



Important Pre-Booking Information

Southend High School for Boys
Crater Lakes and Cocoa Co-ops

Destination: **Ghana**
July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Southend High School for Boys - Ghana: Crater Lakes and Cocoa Co-ops

Your son has the opportunity to take part in an adventurous school trip that we are helping your school to plan.

Adventure travel is exciting. It is a chance for young people to stretch their horizons and develop an understanding of cultures and destinations beyond our everyday world. It is an opportunity to build their self-confidence and understand more about the amazing world we live in. The educational benefits and opportunities for personal development are many indeed.

Here at STC Expeditions, we firmly believe our educational journeys and school expeditions are packed to bursting point with experiences that will change your child's view on the world. Some companies in our market like to use the phrase "a once in a lifetime trip" – we prefer to think that our trips will be the first of many incredible adventures your son will embark on throughout their lives. If we can inspire young people to travel, to explore and to celebrate the diversity and difference that exists across the planet, then we know we're doing something good.

By its very nature, however, adventure travel is more challenging and demanding than a conventional school trip. The enjoyment, excitement and educational benefit is derived, in part, from the inherent risks and challenges associated with each journey and destination. The following Parents' **Pre-booking Information Pack** is designed to enable you to make an informed decision as to the itinerary and organisations involved, and whether the trip is right for your child.

Please read it carefully and should you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Sainsbury
Director



6B King St
Exeter
EX1 1BH

Tel: 01392 660056
info@thestc.co.uk
www.thestc.co.uk

About STC Expeditions

STC Expeditions has been organising adventurous school trips and expeditions since 2006. Over the years we have helped school groups summit 6000m peaks in the Himalaya and visit remote tribes deep in the rainforest clad interior of Venezuela. Not all the trips we arrange are as adventurous as these, yet wherever we operate our key goal is to provide an exceptional educational travel experience, one that takes students out of their comfort zones, opening their eyes and stretching their global horizons in a carefully risk-assessed environment.

Objectives

- To undertake an eleven-day Fair Trade journey of discovery in West Africa, in line with the schools Fair Trade status and goals in SMSC education.
- You would like a diverse itinerary that shows all aspects of the destination – the geography, biology, language, history and culture.



Trip Overview

Palm fringed beaches, vibrant markets and fair-trade plantations; cocoa community co-operatives, slave castles and canopy walk ways - Ghana is one of the friendliest countries in Africa, matched only by the treasure-trove of amazing educational opportunities on offer. With its rich culture and enchanting music, Ghana is a country you will quickly fall in love with. This short fairtrade and business focused journey offers a unique insight into many aspects of Ghana - from the culture and landscape, to the people and the Fairtrade movement.

Trip Dates

The trip is planned for July 2026. Flights can only be booked a maximum of 11 months prior to departure, so we will be

in contact once your travel dates are available to book.

Planned Itinerary

Below is an outline of the planned itinerary. Please note, it is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. Whilst every effort will be made to follow the schedule below, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or environmental factors, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides – he or she will want you to see their country in a good light.

Day 1: Depart UK and fly to Ghana

Fly from the UK to Accra. Our local staff and vehicle will meet us at the airport, once we have navigated our way through immigration, the baggage hall, customs and the warm but busy welcome of the airport in general! We head straight to the guesthouse for a drink and light snack and an early night in preparation for tomorrow. Meals: LD

Day 2: Depart Accra and transfer to Elmina

We'll have an early start to get on the road and out of Accra before the traffic gets too heavy. Accra is a busy and typical African city, the sights, sounds and smells are so very distinctively African that this first day can be quite overwhelming, but it is just a taster of what is to come! We eat en-route as we head for our first base camp of the trip. Our cook will introduce us to Ghanaian food that is eaten around a camp fire, under African starlight. Meals: BLD

Day 3: Project Visit & Batik Workshop

In the morning we have breakfast at the beach and then visit 'Global Mama's' – an inspiring non-profit and fair trade organisation assisting women in Africa to become economically independent. During this visit we learn about the challenges and successes of running these kinds of projects. After lunch we get our hands wet whilst

being guided through a Batik Workshop, learning about this traditional pattern making process which is native to West Africa. This workshop takes most of the afternoon and occurs at Stumble Inn. Meals: BLD

