

WINTER/SPRING TERM • FEB 2026

# KENT SCHOOLS ORIENTEERING NEWSLETTER



## South East Junior Squad Tackles the Welsh Dunes

Alison Howe, Saxons

Last November, the South East Junior Squad joined other regional squads in South Wales for an intensive and exciting training weekend on unique terrain, a fantastic opportunity for juniors to hone their technical skills.



Saturday's focus was the sprawling, technically challenging predominantly grass covered sand dunes of the Methyr Mawr peninsula. The juniors reinforced fundamental skills like map visualisation, working with contours, and perfecting compass work for efficient navigation.

The afternoon ended with a challenging race up the 'Big Dipper,' the UK's largest sand dune, providing a thrilling conclusion to the day's technical work.

As darkness fell, the focus shifted to Briton Ferry Woods for a classic night orienteering event. Navigating the steep, challenging wooded area in groups added a layer of teamwork. Everyone enjoyed the unique experience of orienteering under the cover of night despite the tricky slopes.

Sunday was race day at Kenfig Burrows, one of the UK's premier sand dune orienteering areas, offering the perfect chance to put refined skills into competitive practice. Despite the classic cold and wet Welsh November weather, competing in this special location was a real treat.

The weekend's intensive training on varied terrains proved invaluable, giving the squad a great boost before the winter competition season. The final essential activity before the journey home was a triumphant ice cream stop, a perfect celebration of a successful weekend of tough orienteering!





## Recognised Delivery Partner Scheme

Andrew Evans

Our National Governing Body, British Orienteering, supports the promotion of map based activities in schools and is keen to assist wherever possible. British Orienteering has therefore developed a Recognised Delivery Partner Scheme which aims to provide assurances to the public that the orienteering provision being offered is of good quality and safe, and that the organisations they partner with promote the sport positively to work in the best interests of the sport. ([See British Orienteering Website](#))

Within Kent, as elsewhere, our two orienteering clubs (Saxons and Dartford Orienteers) have limited resources to be able to meet all of the demand we see from schools for the mapping of school grounds, lesson development, teacher training and delivering experience days. That is where the Delivery Partners come in - The Outdoor Classroom and Cross-Curricular Orienteering. We have had direct experience of working with each of them, and can also vouch that they will deliver orienteering to pre-set quality standards as determined by British Orienteering.

## The Outdoor Classroom

Some schools use tablets for the provision of activities or want to make more use of them in the future. For these schools, The Outdoor Classroom is a free digital toolkit for orienteering and outdoor learning. Designed to inspire schools to increase their physical activity, it takes learning outside the classroom walls.

There is an innovative one-click automatic course planner which makes planning orienteering courses quick and easy. Activities are presented in a variety of formats, making it inclusive and accessible for all learning styles. The Outdoor Classroom can be used in many ways, including CPD sessions, teacher training, extra-curricular clubs and inter-school sports competitions. Each activity is logged and compiled into easy-to-read reports and dashboards, making it straightforward to evidence the impact of outdoor learning.

To find out how The Outdoor Classroom can benefit your school, here is a link to a [contact form](#) if you wish to get in touch and their [website](#) has more information.

**THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM**

**MAKE ALL LESSONS ACTIVE**

**DIGITAL ORIENTEERING FOR SCHOOLS**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



# Cross-Curricular Orienteering

For schools that do not use or plan to use tablets, Cross Curricular Orienteering has a team of qualified teachers and licensed British Orienteering coaches to support schools, providing complete mapping, installation, CPD and curriculum packages, with sequenced Orienteering in PE schemes for every year group. They are officially accredited by the Association for Physical Education (afPE).

They offer over 1,250 high-quality, physically active lessons written by qualified teachers across PE, Maths (fully aligned with the White Rose progression), English, Phonics, Science, Geography, History, PSHE, Art, Music, RE, seasonal topic days and more – giving schools access to a large collection of cross-curricular active learning resources. Alongside this, they deliver a wide range of exciting orienteering experience days and events, designed to inspire and engage pupils of all abilities and ages.

