

Adventuring through the eyes of a child

Earlier last year, the Meek family made a rather radical decision. They gave up most of what they had in order to travel around the UK, homeschooling their two daughters. Their eldest daughter **Amy Meek** (12) explains more about their life-changing choice

In the summer of 2014, I think it would be safe to say my life changed. Not in a terrible world-upside down kind of way. No, it was the complete opposite. It was an exciting, once in a lifetime opportunity that I'm so lucky to have been offered.

My parents sold our house, quit their jobs as teachers and took me and my younger sister Ella out of school to embark on a year long adventure, travelling, living and learning around the UK in a caravan.

After winning the caravan in a competition (that's a different story altogether!), my parents took this as an opportunity to change our lifestyle and make the most of the valuable time that they have with me and Ella before we grow up.

It's too easy to just let days tick by and turn into weeks, which soon turn into months, which soon turn into years. We were determined not to waste the precious free time we had together. So we began our year of ed-venture, as we call it. We began our escape from the modern way of life in (possibly) the slowest getaway vehicle ever and are still loving it!

We've zigzagged from Cornwall to Inverness, passing



The Meek family on their descent of Ben Nevis, in Scotland

regularly through our hometown of Nottingham to see friends. We've visited various historical places, developed our geography and expanded our knowledge of various other subjects. Our learning is much more real – we visit the places we learn about and what we learn stays with us much longer.

Modern family

But there's a reason we call it a year of adventure – it's a blend of education and adventure. As well as learning around a location, we make time for adventure. Now, if you're expecting to read about us rock-climbing El Capitan or sailing the Pacific, you can think again. We are just a normal... well, fairly normal family striving to live life to the full.

During this year we've completed a range of adventures together: we've paddled the 60-mile long Caledonian Canal, walked the Yorkshire Three

Peaks in two days and the 100 mile Ayrshire Coastal Path, been wild-swimming in the North Sea and wild camped in Dartmoor.

We find that the important thing is not what you actually do on an adventure, but just the fact that you are doing it in the first place. Adventure doesn't have to be a life threatening or a gruelling experience – so why make it like that? This year is meant to be fulfilling as well as a chance for us to push ourselves and become stronger in the mind, but not to the point where it becomes unbearable.

It is more important to adventure together as a family and make the adventures manageable and enjoyable for all age groups. The exciting thing about what we are doing is that we don't really know what is going to happen next but we know one thing – we are going to be carrying on for another year because none of us want to stop.

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