



12 April 2024

Dear Parent / Carer

I am delighted to outline the final arrangements for the Year 9 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Practice and Qualifying Expeditions, including twilight training sessions. As confirmed previously, the Qualifying Expedition will take place on **Friday 5 July & Saturday 6 July 2024**. Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 8.00am, heading to the sports centre - and will be due back at school by **5.00pm** on the Saturday.

Although Bronze participants do not have to undertake a practice expedition, we have decided this year to include one to ensure students are familiar with the ideas of camping, camp craft as well as navigating using maps and compasses. Because of this we will be staying overnight on the North Leamington School site on the night of **Friday 17 May 2024**. Students will be able to attend school on the Friday in school uniform, will stay overnight at the school, camping in tents on the school fields and then undertaking a short walk on the Saturday morning. Further details about this will be released over the coming weeks but it is a good opportunity for students to 'break-in' any kit that they will use for their qualifying expedition – especially walking boots – and I would urge you to look at the kit for the qualifying expedition and, where possible, purchase anything you can ready for this practice expedition.

### Expedition Twilight Training – Amendments to original dates

Expedition training is a compulsory requirement of all participants, and will provide the essential camping, navigation, and first aid skills.

Pupils must successfully complete each stage of training before being allowed to undertake their qualifying expedition. Training will take place on Wednesdays and will run from 3.20pm-4.30pm unless specified. The training dates and content are set out below:-

Session Date - 2022	Content
8 May	Bronze First Aid Training
15 May	Bronze Tents and Cooking
17-18 May	Bronze Practice NLS
3 July	Bronze Kit Distribution
5 - 6 July	Bronze Qualifying

### Qualifying Expedition Details

The qualifying expedition for many is the highlight of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The pupils will be assessed on their ability to meet the 20 Conditions of DofE across the weekend, by accredited Expedition Assessors.

Students are assessed as a team, and thus if one person in a walking group fails to meet one of the twenty conditions – the whole team is liable to fail. Students are reminded that whilst



out on expedition they are representing North Leamington School and should behave in a wholly responsible manner which is in keeping with the expectations of a pupil at our school and following the Countryside Code at all times.

During the expedition, our students will be walking in the Broadway/Winchcombe area of the Cotswolds, heading to our campsite at Hayles Fruit Farm, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, GL54 5PB.

### **Wednesday 3 July 2024 – Expedition meeting and kit collection**

On the Wednesday before our expedition, pupils will have a final meeting and go through the process of signing for their expedition kit – supplied by North Leamington School. The kit provided is expensive and pupils are expected to return their kit in the condition it was loaned out. Missing, or broken kit caused by misuse will incur a charge for replacement.

### **School will provide the following kit:-**

65lt rucksack, tent (shared between 3), cooking stove & fuel, roll mat, first aid kit, map (1 per group) and compass. All other expedition kit, including sleeping bag, utensils, and food will need to be supplied by home. \*Student may use their own rucksack provided it is a minimum of 65lt and tent so long as it is 2-3 person\*

**Friday 5 July 2024** Students should arrive at school no later than 8.00am for their departure via coach to their drop off location in the Cotswolds. Whilst out on expedition, the students are expected to walk independently and will need to use their learned navigation skills and follow their planned route at all times. Staff will supervise groups across busy roads to ensure safety, and will meet up with the pupils regularly whilst they are out walking. Drinking water will be readily available so students can top up their water bottles regularly.

Part of the Duke of Edinburgh qualifying expedition, qualifying will need to complete several camp craft based tasks upon their arrival at camp.

This will include:-

- Setting up and setting down of a tent
- Cooking a substantial meal on a meth stove

As a school we have enjoyed a great relationship with the campsite owners at Hayles Fruit Farm. Whilst we want our expedition to be a memorable one, this should not come at the expense of disruption of members of the public and potentially other school parties whom will be accessing the campsite that weekend. We will be expecting respectful and appropriate behaviour at all times whilst at camp; also ensuring no litter is left behind. No pupil should be entering any tent which is not theirs at any time, and pupils will be expected to be in their tents by 9.30pm and lights out by 10.00pm. The expedition is a tiring process and pupils will need to be well rested ahead of the Day 2 walk.

**Saturday 6 July** Students are expected to be up by **6.00am** on Saturday morning. Walks are scheduled to commence by **8.00am** and completed by **3.00pm** to ensure a timely return to NLS. The walking groups will receive a short de-brief upon the completion of their day two walks. During the de-brief they will be asked for their reflections on their DofE experience and informed of the outcome of their qualifying expedition. Following this, they will be transferred back to North Leamington School. Before departing school, all borrowed equipment will need to be signed back in at the sports centre. All kit borrowed will need to be returned and signed back in before departing NLS so students should be ready to leave school by about 5.00pm. **The signing back in of equipment and checking is an essential part of expeditions but does take some time – especially as there are over a hundred Bronze participants this year. Please be aware that this is occurring and allow staff the time to ensure this happens with minimal interruption.**

**Dress and Equipment** Students should be dressed appropriately for two days walking in the summer: with all kit and food they will need for two days, including a re-fillable water bottle. Pupils are reminded that they must be wearing walking boots, and have a waterproof top and bottoms accessible in their rucksack even if the forecast is dry. Pupils must bring a packed lunch to eat on Friday. Essential equipment is listed below:-

\*Walking boots, waterproofs, sleeping bag, a change of clothes for camp, trainers/flipflops, packed lunch, dinner to be cooked on a Trangia (e.g. dry pasta, boil-in-a-bag meal), breakfast (hot chocolate, porridge pot), water bottle, plastic bag for litter, utensils, medication, sun cream, sun hat, wristwatch, sweets & snacks\*

**Medication** - any pupil taking medication is responsible for remembering to bring those items. Asthma sufferers especially are reminded to bring their inhalers, and those requiring epipens must ensure they are present.

**Mobile phones** - mobile phone usage on the assessed expedition is prohibited whilst out walking. Each group is permitted one emergency phone, which is to be placed in the carrier's rucksack and should remain switched on with the volume up in case staff need to make quick contact with a group. All other mobile phones should be left at home.

**Emergencies** I will be the main point of contact for parents and carers whilst out on expedition. My emergency contact number will be shared with you prior to the expedition. In the unlikely event of extreme weather conditions, a decision will be made by myself to prematurely end the expedition; the pupils will be returned to school.

**Students are reminded that to access the expeditions – they must have completed two out of their 3 units (SKILL, VOLUNTEERING, PHYSICAL) and have evidence that they are working towards the third.**

If at any point you need to speak with myself regarding any aspect of the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact [ibarrett@northleamington.co.uk](mailto:ibarrett@northleamington.co.uk)

Yours faithfully



**Mr James Barrett**

DofE and The Prince's Trust Coordinator

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