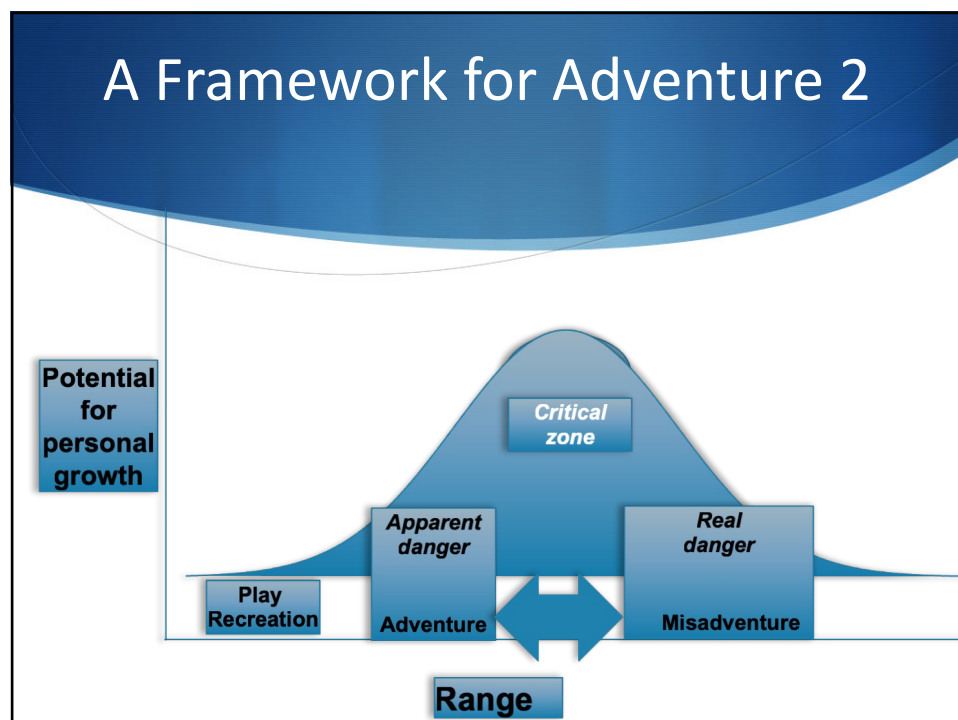
Adventure is a state of mind that begins with feelings of uncertainty about the outcome of a journey and always ends with feelings of enjoyment, satisfaction, or elation about the successful completion of that journey....

The initial feeling of uncertainty of outcome is fear of physical or psychological harm. There can be no adventure in Outdoor Pursuits without this fear in the mind of the participant. Without the fear there would be no challenge. Fear extended to terror, however, is not adventure. This is misadventure as the journey is psychologically too demanding for the person concerned.

Colin Mortlock

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A Framework for Adventure 2



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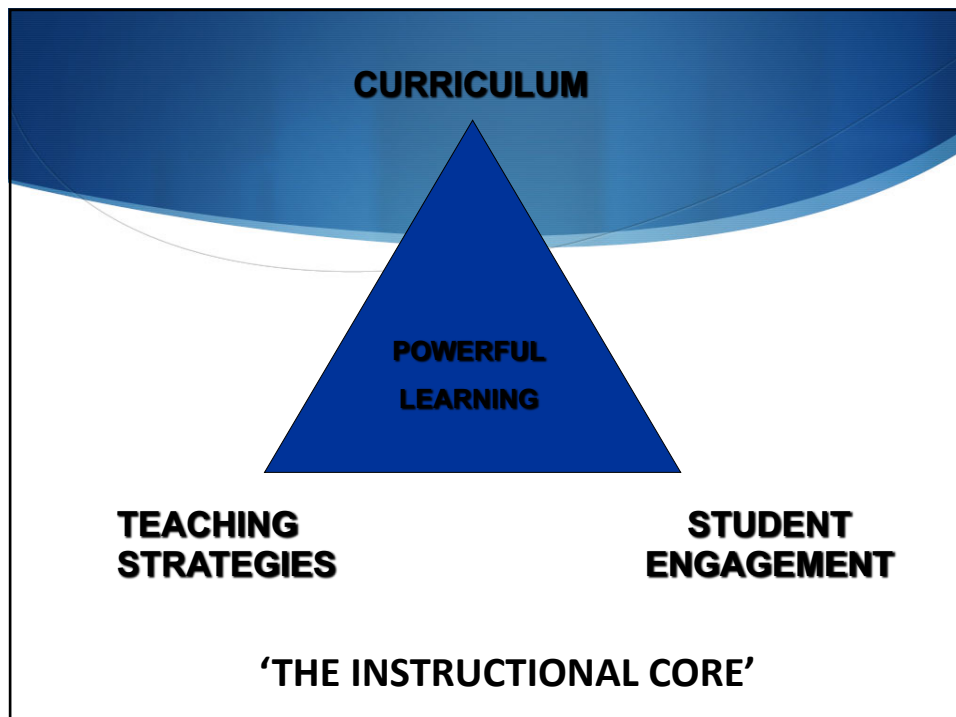
Powerful Learning ...

