



DUKE OF EDINBURGH SKILLS TEST IN THE GREEK ISLANDS FOR AMBROSE SAILORS

Duke of Edinburgh Award students at St. Ambrose College are doing a skills test with a difference as 19 sailors fly out to the Greek Islands for a week's sailing in the sun.

Over 300 young men at the top Catholic grammar school in Hale Barns are currently enrolled on the Duke of Edinburgh programme and this year to make it even more exciting St. Ambrose has recruited four Royal Yachting Association qualified skippers to take four staff and 19 boys on four specially chartered 50 foot yachts for a week's sailing in open waters around the Saronic Gulf.



Jonathan and fellow teacher Sophie Cockcroft are pictured with St. Ambrose's young sailors on a boat they are currently refurbishing at the College.

Jonathan Leisk, who runs the College's D of E programme, but has never been sailing himself has completed with the boys a 12 week course on health and safety, navigation, basic sailing skills and rules of the water but expects quite a steep learning curve.

Jonathan, before departing for the week's sailing on April 2, said: "I expect the first couple of days to be quite tough. It's not a holiday and the boys will have to learn on board discipline, team-work and sailing skills quickly but by the end of the week we will be sailing between the islands and enjoying the open water."

He has already completed a reconnaissance trip with all anchorage stops planned and booked in advance as they will stop off at Aegina, Spetses, Hydra and Poros on their once in a life time tour.

Jonathan added: "The aim is to qualify the boys for their RYA Day Skipper Licence and give them a skill and passion for sailing to last a life time." The boats will travel around 50 miles on the open water, with the skippers, staff and boys all sleeping on board.



Jonathan added: "Our patron and founder The Duke of Edinburgh wanted to challenge young people in a way normal education cannot reach and I hope he feels this fulfils his mission."