To find out how Cross Curricular Orienteering can benefit your school, here is a link to a [contact form](#) if you wish to get in touch and their [website](#) has more information.

**RECOGNISED** COLLEGE PARTNER

Qualified teacher status

**Cross-Curricular Orienteering**  
"Making learning active across the curriculum"

afPE Business Associate

**Lesson Portal**  
**1,250+ lessons!**

Maths matched to White Rose progression!

PE	Maths	English
Science	PSHE	Geography
History	Topic Days	And More!

**Control Markers**

**Staff Training**

association for **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**  
**Approved Curriculum Resource**  
2025-2027



## Upcoming Orienteering Events in Kent this Winter/Spring

For further information on upcoming events, visit [www.saxons-oc.org](http://www.saxons-oc.org) and/or [www.dfok.co.uk](http://www.dfok.co.uk).

Sat 7 Mar	Tunbridge Wells Common	Tunbridge Wells
Sat 21 Mar	Shorne Woods	Gravesend
Sat 18 Apr	Clowes Wood	Whitstable/Herne Bay
Sun 26 Apr	Kings Wood	Challock
Sat 2 May	Leyborne Lakes	West Malling
Sat 16 May	Shooters Hill	Welling
Sat 23 May	Canterbury City Race	Canterbury
Sat 30 May	Danson Park	Bexl

All of our events have courses for beginners. Guidance will be available to newcomers and novices before the start. Go around individually or as a group, pair or family.

## Permanent & Virtual Courses across Kent

You don't need to wait for an event to do some more orienteering. Try one of our permanent or virtual courses across Kent at a time that suits you - for more information visit [www.saxons-oc.org/anytime](http://www.saxons-oc.org/anytime)

**Victoria Park (Ashford) - Virtual**

**Tonbridge Castle & Haysden Country Park (Tonbridge) - Virtual**

**Capstone Country Park (Gillingham) - P / Virtual**

**Shorne Woods Country Park (nr Gravesend) - P / Virtual**

**Betteshanger Country Park (near Deal) - P / Virtual**

**High Meadow & Whinless Down (Dover) - P / Virtual**

**Mote Park (Maidstone) - P / Virtual**

**Brockhill Country Park (Near Hythe) - P / Virtual**

**Milton Creek Country Park (Sittingbourne) - P**

**Trosley Country Park (near Vigo) - P / Virtual**

**Leybourne Lakes Country Park (nr Maidstone) - P / Virtual**

**Bedgebury Pinetum - P**

**P - Permanent Course. Virtual - Virtual courses using MapRun app**

**"how to" guides  
for Virtual courses  
and how to get  
involved**



**FIND YOUR  
WAY PROJECT**



# Map Adventures: Your Students' New Superpower!

Andrew Evans

We all love the "magic blue dot" on our phones, right? It shows us exactly where we are, whether we need the nearest petrol station or a quick pizza fix. It even works on a hike, identifying that majestic peak in the distance!

So, why bother with those old-school paper maps? And why is Mountain Rescue getting busier?

## The Mountain Mystery: More Than Just a Flat Battery!

When a hiker runs into trouble, it's not always because of a forgotten jacket or a sprained ankle. We chatted with Anne Edwards, a volunteer with a Mountain Rescue team, and she shared some insights.

Most incidents happen when the weather suddenly turns sour or someone gets hurt.

Here's the thing about that amazing blue dot: It tells you "You are here!" but it doesn't always show you the safest, smartest way down. Imagine thick fog rolling in—the blue dot might point you directly towards a slippery cliff edge! Yikes!

