7 May 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

**Practice Expedition – Duke of Edinburgh**

We are fast approaching our Practice Expedition on **May 18 and 19 2019**. Students will be expected to arrive at School with full kit ready to walk. Students will need to be at School by the Sports Hall for 8.00 am so that we can leave promptly.

**The following groups will be on the coach:**
Dunstable Downs start point: Bryson, Cook, Drake, Finnes, Polo, Shackleton

**Minibus 1** – Hemmingway, Columbus
**Minibus 2** – Blackhall

Students have been working in their walking groups and should know which group they are in. We will be monitoring the groups closely over this expedition to ensure all groups work well together prior to the qualifying expedition. The coach will be picking up outside the Sports Hall. All students should meet at the Sports Hall.

Students should arrive with their bags packed and dressed ready to go. Only the roll mat should be on the outside of the bag and this should be inside a bag to help keep it dry.

To speed up the process and get off the School site for the expedition to begin I would ask that if students choose to take a camping/pen knife this needs to be available to be inspected by staff.

May I remind you that the Practice Expedition is part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award training scheme. Students should look at this expedition as a trial, they need to demonstrate they have the appropriate skills and maturity to attempt the Qualifying Expedition. Failure to attend this expedition will mean that students will not be able to complete the Qualifying Expedition.

You can find a full Duke of Edinburgh kit list in the students’ DofE handbooks or online here - [https://www.dofeshopping.org/dofe-expedition-kit-list/](https://www.dofeshopping.org/dofe-expedition-kit-list/)

Fuel for the cooking stoves will be provided by the School in appropriate containers and handed out at School on the morning of the Expedition. Students should not be decanting this into any other container during the Expedition.
MOBILE PHONES
Due to advice from the Duke of Edinburgh Award, students will not be permitted to bring mobile phones or electrical items of any sort. Students will be issued with a basic mobile per team that they can use in the event of an emergency that is in keeping with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Any student who does not adhere to this and chooses to bring their own mobile will run the risk of it being confiscated and being removed from the course. This may then have an impact on their ability to complete the Award. As the expedition is a team event this may also have an impact on the rest of the team. One of the 20 conditions set out by the Duke of Edinburgh Award is that students walk in groups of 4-7 students so if these numbers are compromised there may be a direct impact on other students’ awards.

The rules around mobile phones is part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Students are expected to undertake the weekend without the aid of a digital device and without communicating on the internet. The weekend is expected to put students in a situation where they have to work as a team and work things out thinking on their feet. It is also to enhance their communication skills and take them back to basics.

FA Cup Final
I am fully aware of the important match that is happening over the Bronze practice. Unfortunately, we have to continue with the Duke of Edinburgh rules and so I urge parents to ensure students do not bring mobile phones. Whilst it does not compare with watching it on TV, I am happy for staff to inform students of the progress of the game should students wish to know.

Kit Equipment
Please ensure that all kit is cleaned and dried after each expedition ready for the next use or to be returned. Where kit has been split between students I would ask that it is put back together in the bag provided prior to returning. With the volume of equipment, we have out on loan if each student only returns part of a tent this often leads to parts being mislaid.

Friday 17 May 2019 is the deadline for the outstanding balance to be paid. This can be paid online or to the Bursars’ – if you are unsure of your outstanding balance or having difficulty making this payment please contact me. I also require any outstanding code of conduct letters back as a matter of urgency.

Many students are on target with their sections; they now need to be getting the assessor reports submitted to their eDoE accounts for these to be approved. The deadline for all 3 sections to be compete is 8 June 2019 All 3 sections must be signed off by this date for students to attempt the Qualifying Expedition. If students are not able to compete their sections in this time, please contact me so that I am aware of the situation.

Please can I also remind you to ensure the School is up to date on all medical conditions and medication held onsite. Please contact me with any queries as soon as possible especially if it concerns medical/medication whilst on the expedition.

Yours sincerely

Miss J Baron
Duke of Edinburgh Co-ordinator