Day 4: Kakum Park Canopy walkway, Hike and Relaxation at Ko-Sa beach

Today we'll visit Kakum National Park, 357 sq. km of protected rainforest which we explore from a monkey's view point on the 40m high canopy walkway! We have a talk about deforestation and the important role national parks and tourism play in helping to protect the forests. Late afternoon, we head to the beach to relax and enjoy the sunset. Meals: BLD

Day 5: Fish Market, Slave Trade Castles, Drumming workshop

After breakfast we head to an amazing fish market and then onto St George's Castle in Elmina. Built by the Portuguese in 1482, this is the oldest European building in existence below the Sahara. There will be a talk regarding the history of the castle, in particular the role it played in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. For some being locked in the cells and hearing the dreadful stories is sure to be an emotional experience. In the late afternoon, once back at camp, we are met by Rasta Kobi who will lead us in a drumming and dance workshop on the beach as the sun sets over the ocean. Ghana has certainly got the beat, we will hear music wherever we go, and this workshop gives us the opportunity to learn some of the traditional drum and dance rhythms. Meals: BLD

Day 6: Kumasi-Armed Forces & Cultural museum

Today we'll have early start as we head north on our journey to Kumasi, Ghana's second largest city and capital of the Ashanti Region. Once we settle at the guesthouse we'll head into Kumasi town - visiting the Cultural museum learning about the history of the Ashanti Kingdom. We'll also have a tour of the Armed force museum and spend the evening relaxing and watching movies at the guesthouse. Meals: BLD

Day 7: Kuapa Kokoo Fair trade Farm and Kejetia Market

In the morning, we will visit Kuapa Kokoo Co-operative farm and help harvest cocoa fruits and learn about how cocoa beans are processed and shipped abroad for the production of chocolate. This is where chocolate starts and we will witness that in buying Fair Trade products we are supporting the improvement of working conditions, the banning of child labour and ensuring women's voices are being heard in decision making process. In the afternoon, we will go shopping in the biggest and crowded market in Ghana-Kejetia market. We will spend the evening relaxing and re-packing for our journey tomorrow.

Meals: BLD

Day 8: Travel to Lake Volta region

We will leave Kumasi and head east to the Volta Region which is a lush forested area situated between the Lake Volta and Togo. The Volta River and the impressive hydro-electric dam creates much of Ghana's power. Lake Volta was at the time of creation the world's largest man-made lake.

Meals: BLD

Day 9: Tafi Atome monkey sanctuary, Tafi Abrife Kente Village, Mount Gemi

In the morning we visit Tafi Atome village which offers the opportunity to get close to wild Mona monkeys and feed them with bananas. The local community believe the monkeys are messengers from God and therefore should be treated as sacred. From here, we head out to the Kente village and learn about the history of Kente cloth, its significance and also practice some Kente weaving skills. We might get the chance to help make the locally specialty – doughnuts – and, of course, it would be rude not to try some as well! After lunch we drive up to the highest settlement in Ghana-Gemi and enjoy the cold and cloudy temperature.

Meals: BLD

Day 10: Fairtrade banana co-operative, bead making

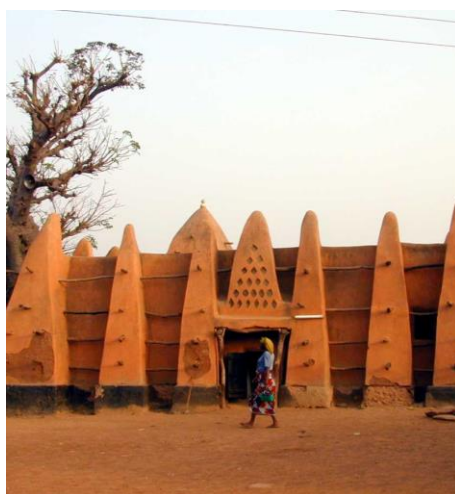
In the morning we will visit a Fairtrade banana co-operative which sells their produce to M&S in the UK. From here we make our way through the Shai Hills to see the Baboons and the beautiful landscapes. We will stop along the way at Krobo, the bead capital of Ghana. We will visit a fair trade bead assembly site to see how these traditional beads are made from recycled glass and then made into necklaces worn by all Ghanaian women around their waist. We will depart in plenty of time to reach Accra airport for our evening flight departure.