Is the ability of learners to respond successfully to the tasks they are set, as well as the task they set themselves. In particular, to:

- Integrate prior and new knowledge
- Acquire and use a range of learning skills
- Solve problems individually and in groups
- Think carefully about their successes and failures
- Accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty

All this has been termed “meta-cognition” – it is the learners’ ability to take control over their own learning processes.

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The Learning Framework

◆ Application of Learning Skills in CLASSROOM adventure settings

◆ These need to define the core learning skills and the curriculum activity that is designed to develop them

ALS
Schools
Core
Learning
Skills

◆ Application of Learning Skills in OUTDOOR adventure settings

◆ These need to define the core learning skills and the adventure activity that is designed to develop them

All of these learning skill and activities are underpinned and consolidated by the students adventure learning profile

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The Evidence ...

- ◆ The effects are large and increase over time.
- ◆ Research has shown that Adventure Learning has helped young people to develop greater independence, assertiveness, confidence, self-esteem, communication skills, group cohesion, team-work and leadership skills.
- ◆ Where adventure-learning programmes have had a specific academic focus such as on literacy and problem solving, they have been particularly effective.
- ◆ This leads to the basic premise of adventure learning schools - that there should be transfer of the most effective teaching and learning strategies from out-of-class settings to those within the classroom – so that adventure consistently pervades the learning experiences of all our students.

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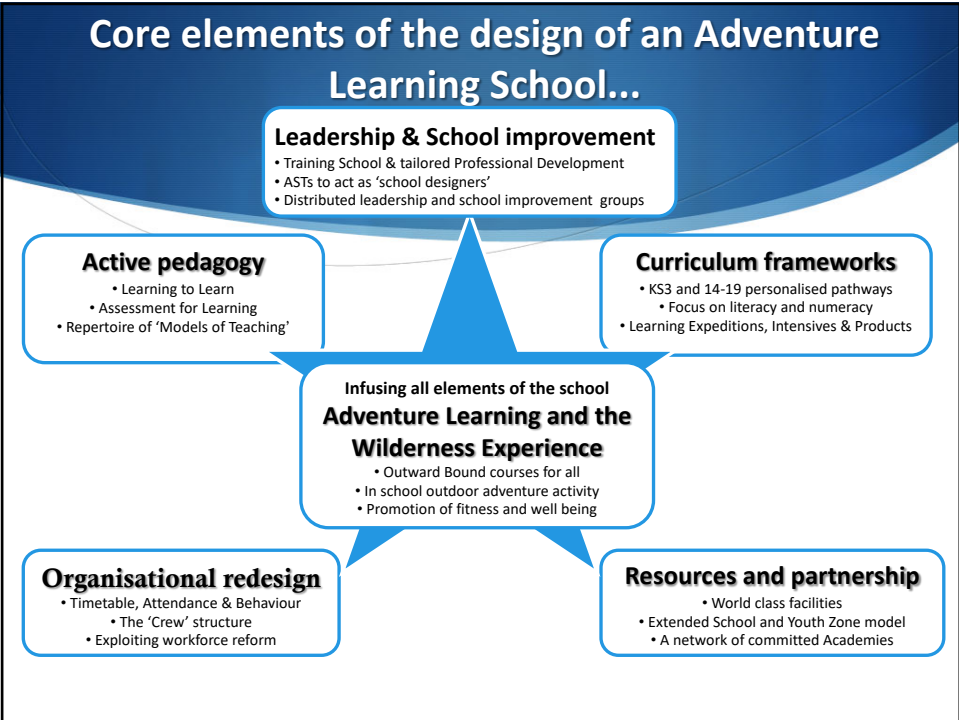
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Learning through Adventure – A new Design for Schools

In wildness is the preservation of the world – Henry David Thoreau

- Vision is of a network of schools formed on principles related to adventure, the wilderness environment, and experience enhancing personal growth
- Located in areas of high social deprivation with proximity to Areas of Natural Beauty
- These schools will be fully comprehensive and inclusive with a strong focus on personalisation. These are places where young people will thrive irrespective of their background, socio-economic status or learning needs
- Curriculum and timetable models creating opportunities for learning through adventure – within and outside the classroom
- Current policy trends offer the freedoms and flexibilities in building design, curriculum and timetable models and staffing to deliver the ‘Adventure Learning’ school

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Pathway to becoming an Adventure Learning School ...

