

ENRICHMENT AT TESTWOOD

Rona Sailing Project with Olivia Inspires Voyage May 2024

In May, a group of Year 10 boys plus Mrs Long and Mr Booker embarked on a five-day, four-night yacht voyage with the Rona Sailing Project aboard the "Donald Searle" to Weymouth, Poole and Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight.

The boys completed sail training, played games, cooked for nearly 20 people and learned to work as a team. Highlights of the trip included an overnight sailing to Weymouth and welcoming an ITV Meridian film crew aboard in the Solent! The boys had a great time and were a credit to the school. Alfie and Dainton were even interviewed for Meridian Tonight!

Monday 6th May: After boarding the Donald Searle at Universal Marina in Hamble, we sailed on to Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, where we anchored out at sea for a few hours ready for a night sailing to Weymouth.

Tuesday 7th May: We left Yarmouth at midnight to sail on to Weymouth in Dorset. The conditions were in our favour and although it was not anticipated that we would arrive in Weymouth until Tuesday afternoon, we had arrived in to Weymouth by 7am on a beautiful sunny morning. In the morning, there was the opportunity to learn rowing skills before we went to the beach and had free time in Weymouth in the afternoon.



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Wednesday 8th May: After leaving Weymouth in the morning, we sailed on to Poole in Dorset and learnt more sailing skills. The sea was at its choppiest on this day, and some of the crew found this more challenging than others! Many were grateful when we eventually reached dry land having moored in Poole Town Quay for the night.

Thursday 9th May: We set off from Poole in the morning and headed for Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight. Although Yarmouth is a beautiful place, Mrs Long and Mr Booker were slightly more apprehensive having experienced the scary, long, rust and seaweed-coated ladder that has to be climbed to leave the yacht in Yarmouth before! In the afternoon, the boys went with Alex and Charles from the afterguard to play games and paddle in the sea in beautiful sunshine near Fort Victoria. Once the fun was over, we had the task of cleaning the yacht ahead of our return on Friday!

Friday 10th May: We sailed on from Yarmouth in the morning to meet an ITV Meridian film crew along with Nigel Burt from Olivia Inspires. The film crew interviewed Dainton, Alfie and Mr Booker about the voyage. We then returned to Universal Marina before packing up and leaving after a terrific week of sailing.

Our thanks go out to Olivia Inspires (@oliviainspires) who provided funding for many of the students to experience this wonderful opportunity. Further details can be found here: <https://www.oliviainspires.org.uk/>