Meals: BLD

Day 11: Arrive UK

After an overnight flight, we arrive back into the UK, no doubt tired, but also full of West African joy.

Meals:



Adventure Grading

We grade all our trips so teachers, school leaders, students and parents can gauge whether it is appropriate to their requirements and objectives. Grade 1 is the easiest / least challenging. Grade 5 is the most challenging. We have given this trip the following gradings:

Physical: Grade 2: Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

Culture Shock: Grade 4: Students joining trips at this level will find the comforts of home are more of a rarity – or viewed another way, a welcome luxury. English is unlikely to be widely spoken and the food will be quite different to home, perhaps for extended sections of the trip. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty and accommodation in some locations is likely to be basic. Whilst a challenge, destinations and trips at cultural level 4 are also a fantastic opportunity to see a very different part of the world.

Minimum Age

We recommend a minimum age of 15 years for this trip.

Meals

The majority of meals are included on our trips. Breakfasts, Lunches and Dinners for each day are shown as a BLD code on each day above. Please note the exact meal inclusions may change slightly on the first/last days depending on flight departure/arrival times.

Reality Check / Expectations

Ok, so you want to go on an adventure to Ghana? What does this *actually* involve? What expectations should you have? It's very difficult for us to give an accurate description in advance of what you will experience on this trip. That is, after all, the whole reason why we run these trips – some things you can only understand when you experience them in person, outside of the classroom, immersed in another culture. Below we give a few home truths about your trip. Some of them may sound 'harsh', but we want you to be fully informed and remember, a little discomfort here and there is a small price to pay to experience the amazing opportunities available on this adventure. Standards of accommodation, transport, service provision, healthcare, hygiene and emergency response are, generally, not as high as in the UK. Flexibility and patience on the part of the traveller is important, so too is your understanding of this as a parent or guardian.

Accommodation

Accommodation standards on our adventures vary from country to country. Don't expect to turn up to towels folded into swans and a neat triangle fold at the end of your toilet roll. Sometimes we have quite good accommodation. Sometimes shared rooming is exactly what it means, you could be sharing cramped rooms in bunkbeds. You could be travelling on an overnight train where the 'walls' are curtains. At the lower end of accommodation, your bed may just be a mattress on the floor in a basic guesthouse or a hammock in the jungle. Washing facilities may be basic with limited showers and squat toilets. It all adds to the experience though, and is part and parcel of travelling in low income countries.

Accommodation types used on this trip includes:

Overnight Flight: We use good quality airlines for our international flights. Most, if

not all, have in-seat entertainment and good food / refreshments.

Simple Hotel / Guest House: You should expect simple but clean rooms, sometimes en-suite, but some will have shared facilities. Rooms will often hold two to four beds, occasionally more. Guest houses are often less formal than hotels but that often comes with more character, a welcoming host family and/or unique features.

Hostel: Simple backpacker type accommodation, often with multi-share dorm accommodation and shared facilities.

Fixed Camp with Facilities: Expect to sleep in either fixed multi-share tents or two or three person tents set up specifically for you group. Facilities are likely to include toilets (possibly of the squat type) and showers possibly with additional communal buildings for eating and gathering.

Environment & Place

The environment can be the biggest challenge on an expedition. The locals are used to it, but to you it will be an alien environment and you will have to learn to adapt. This may be a struggle initially, and be uncomfortable for a few days, but give it time and you'll soon get used to it. Learn to look through any initial discomfort and look around at where you are and what you're experiencing. The environments you'll encounter on this trip include:

Tropical: Anywhere in the tropics can be nice and sunny one minute, then very, very wet the next. It will still be warm so the rain is often welcome, but you should come prepared to get wet, so make sure your kit is well waterproofed. The reason you are here is because of the lush and beautiful scenery. You'll soon discover how it gets like that! There may be quite a few bugs about too!

