

## **BLUE PETER, THE SEA SCHOOL – GOLD DofE PRACTICE JOURNEY**

### **SILKWOOD STUDENT TESTIMONIALS:**

Before I left for the Duke of Edinburgh trip, I was very curious about what was ahead for the next four days. Packing my bag with the essential items required for a sailing trip, I had no idea whether there were going to be toilets or showers, whether there would be cooking facilities during the day time, what the weather was going to be like & most importantly of all, where would I be sleeping - on a boat, beach or on land. All these questions floating around in my mind were answered shortly after arriving at the Victoria Point Volunteer Marine Rescue headquarters. Finally, I could relax and begin to enjoy the journey ahead. I had anticipated many new opportunities in the days to come and that's exactly what I got. Transitioning from having limited sailing knowledge to being capable of sailing a 16 ft. vessel within 4 days, was remarkable to me. Having the opportunity to sail really excited me and ignited my passion to sail more often. The Sea School instructors were very patient, wise, caring & thoughtful. They were very knowledgeable and in each theory session you could sense their passion and love for sailing. This made the camp an all-round great experience and created some lifelong skills and memories for me.

(Bianca Deacon – Age 16)

Over the past four days, I've learnt how to sail and sea kayak whilst gaining many valuable skills and knowledge through the Blue Peter Sea School. As a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award participant, my previous journeys have been based around bushwalking, so being able to switch things up to sea-based activities for my Gold Adventurous Journeying has been incredible! The team of skippers – Jono, Rob, Bob and Em are not only inspiring leaders but beautiful souls too; always expressing positive attitudes and making us smile. They each have their different areas they specialise in, including sailing and sea-kayaking and we learnt so much from them throughout the journey to increase our skillset and experience in travelling by sea and camping on islands. Through the guidance of our leaders, I can now say that I am equipped and prepared with the skills and knowledge required to take on the qualifying journey. Thanks to all the team at the Sea School and see you soon!

(Waimarie Brand – Age 17)

After working with the leaders/Skippers from The Sea school I have gained many skills involved with sailing, knot tying, sea kayaking and most importantly teamwork. I have met an inspiring group of hard-working and extraordinary people, all with their own story to tell. I've also learnt a great deal about what good seaman-ship is and how I apply that in my own life. This is definitely a journey I will never forget and cannot wait for my next adventure and the challenges that come with planning for a qualifying journey. I hope other people can experience what I did with The Sea School. I wouldn't change a thing.

(Flynn Dempsey – Age 17)

Over the years I've sailed a couple of times but nothing as thrilling and exciting as this. To be surrounded by amazing mentors full of knowledge and zest for sailing, sea kayaking and the outdoors made the experience one of the best I've had so far! I'm super excited to continue my adventurous journeying with the Sea School and doing my Duke of Edinburgh Gold qualifying journey soon.

(Jack Hamblyn – Age 17)

A challenging four-day camping trip that gave us new experiences, new and interesting people supporting you throughout the whole journey, while still leaving us time to be our own self and make our own decisions. We were kept busy with our skill development and learned about various places, local traditions, and nautical signs and information during the camp. What makes this Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award practicing journey so unique is that we could make this our own camp in terms of what we wanted to get out of it. The more experienced people there gave us suggestions, but it was all down to us in the end, which combined with a great crew makes the whole experience great for people with plentiful knowledge, or next to none. If you don't have any mates to come with you, the people you do get to meet add heaps of life into this experience.

(Ty Roberts – Age 16)

The Blue Peter Sea School ran a great Duke of Edinburgh adventurous journey expedition. The team leaders were all positive and helped us find our adventurous spirit. Jono and the other supervisors were great leaders in this camp and helped us to find and channel our adventurous spirit and step up as leaders. They taught us many new skills, challenged us and kept it fun at all stages of the journey. I have never sailed before but thanks to the wonderful guidance and support from the Blue Peter crew, I was able to understand how to operate different roles in sailing a boat and paddling techniques in a sea-kayak group. It was an eye-opening experience and I would definitely recommend this type of expedition to people wanting to gain lots of knowledge about sailing and sea kayaking in the ocean.

(Ethan Sunderland – Age 17)

The Sea School was great it helped us as students to come out of our shell and take adventure by the scruff of its neck and make the most of being out on the ocean, learning how to sail and sea kayak, camping at islands in the Moreton Bay along the way. Jono and the other leaders were extremely knowledgeable and guided us through everything we needed help with and better lead key aspects of the expedition ourselves, as required for the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Adventurous Journey. It was an amazing experience and thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of the Sea School crew.

(Fraser Kemp – Age 17)

Our Duke of Edinburgh Gold practicing adventurous journey, hosted by the Blue Peter Sea School was an amazing expedition to be involved with. Throughout the period of four days we learnt how to sail, sea kayak, develop our camping skills and connect with a range of like-minded, motivated people. The crew were incredibly helpful, supportive and ensure the experience was lots of fun. We learnt the skills required to lead out on our qualifying journey and how to ensure that all activities had a plan B if need be, especially when considering weather conditions and tides. I thoroughly enjoyed this expedition and would recommended it to anyone completing their DofE or looking for a few days of ocean exploration, filled with adventure, learning and most of all fun!

(Kalila Purtle – Age 17)

Think Outside...no box required! Had a marvellous time travelling with our first-ever Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award students on their practice adventurous journey by sea. Anna and I accompanied eight Silkwood students to join other DofE students and trainee skippers on a 4-day sailing and sea kayaking expedition in the Moreton Bay (Quandamooka Country)

region with Blue Peter Sea School. Conditions were variable and challenging, which made the expedition exciting and full of learning opportunities supported by the friendly, well-equipped Blue Peter leaders. Our first camp site was Coochiemudlo Island and then we ventured to Blakesleys Slip on North Stradbroke to set up camp for 2 nights. We sailed/kayaked around Karragarra Island and back to Victoria Point on our last day. The positive attitude and energy was fantastic and all the young folk were keen to be out in nature, exploring and meeting new people along the way. They loved having to think for themselves, be in charge of their groups and take responsibility for key decisions. Anna and I were chuffed to see how competent our students are with communicating, camping, team work and learning new skills. Outdoor Adventurous Learning is amazing for personal development to build capacity, confidence, relationships and resilience. Thanks to Jono and crew for providing us the opportunity to adventure by sea.

(Kalindi Brennan – Duke of Edinburgh Award Unit Leader)