



Andy Jackson - Ferndown Upper School Leaver - 2018

My name is Andy Jackson and I was a student at FUS from September 2012 to June of 2018 when then went to Swaziland and Mozambique with World Challenge in July. I did. After completing my GCSEs I opted to stay on in the Sixth Form and studied English Language, History and Sociology. I enjoyed studying all three subjects greatly as they were a step up in difficulty and scope which kept me engaged and ready to learn. After my A-Levels I went on the World Challenge Expedition to Swaziland and Mozambique for 3 weeks. In Swaziland we worked with an amazing village as we took part in building a children centre which was their on going project with several other World Challenge groups, we spent 5 days in the village helping on the building project with several tasks which culminated in us building a permanent compost heap to help with the disposal of food waste. We hiked four days round one national park and rested in another. We finally spent time in Mozambique doing our conservation work by helping a local dive company monitor Whale Shark activity in the Inhambane province where we also took some great R&R. I come from a military family and I have always wanted to join the military so upon returning to the UK I applied to join the Army and after a long wait I started my basic training at Pirbright in October of 2019. I finished my Basic Training in January 2020 then went up the road to Bovington to start my armoured vehicle training. With that Completed I reported to the Household Cavalry Riding School in Windsor and sat on a horse for the first time.

Learning to ride a horse in the army was the hardest thing I've ever done, it was a 16 week course where you learn riding, stable management and cleaning the uniform we wear to the highest standard which can take an experienced person 5 hours to clean. The course itself was both physically and mentally challenging but looking back I enjoyed it. At the end of that course I volunteered to become a trumpeter which was very unexpected as I had no musical aspirations, I went in not expecting to do well and fail only to come out as top of the course. I have taken to being a trumpeter with pride, it's a very responsible position on parade and off parade and I've had the privilege of playing at several functions including royal ones and it's seen me ride in very high profile parades in front of parade, I've been the trumpeter for Trooping the Colour 2022 when I had to canter a 5 year old horse on Live TV on his first parade. It was so much more an honour though was to ride behind King Charles III on the day of his coronation. I had to take part in a selection of all the regiment's trumpeters to see who was the best, I was really surprised and thrilled. There was three weeks of solid practice before the day when we spent a lot of time working overnight rehearsing the route and the timings but it's been the biggest honour of my career to date. My best piece of advice to the students is that you should take every opportunity that's offered to you because it may lead to something greater.