Poverty: Poverty in the UK is very much in existence, but it's usually masked by clean streets, good infrastructure and a temperate climate. When you visit many of our destinations poverty has a completely different look and feel: discarded rubbish, animal (or human) waste, stagnant water, poorly maintained roads and pavements and basic housing. Add in barefooted children in often dirty clothes and you will soon understand what we mean. Experiencing this can be unpleasant as you would never wish this upon anyone, but we live in the real world and sometimes the real world isn't pretty. Our trips are designed to open your eyes to all aspects of your

destination.

Malaria: Your trip travels to an area of 'high' malarial risk. On the advice of our Medical Advisor, STC Expeditions has a policy that all participants must take anti-malarial prophylaxis if you wish to travel on this trip. Our specialist Medical Advisor will provide vaccination and malarial advice helping you decide on which medication to source from your GP or travel clinic prior to travel. STC Expeditions reserve the right to refuse travel to those not taking anti-malarials.

Modes of Travel

Transport on this trip will be by:

Bus / Coach: We use good quality, privately owned buses. We do not use public buses. All buses have seat belts and been safety checked to at least minimum local standards, if not western standards. All drivers are known to and trusted by our local partners in country and have their driving hours limited in line with EU rules.

4x4: 4x4s enable us to access more remote and hard to reach places such as national parks and out of the way villages. We only use them when necessary, so if they form part of your itinerary then expect 'roads' that are really just dirt tracks. In some places in Africa we go where there are no roads!

Trip Cost and Group Size

Our price to the school for this trip is **£2,795.00 - £2,995.00 per person, dependant on group size.**

We aim for our tours and expeditions to be essentially fully inclusive. There are, however, some things we can't include in our price to the school – please see the 'What's not included' section below.

We price our trips based on different group sizes and price 'breaks'. The above price is subject to a minimum of 15 paying participants to make the trip viable at this price.

What's included?

The following is included in the price to the school:

- International airfares and pre-paying taxes
- All accommodation, activities, entrance fees and transportation as



per itinerary, unless marked 'optional'.

- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC Tour/Expedition Leader whilst in Ghana with further local guides at sites as required
- Pre-travel training programme as detailed
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency, Repatriation and Cancellation Travel Insurance (see below)
- Group First Aid Kit & Medications Pack
- 24-hour emergency response and management
- All pre-departure services including BS8848 safety management, risk assessments, planning fees (£200pp) and final travel documentation.
- Carbon Mitigation of flights for the whole group.

What's not included?

Our price to the school does not include the following, which the school may have added an additional fee for:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinking water & soft drinks (we discourage the use of single-use plastic water bottles and will be giving advice on filter bottles and the purification of water)
- Visas if required (see country information for more details)
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money – to cover souvenirs, postage, snacks, drinks, optional activities/entrance fees
- Airport departure taxes to be paid locally (if required)
- Tips for guides, drivers and support staff: (we suggest allowing £40 per person for this trip).

Country Information

Full Country Name: The Republic of Ghana

Area: 238,538 sq. km

Population: 32.1 million (2023)

Capital City: Accra

People: Ethnic groups include the Akan, Mossi, Ewe, Fante, and Hausa.

Language(s): Ghana is a multilingual country in which about eighty languages are spoken. Of these, English, which was inherited from the colonial era, is the official language and lingua franca. Of the languages indigenous to Ghana, Akan is the most widely spoken. Ghana has more than seventy tribal groups, each with its own distinct language. However, languages that belong to the same ethnic group are usually mutually intelligible.

The Dagbanli and Mampelle languages of Northern Region for instance, are mutually intelligible with the Frafra and Waali languages of the Upper East Region of Ghana. These four languages are of Mole-Dagbani ethnicity. Eleven languages have the status of government-sponsored languages: four Akan ethnic languages (Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Mfantse and Nzema) and two Mole-Dagbani ethnic languages (Dagaare and Dagbanli). The rest are Ewe, Dangme, Ga, Gonja, and Kasem.

Religion(s): Mainly Christian and Muslim, although there are many traditional beliefs as well.

Time: GMT

Country overview

Hailed as West Africa's golden child, Ghana deserves its place in the sun. One of Africa's great success stories, the country is reaping the benefits of a stable democracy in the form of fast-paced development. With its welcoming beaches, gorgeous hinterland, rich culture, vibrant cities, diverse wildlife, easy transport and affable inhabitants, it's easy to come here for a week or a month, but no trip can be complete without a visit to the coastal forts; poignant reminders of a page in history that defined our modern world. Travel north and you'll feel like you've arrived in a different country, with a different religion, geography and cultural practices. The beauty is that this diversity

exists so harmoniously, a joy to experience and a wonder to behold.

