

18 December 2018

Re: Duke of Edinburgh Award Gold Practice & Assessed Expedition

Dear Parent/Carer,

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme has 5 sections, as you know; your child is currently involved in the longer term aspects of the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections and has to organize the residential for themselves (well done to those who have already organized this aspect). As a school we work together to coordinate the Expedition section for the group. Students will need to complete two expeditions (a practice in Year 12 and an assessed expedition in year 13) in order to complete their award. If of course, students are unable to make the expeditions organized by Birchwood, they are still able to complete their award by utilizing 'open expeditions', if students find themselves in this position they should come and talk to me asap and I will suggest possible solutions.

Due to the qualification matrices required to ensure safety when under remote supervision in wild country areas, we have again teamed up with Ieuenctid Cambria Youth (ICY) Expeditions who have significant experience in working with Hertfordshire schools, to run our DofE Gold Expeditions this year. Indeed, whilst Birchwood will coordinate information and help with the planning and training of groups as well as sending staff to accompany the expedition and provide pastoral support etc. as needed, the safety and supervision of participants will be the responsibility of ICY during the expedition.

The participants have decided that the Expedition will take place in Southern Snowdonia and the exped will be between the 19 July and 24 July. The plan is to travel via coach from Birchwood to Snowdonia on the afternoon of the 19th, we will then spend that evening and the 20th undertaking training and familiarisation in the expedition area before beginning the expedition on Sunday, finishing on Wednesday before returning to Bishops Stortford via coach on the evening of the 24th July.

Students will be able to loan equipment from the school including stove sets, tents and rucksacks as needed, though they will need their own sleeping bags and hiking boots. A full kit list is attached for consideration. Students are also required to provide their own food for the expedition and we will discuss in detail various options for this nearer the time. Please note that students should not bring jeans / denim as these become very heavy when wet. Any mobiles, smartwatches, ipods or similar are brought at their own risk and should not be used either when walking or when at the campsite. Generally speaking, the lighter their rucksack is, the more enjoyable they will find their expedition.

For Year 13s it is hoped that the expedition will be the final part of their Gold DofE, many of them have been working tirelessly for months on the Physical, Skills and Volunteering aspects of their awards and some have completed their residential sections too. The 20th of the 20 conditions of DofE Expeditions is that "You must create and deliver a presentation after your expedition to complete the section." In order to facilitate this and also ensure effective return of equipment by Year 13s after they have left the school, the presentations will be held on Monday 9th September. They will need to hand in equipment at 3.30 and then carry out a presentation about their achievements to staff and students starting at 5pm in the Library. You are of course, warmly invited to attend this event in September.

Principal - Dr Chris Ingate

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The cost of this expedition will be £280. For your child to participate in this visit, which is needed for their DofE Award and which should be very enjoyable, please complete the slip below asap and return to our school finance office by 25th January, together with the ICY medical forms and a non-returnable deposit payment of £80.00 which can be made using our ParentPay system, or if you prefer cash (exact amount please) or a cheque made payable to Birchwood High School, the remainder of the trip cost, £200 is due by 29th March and can be paid in two installments of £100, with the first installment due by 28th February. The £280 total cost of the expedition includes ICY staffing, campsite fees, coach costs, maps etc. as well as fuel and equipment hire from the school. N.B Please note that should students lose or damage any of the equipment they are borrowing they are required to replace the equipment with the exact replica. This year's price includes coach travel to and from the expedition and as a result is higher than last year's price.

If you have any queries about the Duke of Edinburgh Award and what it involves, please do not hesitate to contact me, though I have included a copy of the ICY Expedition guide which may answer many questions.

Yours sincerely

Mr W Morton

Head of History

DofE Award Coordinator

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Reply Slip - Please return to the Finance Office by 25 January 2019

Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award Practice Expedition

Name of Student.....Form.....

I agree for my son/daughter to participate in this expedition organized by ICY Expeditions.

I am aware that the cost of this 6 day expedition is £280 +students have to organise their own food as part of the expedition.

I have paid the first installment of £80.00 via parent pay

I enclose a cheque/cash for the first installment of £80.00.

I am entitled to and wish to use my 6th form bursary to pay for this.

I enclose the ICT medical forms

Signed.....Date.....