



October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award: Qualifying Expedition Weekend (Year 10/11)**

Further to recent communications we are pleased to confirm that the rescheduled Bronze DofE qualifying expedition will take place on **Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 October**.

### **Camping**

We had hoped to offer students the opportunity to camp but the school has made the decision not to camp due to increased Covid-19 restrictions in place. Please therefore be aware that you will need to collect your son or daughter from school late afternoon on the Saturday.

### **Students who cannot attend**

Due to the dates being rescheduled we are conscious that some families and students will already have commitments which cannot be changed, such as exams. **Please let me know by next Wednesday, 6 October, via the email below [dofe@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk](mailto:dofe@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk) if your son or daughter cannot take part in this weekend.** There is no need to let us know that they can attend.

Students unable to attend on 16-17 October will be able to complete the expedition section of their award at a later date in the summer term, but we may need to make some changes to the groups at the end of next week, depending on student numbers/ratios in each group.

### **Drop off points and groups**

We will confirm groups and their route drop off locations and times at the end of next week, once we know how many and which students cannot attend.

### **Cooking and Camp Skills**

These will be assessed once the groups return to school on the Saturday, so please provide a camping meal that can be cooked on a Trangia, as you did for the summer training day. This should be a meal rather than a boil-in-the-bag option. An idea might be a simple pasta and sauce (no glass bottles please). Your son/daughter will be ready to be collected at some point after 16:00. I am conscious that last term some groups returned later than planned (due to the heat) and it is always difficult to have a fixed time for collection. We will allow groups to use their phone/s once they are near to finishing each day. Please follow us on Twitter where we will provide updates on collection times for each group at **@AshlynsDofE**.

### **Kit List**

I am sure that you have all the kit from last term. Please remember that all participants should wear sturdy walking boots to protect their ankles on a long walk (trainers or shoes are not acceptable) and the students are aware that they must share the load of the group kit. It is each team's responsibility to decide who will bring each item of the shared group kit, eg washing-up liquid, tea towel etc.

This is a link to the DofE [kit list](#). Please ensure all kit is properly waterproofed, as rain covers are not sufficient. Fashion leggings and jeans are not effective when wet and should not be worn. DofE advice is that bags should not weigh more than 25% of the participant's body weight (including group kit).

### **School Kit Collection (Tents/Trangias etc)**

Groups will be collecting this after school on **Wednesday 13 Oct**. They must be responsible for the kit and its safe return after the weekend. Again, this must be fairly distributed among the group. Fuel for the Trangias will be given out at school on the Saturday for the afternoon meal and will not be carried by students. Students are asked to respect group kit, look after it well and ensure they keep all parts together.

### **Mobile phones**

As on the practice walk, students will need to decide who will be bringing the emergency phone for their group. This should remain switched off for the whole trip, unless there is an emergency, wrapped in a plastic waterproof bag in their rucksack. This phone will be brought at their own risk so we recommend bringing an old phone if possible. We do not expect to see mobile phones at any other time unless contacting parents at the end of the assessment and only when instructed to by their assessor. This is a back-to-basics expedition and failure to comply with expectations may result in your child repeating it later in the year.

### **Contact numbers**

DofE Contact – please only use this number in case of emergency, not to enquire about progress or collection times: 07376 426330. Please do not try and contact your child over the weekend; if students do contact you please inform us straight away as their first point of contact should be their supervisor, not family/home.

### **Expectations**

Having completed the practice weekend your child should be prepared for this assessment, however this time the groups will complete the walk with remote supervision, meaning that their DofE assessor and/or staff supervisor will meet them at regular points throughout the day, rather than helping to lead the expedition. This will mean more independence and therefore more responsibility. We have high expectations of behaviour throughout the weekend and individuals who fail to meet these expectations may be removed from the assessment; however we do not anticipate having to do this. Spray-can deodorants are not allowed on this trip as they are highly flammable. Litter must be put in bins or kept in their bags until they reach a bin and basic respect of the countryside is expected at all times.

### **Food**

I would like to emphasise the importance of students eating well and planning food carefully to cater for the weekend and possibly chillier weather. Students should be eating around 2500-3000 calories a day, and they will cook a simple hot meal on the Saturday afternoon. Trangias will need to be scrubbed to a high standard before handing in. **Please avoid any nuts in your planning due to allergies.**

### **Aims of Expedition**

All groups have decided an aim for their expedition. Please bring anything additional needed for this, eg notebook, pen, camera (not phone). On the return from the expedition they will need to do a group presentation to the Duke of Edinburgh Team, based on this aim.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Please be reassured that each group will have a mobile phone in case of emergency and an emergency card with staff telephone numbers on. Each group will also have a GPS tracker so both staff and assessors can see how they are getting on and find them in the event they are significantly off course. There will be staff liaising at various checkpoints throughout the day.

### **The Other Skills / eDofE**

Most students have completed, or are near completion of, the other skills of Volunteering, Skills and Physical, which is really pleasing - well done! Once this assessed expedition is done, Miss Richardson and I will be able to support the students to sign things off and help any who may need a bit more help with the other sections. Please visit [www.DofE.org](http://www.DofE.org) for any further information about the award; if you have any questions please ask your son or daughter who may well be able to answer them, or contact me on the email below.

Yours sincerely

**Ms G Mellor**

DoE Coordinator

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