Geography

Ghana is about the size of the UK and encompasses plains, low hills, rivers, Lake Volta, the world's largest artificial lake, Dodi Island and Bobowasi Island on the south Atlantic Ocean coast of Ghana. Ghana can be divided into four different geographical ecoregions; the coastline is mostly a low, sandy shore backed by plains and scrub and intersected by several rivers and streams while the northern part of Ghana features high plains south-west and south-central Ghana is made up of a forested plateau region consisting of the Ashanti uplands and the Kwahu Plateau; the hilly Akwapim-Togo ranges are found along Ghana's eastern international border. The land borders with three countries: Burkina Faso to the north, Ivory Coast to the west, and Togo to the east. To the south are the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean.

Climate

Ghana is typically tropical and strongly influenced by the West Africa monsoon winds. The climate is generally hot and humid, although there are regional variations. In the south there are two main rainy seasons, running from March to July and September to November. In the north the gap between these two seasons blurs, resulting in one rainy season that starts in March and continues until September. Between December and March the north is affected by the Harmattan, a dry desert wind which lessens the humidity and cools the night, but increases the heat during the day. For more detailed information on climate, please visit the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) website on following link:

<http://worldweather.wmo.int/en/country.html?countryCode=GHA>

Cultural considerations

Ghanaians should always be addressed by their formal titles unless they specifically



request otherwise. Handshaking is the usual form of greeting, sometimes with finger click at the end. It is customary in much of West Africa not to use the left hand for touching food. Respect local traditions, customs, laws and religions at all times and be aware of your actions to ensure that they don't offend, especially if you intend to visit religious areas. For more information see <http://www.guide.culturecrossing.net>

Regulations: Red Tape

A full passport, valid for 6 months after your return date as well as a visa is required for travel to Ghana.

For non British passport holders, we recommend you check visa requirements as soon as possible. Information can be found on <https://travcours-vls.com/> and <https://visacentral.co.uk/>.

Foreign Office Advice

You should familiarise yourself with up to date foreign office advice for travel to Ghana. This is available on their website: <http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ghana> and contains useful information regarding safety and security, health and entry requirements.

Health & Vaccine Information:

Shortly after booking, all our groups receive a trip specific health and vaccination briefing letter from our medical advisor. If you want to look up the latest health advice and recommended vaccinations for your destination prior to booking, please visit the TravelHealthPro

country specific website on the following link:

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/89/ghana>

Venture Provider

STC Expeditions is the venture provider for this trip (as defined in British Standard BS8848), holding overall responsibility for safety and operations.

Leader Team

The Leader team for this expedition will be made up of:

STC Leader: An experienced tour/expedition leader will accompany the group when in country. By using leaders from your destination, we ensure our clients get the best possible in-country experience. Students and teachers regularly tell us that our leaders are a vital part of the success of our trips, providing an invaluable insight into local customs, history, flora, fauna, geography, politics and much more. They also have detailed knowledge of the local environmental and safety issues that groups could potentially incur and are thoroughly trained by us in their responsibilities and emergency procedures. The STC Leader has overall responsibility for directing the logistics of the trip and ensuring the safety of each and every person participating.

As a minimum requirement, all STC Leaders must:

- Be over 25 years of age
- Have at least three years' experience leading relevant trips in the destination
- Have suitable professional qualifications (e.g. mountain guide qualifications, tour leader certificates), as applicable to the trip.
- Hold an in-date, appropriate first aid certificate.
- Have clear police/background checks and references to the fullest extent available in the destination.
- Have attended an STC Leader training day and been selected by STC UK staff as being appropriate to work with our groups.

School Leader Team: This is made up of a minimum of two teachers, one of each gender (if a mixed group). The school leader

team support the STC Leader in aspects of pastoral care issues of participants and the implementation of school policies and appropriate guidelines.

