

What is an environmental retreat and why does St. Stephen's School participate?

All students in grades three through eight participate in overnight educational trips. It is our desire for our students to learn about our environment and to understand and appreciate the beauty of nature. Having our students knowledgeable of God's workings will create a stewardship of Pennsylvania's rich outdoor resources which will last a lifetime. These trips are an integral part of our curriculum.

What is Pine Grove Furnace?

Pine Grove Furnace is an historical site that has been in existence since Revolutionary War times. It is located in Pine Grove Furnace State Park. The name comes from the actual furnace that operated on the site and produced iron. A portion of the furnace still stands today.

Our area of exploration includes the Ironmaster's Mansion, wooded areas, the Appalachian Trail, Fuller and Laurel Lakes, and picnic areas.

What and where is the Ironmaster's Mansion?

The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy has recently taken over operations of the Ironmaster's Mansion. This historic building is available for special events and as low cost lodging for hikers and groups. The Mansion is located within Pine Grove Furnace State Park near Newville on Route 233.

The large historic brick "mansion" once housed the ironmaster of the furnace industry in the area. There are male and female bunkrooms with bunks, bathrooms, showers, a dining room, and a fully equipped kitchen.



Who provides the instruction for this educational experience?

For third and fourth graders, the classroom teachers and guest resource persons provide activities on environmental topics and the history of the site.

Fifth and sixth graders receive comprehensive instruction from field educators of the King's Gap Environmental Center and other resource persons. The classroom teachers from St. Stephen's assist and accompany the group. The curriculum involves hands-on activities using the resources of the Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

What will my child need to bring on this trip?

Please see the attached list of items to be packed. We would appreciate your cooperation in keeping prohibited items at home.

Written instructions and parental permission must be given in order for medication to be given by our assigned adult.

How is transportation provided?

The bus for the 5th & 6th grades departs St. Stephen's School at 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday and returns to City Island at 4:00 p.m. on Friday. The bus for 3rd & 4th grades departs St. Stephen's School at 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday and returns to City Island at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday. Parents should arrange to pick up their children promptly at this time.

What about food?

We eat well and often! Well-balanced, child-appealing meals are provided. Ravenous mountain appetites will be satisfied. Snacks are also offered.

Please update or make the School aware of any food allergies or restrictions.

Will my children be supervised and safe?

Thanks to our teachers and many parent volunteers, our staffing is more than adequate. Students are supervised during all activities, free time, and in the bunkrooms each night. Duty schedules for teachers and parent chaperones are made prior to each trip. Students are not permitted to leave the grounds of the Ironmaster's Mansion without being accompanied by adults.

May I visit my child?

This trip is an opportunity for your child to experience independence in a carefully controlled and nurturing environment. An appropriate time to visit your child is after dinner during the campfire (6:45 p.m.). Departure prior to bedtime is requested.

Does Mother Nature affect the plans or schedule?

We go to experience nature no matter what she may be offering. Refer to the "Clothing and Equipment" list so that your child will be dressed appropriately. Modification and alternative activities are planned in case of inclement weather.

What should I expect when my child returns?

Reminder: Students are to be picked up at City Island at **4:00 p.m.** Please be prompt and appreciative of the parents and teachers who have supervised your children.

Encourage your child to talk about the benefits of this experience.

Warning: He or she may be too tired initially to respond.

Be assured that your child will be pleasantly exhausted, environmentally enriched, and eagerly awaiting the next trip.

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ALMOST ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TRIP!

This pamphlet was prepared to educate, inform and answer questions about this experience that sets our children "abuzz" at this time of year. Please feel free to contact the classroom teacher or the School Office with specific questions or concerns.