

Bloxwich Academy

A group of students from Bloxwich Academy (Walsall, West Midlands) stayed at Cohort Hostel in July 2016 as part of their school's activity week. Students were aged 11 – 14.

The remit

Bloxwich Academy participates in an activity week during the last week of the summer term. Staff members were asked to propose a week-long programme of activities and provide provisional costing so the trip could be posed to the pupils and their parents; the St Ives trip was a clear winner.

Bloxwich wanted staff to propose ambitious ideas [for activities week] which played to the school's strengths, as well as the interests of staff and pupils.

Sophie Lester, Head of Art & Sport at Bloxwich Academy submitted the proposal to come to St Ives which topped a Newquay suggestion due to the arts element – a dimension not offered by other Cornish destinations. She felt there were a great variety of activities available and that it was a safe and secure place where both students and teachers could relax.

Cost

The entire trip cost each student £300; this included transport, accommodation, all food, art activities, surfing lessons, entertainment, cinema, etc.

Activities

The following activities were undertaken by the group: Ghost Walk, Barbara Hepworth Museum, 2 Surfing Lessons, a Big Beach Day (games, swimming, etc.), trips to Lands End and St Michael's Mount, a Sketching Challenge, Cinema, meal in a local restaurant and a Coastal Walk – it was an action packed few days.

The best thing about the trip

The teachers were very impressed by St Ives Surf School as it gave them a sense of being taught rather than being the ones teaching, they found the instructors excellent and engaging.

The pupils enjoyed the independence they experienced whilst staying in the accommodation, the opportunity to organise themselves and their belongings. They also loved the surfing, beach activities and art tasks.

Meeting objectives

Bloxwich Academy pupils live in a deprived area of the UK and benefited greatly from the cultural experience they had in St Ives. Staying at Cohort gave them a sense of independence and the diverse mix of activities from ghost walk to surf lessons to sketching guaranteed a well-rounded activities week.