Pre-departure information

In the build up to your trip, we will be providing detailed information and training sessions to enable participants to plan and prepare as thoroughly as possible for this trip. This information will include advice on:

- Confirmed travel arrangements
- Health & hygiene advice
- A comprehensive kit list
- Culture & history of your destination
- Sources of further information about your destination
- Passport and visa requirements
- Trip specific vaccination and medical advice from Travel Health Consultancy Ltd.
- Money matters including, if appropriate to your trip, fundraising ideas and entrepreneurial schemes
- Language – basic phrases
- Expected fitness requirements (a training programme will be available on your booking page)
- Roles, responsibilities and expectations of participants
- Responsible tourism advice and suggestions
- Code of conduct
- What to do in an emergency and emergency contact information

Pre-travel meetings/training

Preparing students for their upcoming adventure is a vital part of safety management and an opportunity to teach important life skills. The training given to students prior to this adventure is made up of the following:

Three to six months prior to travel, we deliver an Ethical Travel Workshop for the students and teaches, followed by a parent and student pre-departure information evening.

Session 1: Responsible Tourism and Ethical Travel

We start our afternoon / evening of training with a session of approximately 1 hr 30 mins on the ethics of travel, responsible tourism and group communications / dynamics. The session is delivered through a mix of games, debates, discussion and workshops. Topics include:

- Water usage
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering
- Positive and negative impacts of travel

Session 2: Health & Hygiene, Safety, Kit and more

This session is for parents and students and involves a pre-trip information evening. At this evening we cover the following elements:

- Passports and visas
- Safety approach and attitude
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Personal safety
- Specific hazards related to your itinerary e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Packing and kit

How to book

To confirm your place on this adventure, you need to do the following:

1) Complete an STC Expeditions online booking form:

This collects personal contact details, next of kin, passport and medical information. If under 18 years of age, this form MUST be signed by a parent or guardian AND the student travelling. It is important that the booking form is completed in a prompt timeframe to enable our medical advisor to give initial clearance for all participants wanting to join the trip. Should we have any questions regarding medical conditions, we will contact the parent/guardian for more information.

To complete our booking form, go to www.thestc.co.uk, click on "Login" and then "Create an account". Follow the instructions on screen to set up your user account. **[Please make a note of the username/email used – see below]** Then, when prompted to enter a booking reference, use the code: **2026-07-shsb-ghana**

Your username: The username/email (and associated password) used to set up your account above provides on-going access to our portal. You will need this to log back in to our system at various points in the build up to your trip. You will be able to view any trip documentation online (e.g. kit lists and pre-departure information) in the run up to departure.

In addition, should any of your personal details change (e.g. a passport needs renewing or you need to update your medical information) you can log back in and change the details on our secure site.

**** The deadline for completing our booking form is: 30/04/2025 ****

If we do not receive your completed application form by this date a late booking fee of £50 may be applied due to additional administration work on our behalf.

2) Pay a deposit to school:

The deposit for this trip is £400 made up of two payments of £200. Please refer to the letter from school for details of this. Deposits should be payable to the school please, NOT to STC Expeditions.

Safety & Attitude to Risk

Safety is our number one priority and we take the welfare of our clients and those who work on our trips extremely seriously. We have comprehensive safety management systems in place, including areas detailed below. If you would like to know more, please ask for a copy of our Safety Management System.

British Standard 8848:2014: All trips and expeditions provided by STC Expeditions conform to British Standard 8848:2014 (a specification for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom) as declared by The Young Explorers' Trust on the basis of the operating procedures and safety management systems evidenced on 20th January 2020 and a sample of ventures examined to the year-end 2019.

Trip selection: Each journey and expedition has been tailor-made and researched with school groups in mind.

Leaders: Each trip is accompanied by a full time professional leader, trained in first aid, critical incident management and the complex art of managing logistics.

Risk Assessment: Country and itinerary specific risk assessments are provided prior to departure. In addition, your leader has the training to dynamically risk assess your journey when on the road. Group management risk assessments are provided to assist lead teachers. Copies of risk assessments are available to all

stakeholders and can be obtained by contacting STC Expeditions on 01392 660056.

Water activities: On all our trips there may be opportunities to swim and whilst we cannot guarantee that there will be lifeguards on duty in all locations, any swimming or water activity is covered under our safety management system. Swimming capability of each participant is asked on our booking form and specific permission sort from parents/guardians as to whether participants are allowed to swim in certain locations (e.g. swimming in inland lakes and rivers, the sea, swimming pools).

