

## News from



March 27, 2009

### **Teachers mix surfing and rock climbing with revision**

AN INNOVATIVE education enterprise has begun offering teenagers pioneering revision courses that combine Cornish surf and Peak District climbing with A-level revision.

**The Knowledge Gap** ([www.theknowledgegap.co.uk](http://www.theknowledgegap.co.uk)), set up by outdoor sportloving teachers Rebecca McCowen-Brown and Donald Walmsley, runs intensive revision courses aimed at boosting the confidence of GCSE and A-level students, whether sitting exams for the first time or doing re-sits.

New for this year, in what is thought to be a global first, are "extreme revision" breaks, aimed at exercising students' bodies as well as their minds.

The Knowledge Gap has teamed up with Glenn Eldridge, a former champion surf lifesaver, kayaker and all-round superhuman, who runs a surf school in Cornwall as well as sports science courses at Cornwall College, to offer sessions near Newquay with both surfboards and outrigger canoes.

Half-days of outdoor activities will be complemented by revision sessions based at a hotel.

TKG's Rebecca, a 39-year-old science teacher and keen rock climber, said: "There's plenty of evidence underlining the importance of mixing exercise and fresh air with hard work in front of your books as a way of helping pupils to learn.

"We want to ensure our students make the most of their talents with effective revision in the run-up to their A-level exams, while providing them with some fun physical exercise.

"We'll turn bored-stiff students into surfboard dudes, stop them getting tied in knots with their revision and get them roped up for some of the country's best climbing!"

The first dates are for a residential course for science A-level subjects over the weekend of April 25-26, based at the Blue Bay Hotel, overlooking Mawgan Porth Beach.

The cost for the Extreme Revision coastal course, including all instruction and equipment hire, is just £300 (excluding travel costs but including pick-up/drop-off at local railway stations).

Another innovation will give students a chance to rock climb in the Peak District with a Sheffield-based non-residential course from May 16-17, for £260.

Academic tuition and sports instruction will both be delivered by experienced and qualified tutors, alternating morning and afternoon sessions of each.

Extreme revision courses in other subjects are also being prepared.

The Knowledge Gap was set up in South Yorkshire after its founders spotted a gap

for decent revision course provision. It also offers courses tailored for teenagers making the move from GCSE to A-level, helping them with study techniques before they embark on their year 12 courses.

It runs intensive revision courses aimed at boosting the confidence of GCSE and Alevel

students, whether sitting exams for the first time or doing re-sits. KS2 & 3 classes and one-to-one tuition is also provided, as well as Saturday morning science sessions and science clubs for KS2-4.

TKG's pool of experienced, CRB-checked and highly-qualified teachers extends to about 30, with former headteachers, former and current heads of departments and examination markers among them.

Rebecca and Donald's subjects complement each other well (she's biology, he's chemistry). Each has more than a dozen years' teaching experience and a large pool of highly-qualified teachers of all subjects to draw on as tutors. Rebecca, a keen climber and mother of four (including two one-year-old twins) has been marking Alevel

biology papers for five years and tutoring in the evenings. She also has a climbing instructor's qualification and used to be outdoor education coordinator at a previous school in Cornwall.

Donald, a 49-year-old father of two girls, is a keen proponent of an approach to science teaching that engages young minds with experimental and project work. He said: "Science contains many abstract ideas that young minds often fail to grasp. My teaching style favours practical and other activities that tackle understanding head on rather than lots of book work.

"After all, what is in their heads is far more important than what is in their exercise books."

\* The Knowledge Gap can be reached via the web site [www.theknowledgegap.co.uk](http://www.theknowledgegap.co.uk), by emailing [info@theknowledgegap.co.uk](mailto:info@theknowledgegap.co.uk) or calling 0114-230-4445.