

# Nepal Expedition Summer 2016

## Key Points:



On the 16<sup>th</sup> July, after over a year of planning and preparation, a team of 16 Woodford students were ready to set off on the adventure of a lifetime. We flew into Kathmandu, Nepal and were thrust straight into the heart of the monsoon season; it took our boots several days to dry out after wading through the flooded streets. To our surprise, the rest of our trip was mostly dry.

The 18 day expedition was broken into three phases: project, physical and cultural. As a group, our favourite was the project phase. We volunteered at Mahendra Shanti School in Balkot, Bhaktapur and worked to improve the school environment for its students.



On the first day of the project we painted and decorated a classroom. The teachers and students were so pleased with our work that they asked for more classrooms to be done, and over the course of our project we repainted 4 rooms and fully refurbished another. Despite all the time we spent up to our elbows in paint, we had ample opportunity to get to know and spend time with the students and it was their company and support throughout the project that made it even more worthwhile.



After the project we spent some downtime in Kathmandu before heading to Pokhara in preparation for the physical phase of our expedition. We had planned to trek for 4 days through the Poon Hill region and spend our nights in tea houses. Our days were spent powering through the climb and admiring the spectacular views. Our nights were spent relaxing, playing cards and devouring some of the best *momos* (dumplings) of our whole trip. We easily became accustomed to having a trail of dogs behind us as we walked; our favourite was a dog we named Cleo, who stuck with us the entirety of the descent.

Our return to Pokhara marked the beginning of the cultural phase which we welcomed with a traditional Nepali *thali* for dinner. We spent our remaining time in the town exploring the caves and waterfalls, and even ventured onto the lake with self-steered paddle boats. When we got back to Kathmandu our guide from the trek graciously offered to show us around the city; he took us to see sights such as the Monkey Temple and Durbar Square.

The 18 days flew past and before we knew it, it was time to come home. It was an experience we will never forget and we would like to thank the school for giving us such an amazing opportunity. We'd especially like to thank Miss Keeling and Miss Patel for all of their support leading up to and during the expedition.



**Aarti Amin & Zaynab Ahmed Year 12**