- ◆ The first is that all students will as part of their curricular entitlement have exposure to adventure and expeditionary challenges
- ◆ The second is that students entering Year 7 will have a flying start to their secondary school education through participating in a transitional adventure learning programme in Year 6 of their Primary School
- ◆ Third, schools will adopt a 'crew' or vertical tutor group arrangement to ensure that every student is part of a nurturing social group and have the opportunity to learn from, support and lead others.
- ◆ The fourth is that curriculum frameworks will have a predominantly enquiry approach. This will involve the use of *learning expeditions* and *intensives*
- ◆ The fifth is a discrete and unrelenting focus on Literacy and Numeracy
- ◆ Sixth, this will result in a coherent learning experience that ensures that students acquire a broad range of skills knowledge and experiences that equips them for the transition into adulthood.

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Self-assessment against the model:		All elements already in place	Started thinking, mainly clear and bits are in place	Started thinking but major gaps and nothing in place	Haven't started thinking and nothing in place
Elements of the Framework	Examples of evidence	Assessment			
Adventure Learning and the Wilderness Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-door residential experiences for students • Exploring the urban 'wilderness' • Promotion of health, fitness and well-being • In-school out-door adventure activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students already undertake adventure learning or outdoor activity • Adventure learning type activity has been built into the regular curriculum • The skills students learn and develop are being reinforced in the classroom 				
Curriculum Frameworks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS3 • 14-19 pathways • Learning expeditions • Focus on Literacy and numeracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS3 and 14-19 pathways are well developed and already offer significant opps for cross curricular experiences • All students are achieving expected levels of literacy and numeracy 				
Active Pedagogy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to Learn • Assessment for Learning • Repertoire of 'Models of Teaching' • Student Voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language of learning skills is regularly used by teachers and students • AfL is used consistently by all teachers • You would typically expect to see a range of teaching models in the school 				
Leadership and School Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership for Learning • Professional development leading to training school status • Distributed leadership and succession planning • School improvement groups and ASTs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a clear plan in place for use of our AST and drawing in other ASTs • We have become a Training School • Some good work has been done by groups of teachers getting together 				
Organisational Redesign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetable, attendance and behavior • The 'crew' structure • Workforce remodelling • Intelligent accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you asked students they would be very clear about acceptable behaviour • Students receive the pastoral care and support they deserve • We don't really track progress in year 				
Resources and Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World-class facilities • Extended school and Youth zone model • Partnerships within and outside the school • Networks of AL schools and Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and teachers have the resources and facilities they need • The school works with a range of partners to provide support to students • Parents are actively engaged in school 				

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The Nature of Adventure

*You cannot stay on the summit forever:
you have to come down again....
So why bother in the first place?
Just this: What is above knows what is below,
But what is below does not know what is above.
One climbs, one sees, one descends, one sees no longer.
But one has seen.
There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the
memory of what one has seen higher up.
When one can no longer see, one can at least still know.*

Rene Daumal

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Professor David Hopkins

David Hopkins is Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Education, University of London, where until recently, he held the inaugural HSBC iNet Chair in International Leadership. He is a Trustee of Outward Bound and is Executive Director of the new charity 'Adventure Learning Schools'. David holds visiting professorships at the Catholic University of Santiago, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Universities of Edinburgh, Melbourne and Wales and consults internationally on school reform. Between 2002 and 2005 he served three Secretary of States as the Chief Adviser on School Standards at the Department for Education and Skills. Previously, he was Chair of the Leicester City Partnership Board and Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Nottingham. Before that again he was a Tutor at the University of Cambridge Institute of Education, a Secondary School teacher and Outward Bound Instructor. David is also an International Mountain Guide who still climbs regularly in the Alps and Himalayas. His recent books **Every School a Great School** and **System Leadership in Practice** are published by The Open University Press.

Website: www.davidhopkins.co.uk

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