## Paper Maps: The Unplugged Lifesaver!

This is where a paper map becomes your (and your students') secret superhero:

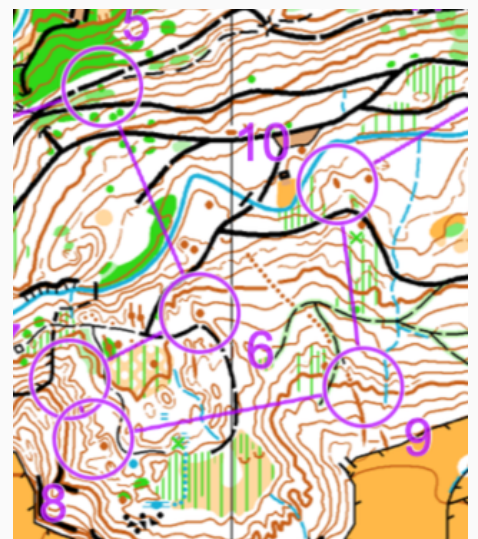
- 1. It Never Runs Out of Battery:** That map won't die on the summit of a mountain. A physical map is reliable, rain or shine.
- 2. It's the Smart Guide:** By following the map on the way up, you understand the terrain. When trouble hits, that map (and knowing how to read it!) shows you the safe, pre-planned route to avoid crags and dangers. It turns an emergency into an informed escape plan.
- 3. It Builds Super Skills:** Learning map and compass skills is a life-long confidence booster! It turns students from "blue dot followers" into real, independent explorers.

## Ready, Set, Map!

The best news is that map reading is easy and fun to teach! As noted by Ofsted, map-based activities are a fantastic element of Outdoor Adventurous Activity (OAA) that can be easily incorporated into your teaching.

Want to turn your pupils into Navigation Ninjas? Orienteering clubs are ready and waiting to team up with teachers to make learning map skills an exciting adventure!

Do you think we can help you start a map adventure? Let us know!





## Orienteering Activity: More School Activities using Markers

**Skills:** Cross Curricular learning combined with basic map skills refresher, (map orientation and thumbing the map)

**Resources:**

- Windows based computer running purple pen
- Map of your school

**The Courses:** There are two types of course from which you can run different activities.

- Line courses where the pupil has to follow a set route
- Score courses where the pupil can visit the controls in any order

First you will need to create a number of courses using different subsets of the control markers using the purple pen software, (see Autumn 25 edition for further details). These courses would then be linked to a particular word or number based activity per below. Given the number of word and number combinations on the Orienteering markers, each course can be used for several different activities.

**Word based activities:** Making Words. Easy. Most suitable as a line course exercise. Pupils follow a line course and note down the required letter on the marker to spell out a word.

Control	Question	Answer
1	4th letter	
2	3rd letter	
3	3rd letter	
4	3rd letter	
5	2nd letter	
6	3rd letter	

Question sheet on left hand side for pupils to complete.

Answer sheet for teachers on right hand side.

Control	Question	Answer	Letters at the control	Marker number on master sheet
1	4th letter	L	ONEL	64
2	3rd letter	O	MVOI	43
3	3rd letter	N	QANF	45
4	3rd letter	D	JADV	53
5	2nd letter	O	BOPM	50
6	3rd letter	N	FANH	57

**Anagrams.** Moderate. Suitable as a line or a score course. Similar to making words, but pupils must solve an anagram of the letters collected having completed the course. A clue can also be given before or after the pupils complete the course if needed. Similar question and answer sheet format as above.

**Number based activities:** There is a large variety of number activities that can be constructed. The Question and Answer Sheet will be similar to the word based activities.

- Add up all four numbers on the marker at each control? (Addition)
- What is the difference between the first and second numbers on the marker at each control?
- What is the highest single number on the markers on this course? (Memory Skills)
- What is the lowest four digit number on the markers on this course? (Number Order)
- Multiply the first and second numbers at each control? (Multiplication)
- On this course, how many number 5's are there on the markers? At which controls?

Many of the exercises will not take long to do hence there needs to be a series of maps created for any lesson with a different course and hence problem to solve.