



## **Kingswood FAQs**

### **Year 6 visit**

***Monday 15 May – Friday 19 May 2023***

Some parents alerted me to negative online reviews of 'Kingswood', the company who run the activity centre at Overstrand, Norfolk where our year 6 children will be spending a week for their residential school journey in May 2023.

I visited the centre, was taken on a tour of the site and inspected the kitchen and dormitories before speaking to two members of staff including the centre manager. The tour provided answers to many of the questions that I had, and discussion with the staff answered others. Below is a summary of the concerns raised by the online reviews, and my response follows each.

If there are additional questions that parents would like to ask, please contact me by email via the school office. If I cannot provide you with the answer, then I will contact the centre on your behalf. I will update the FAQs as and when necessary.

### **They made us swim in the cold river**

*There are no water activities at the Overstrand Centre*

### **The staff were rude to us**

*I have used Kingswood Centres for many years and have always found the staff form great relationships with the children. When I visited Overstrand, I observed a school engaged in a number of activities and saw that the staff were encouraging and kind to the children.*

### **Dirty Rooms**

*The rooms that I saw were clean. I was taken to the dormitories that will likely be used for our visit and certainly found them to be of an acceptable standard. Some reviews mentioned an unpleasant smell but I did not find this to be the case. Sticky or dirty floors were also mentioned, but again, this is certainly not reflected in what I saw.*

### **Dirty Bedding**

*A number of reviews mentioned blood on the bedding. The staff explained that if blood gets onto any bedding, then these sets of bedding are destroyed. Bed bugs are also mentioned in the reviews and I was assured that there has never been a case of these at the centre. Staff, however, are trained in what to do if this is ever a problem.*

### **Showers full of mould**

*Showers that I observed were not mouldy and cleaned to an acceptable standard.*



*The kitchen and dining room was very clean and presented attractively. I did not taste the food although I have not had a problem with Kingswood centres in the past. I spoke about the menu which seems varied and caters for allergies and intolerances as you would expect. They spoke about being very flexible.*

*The safeguarding measures that I saw were robust. I needed to make an appointment. I could not get through the gates without buzzing through to the office and being granted access. I needed to show ID. There was CCTV on the gates.*

*All rooms had windows*

*There is a maintenance team who fix problems that they are alerted to. I did not experience broken handles or locks. All facilities I saw were in good working order. I saw no rusty beds.*

Some residential visits were cancelled in the summer, but this is not unique to Kingswood. Many schools local to us had their visits cancelled with short notice by a range of companies, whilst our Kingswood visit went ahead. This was a common problem in the summer term due to shortages of staff.

In my experience of Kingswood centres, I have never found activities to be unsafe.

I was very impressed by the Overstand Centre. The centre itself is an incredible building and the surroundings are very pleasant. Most activities take place in the natural environment outside. It is a short walk to the beach where some of our activities will also be based.