Third Party Providers: On all our trips and expeditions, we use one or more third party providers in your destination to deliver certain services, including accommodation, transport and specialist activities such as trekking and white-water rafting (if applicable to your trip). All these providers are pre-checked by us in line with our Safety Management System and Standard Operating Procedures.

Crisis response: 24-hour emergency back-up and critical incident support is on hand in the unlikely event of an incident whilst overseas.

Communication: Each group carries satellite, radio and/or mobile communications as your itinerary and terrain demands, ensuring communication is possible in all situations.

Accommodation & transport: All accommodation and transport are risk assessed and checked by local operations teams. Minimum requirements for vehicle standards and driver hours are enforced through contractual agreements with our in-country partners.

Insurance: £5,000,000 public liability insurance is in place and personal travel insurance covering cancellation, medical treatment and emergency repatriation is included for all those travelling.

Pre-travel screening: All travellers are medically screened by our independent medical advisor to ensure they are fit and healthy to undertake your chosen journey.

Covid: We have updated all our operational guidelines to take account of Covid and ensure our groups are as protected as possible whilst overseas. Please contact us if you would like to see

a copy of our Covid related risk assessment. Please note: an increasing number of countries now require evidence of covid vaccination on entry. Covid vaccination requirements may change or be brought in at short notice. It is the responsibility of the traveller to ensure they are up to date with the necessary vaccination requirements in order to gain entry into the destination.

Travel Advice: All tours and expeditions are run within The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advice. FCDO advice is monitored daily and tour operators have the resources to react quickly should that advice change.

Pre-trip training: Students and staff are given the necessary training and skills to safely undertake each journey. Some of this training is provided by us, some by external companies as necessary.

Evacuation: We have an emergency evacuation plan in place for each day of the trip, detailing the nearest medical facilities and places of assistance. Whilst helicopter evacuation is theoretically possible in Ghana, in reality it is often quicker to evacuate casualties by minibus or ambulance. The estimated evacuation time from the most remote point on this trip to a good standard hospital may be in the region of 4 hours or longer, as the actual evacuation time may be affected by outside factors such as: weather, daylight hours, severity of incident, groups fitness levels, resources available and ground conditions. If you would like to see a copy of our emergency evacuation plan then please get in touch.

Malaria: This trip goes to a malarial area. Advice and training will be given re bite avoidance and our medical advisor will be writing to the group in good time prior to departure to recommend suitable prophylaxis malaria tablets. If you would like to know more about this in advance, please see the Health & Vaccine Information' link in the above Country Information section.

Declaration of Risk: Ventures that include adventurous activities involve exposure to accepted elements of risk, challenge and adventure greater than those normally encountered in everyday life. Whilst such activities provided by STC Expeditions are subject to exacting safety management processes, it cannot be guaranteed that all

possibility of resultant injury to participants, or others, is eliminated.

Travel Insurance

We have arranged specialist cancellation, medical and repatriation insurance for all our clients. This includes cover for all activities featured as part of your trip. Full details of cover and conditions is available upon request. The example cover and limits shown below apply to each Insured Person. This policy is primarily to cover emergencies overseas and cancellation. It does not include cover for personal possessions – it is an individual's responsibility to insure possessions when travelling with us, if required. Medical and repatriation cover is included for pre-existing medical conditions declared to us on our booking form and notified to your GP or specialist. Failure to notify your GP or specialist may invalidate any claim relating to that condition. Please note some mental health conditions are not covered, we will contact you with more information, if necessary. Cover for trip cancellation is provided but does not include pre-existing medical conditions. If you require this, you should take out a separate policy.

Overview of Sums Insured

24 hr Emergency Medical, Repatriation:

Up to £5,000,000 with an excess of £75*

Personal Liability: Up to £2,000,000

Personal Accident: Up to £25,000

**for Nepal, the excess is the first £500 of each and every helicopter repatriation.*

Please Note: Any medical expenses incurred overseas if travelling against medical advice, or to obtain medical treatment, or after a terminal prognosis has been made will be excluded from cover whilst travelling overseas. Any medical expenses not verified by a medical report are also excluded.

Travel insurance defines pre-existing medical conditions as follows:

a) Any respiratory condition (relating to the lungs or breathing), heart condition, stroke, Crohn's disease, epilepsy, allergy, cancer, psychiatric or psychological condition (including anxiety, stress, self harm and depression) for which you have received treatment (including surgery, test, or investigations by your doctor or a consultant / specialist or prescribed medication) in the last five years.

b) Any medical condition for which you have received surgery, in-patient treatment or investigations in a hospital or clinic within the last 12 months, or are prescribed medication.

Responsible Tourism

We are the leading UK expedition company in responsible travel. Our ethos is to educate the next generation of responsible world travellers. You can rest assured any adventure planned with us will be sustainable and ethical.

Here are just a few examples which prove we practice what we preach:

- We partner with Scottish rewilding charity Trees for Life www.treesforlife.org.uk and have committed to plant a tree for every person that travels with us.
- Eco Car Club for staff travel
- Employing and training tour/expedition leaders from your destination
- Responsible tourism training to in country staff and within UK schools to students and teachers alike
- Policy against elephant riding and other unethical wildlife activities
- Fairtrade farm visits in our itineraries and use of Fairtrade coffee and tea in the office
- Culturally sensitive itineraries and Women's Perspective opportunities
- Global Environmental Clean Up project for groups to improve polluted coastal or inland areas in their destination

Carbon Impact of This Trip

The estimated amount of carbon created by this trip is 1,819kg CO₂e per person. We estimate emissions at this stage due to unconfirmed group sizes and potential changes to flight itineraries and airlines. We will recalculate your emission once we have booked your flights. If you would like more information please give us a call to discuss or go to:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/carbon-labels/>.

Payment Plan

In line with our Booking Conditions, the following is our standard payment plan for most trips, but please refer to the school letter detailing the specific costs and payment schedule for this particular trip.

- A deposit of £400, usually split into two payments of £200 about two months apart.
- 30% of the trip costs are to be paid by 360 days prior to departure.
- 50% of the trip costs are to be paid by 180 days prior to departure.
- 80% of the trip costs are to be paid by 120 days prior to departure.
- 100% of the trip costs are to be paid by 75 days prior to departure.

Financial Protection

All the flight inclusive tours and expeditions offered by STC Expeditions are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. Our ATOL license number is 11054. On booking, the school will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the CAA website for more details on the ATOL Certificate: <https://www.caa.co.uk/ATOL-protection/Consumers/About-ATOL/>



Paying your Way

We strongly believe that students need their parents' permission to go on these adventures – but not necessarily their money! Students can consider paying their own way towards the trip and will find advice in our 'Stashing the Cash' fundraising guide on the online portal. In our experience, students come up with the best and most entrepreneurial ideas which look great on their CV or potential university applications. Examples could include getting a Saturday job, babysitting or tutoring.

Booking Conditions

By booking a place on the trip, you confirm that you accept our booking conditions which can be found on our website at the following address:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/assets/uploads/general/The-STC-Group-Terms-and-Conditions-v8.pdf>

Privacy & Data Collection

As part of a booking, we need to collect a variety of personal details, including sensitive personal information, in order to fulfil our obligations as a tour operator and to ensure the safety of all participants. We have comprehensive data security

procedures in place and process data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR). We will not sell, distribute or lease your personal information to third parties unless we are required by law to do so.

For more details on how we process data, please visit our website:
<https://www.thestc.co.uk/privacy/>

Relationship with the School

When we run an overseas trip for a school we contract with the school for the delivery of the travel arrangements and any pre-trip programme. We also contract directly with the parents/guardians through our terms and conditions which govern responsibilities of both parties, cancellation policies, changes and liability. Therefore, in terms of health and safety, we work in partnership with the school's Senior Management and/or Head Teacher. This means that we also work with the school's Operating Authority, (if applicable) meaning the trip is signed off by an external body.

How to contact us

We love to talk travel. If you have any questions about this information or want to know more about us as a company then you can find us here:

STC Expeditions
Unit 6B, King St Business Centre
Exeter
EX1 1BH

Or telephone via: 01392 660056
For email: schools@thestc.co.uk
And Web: www.thestc.co.uk

Ghana

