

24 January 2022

Upcoming Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions (Bronze)

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have been delighted with the enthusiasm shown by students so far in obtaining volunteering placements, attending their chosen physical and skills activities and beginning to attend Wednesday evening enrichments to learn how to navigate in the wilderness. We are writing to you to give you an update on the upcoming expeditions and parent meetings to confirm arrangements.

Overview

Below are brief details of the upcoming key dates and expeditions. See the itinerary for more detailed information.

When	What	Where
Wednesday 9th February 17:00 - 18:00	Parents meeting	Theatre
Saturday 23rd April 08:00 - 18:00	Bronze practice expedition	Surrey Hills, area South of Gomshall
Friday 13th May (08:00) - Saturday 14th May (17:00)	Bronze assessed expedition	Surrey Hills, area South of Gomshall. Accommodation: Sayers Croft Outdoor Learning Centre

Due to the nature of the trip our return time to KAA is approximate. Once we arrive back at KAA students will be dismissed, if you would prefer to collect your child please email us directly and we will wait with them at the KAA reception for your arrival. i.oregan@kaa.org.uk or j.speakman@kaa.org.uk

Costs

Thank you to those who have paid for the registration fees covering the eDofE account setup. The remaining cost which will include transport, campsite pitch and some equipment is: **£30** and must be paid by **Friday 4th March** via ParentPay. There is a caveat to this, which as mentioned previously, students must complete 2 of their 3 aspects in order to attend the expeditions by the 31st of March. If you require any financial support with covering the expedition costs or extra equipment needed, please do not hesitate to contact us on: i.oregan@kaa.org.uk or j.speakman@kaa.org.uk

Bronze Parent meeting

This meeting will be held on **Wednesday 9th February 17:00-18:00 in the theatre**. This is an opportunity for you gain a greater insight into the Duke of Edinburgh award. Please take a home covid test on 9th February before attending.

This meeting will cover:

- Introduction to the award
- Our expectations
- More details on the expedition
- What kit the students require for the expedition
- Opportunity for questions

Bronze practice and assessed expedition

The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award consists of a 1 day training expedition and a 2 day 1 night assessed expedition, both of which will take place in the Surrey Hills and students will be transported via coach returning back to KAA.

Practice expedition

Full details of the 2 expeditions will be provided during the parent meetings where we will be able to answer any further questions, with these details confirmed in writing closer to the expedition dates.

What will I need for expedition?

Please see the comprehensive kit list attached to this letter that outlines what is required for the Duke of Edinburgh expedition. Bear in mind that all this equipment needs to fit into one bag (albeit it a large 65L bag) so pack wisely and ask if you have any questions.

Students are also expected to provide all their **personal food** for the duration of the expedition. Students will be working in groups to devise a menu and determine which member is to bring which item of food.

Next steps

The following information needs to be returned to school by **Friday 11th February**

- Consent form for the practice and assessed expeditions
- Fully completed medical form including **2 emergency contacts** and any extra details about medical conditions and medication

Over the half-term break it would be a good opportunity to think about purchasing walking boots and wearing them in ahead of the practice expedition in April. Walking boots can cause blisters if they have not been broken in so it is best to wear them regularly for short periods of time with thick socks before walking in them for a full day. If you require any financial support in purchasing any of the kit required, please do not hesitate to contact us on:

i.oregan@kaa.org.uk or j.speakman@kaa.org.uk

Risks

Remote walking

On the practice walk students will be accompanied by a member of staff to support and develop navigational skills. On part of the practice walk and the expedition students will be remotely supervised.

Remotely supervised expeditions involve journeying, in groups, unaccompanied by staff. Staff will meet groups through the day, but if the group goes off their route there may be periods of a few hours when the group has no staff contact, and when the staff do not know the group's exact location. Participants are trained how to manage these journeys safely including going off route and dealing with emergencies.

We will have a staff: student ratio of 1:7 on our trips. All staff have been trained to look after students outdoors and confidently lead in case of emergency. Both Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) link teachers have walked all the routes students will be walking and have identified appropriate teacher check points to ensure safety (e.g. road crossings). As per DofE guidelines all students will be walking in groups of 4-7 people. In case of emergency their group will be large enough to contact help.

Individual Student Health

Please list on the form below. If your child will require close supervision of their health, please state clearly on this form their medical needs. DofE strongly believes in fair access for all children; we will ensure that your child's medical needs are safely met to allow them to complete the expedition fairly.

Ramadan

This year Ramadan falls on the day of the practice expedition (23rd April). Due to the nature of the expeditions in which students are travelling long distances with heavy rucksacks for multiple days, it is not safe for students to fast during this time. We want to ensure that our DofE program is as inclusive as possible, so please contact us if you foresee this being an issue.

Mobile Phones

The use of mobile phones is prohibited on a Duke of Edinburgh expedition and can lead to failure of the award.

Mobile phones can be a bit of a contentious issue on DofE expeditions. Essentially, DofE guidelines state that students may have individual mobile phones, but that they should be for emergency use only.

Therefore, if students do bring their phones, they'll be placed in sealed envelopes, turned off, and kept inside students' backpacks. We will also be giving one basic phone to each group, which will be kept on throughout their journey. Personal phones will also stay in envelopes whilst at campsite, to preserve their battery and the sense of isolation that is key to the expedition aims.

Why do the DofE have this policy?

Firstly, because students aren't allowed to use GPS navigation, which if they have their phones readily available, they could easily use.

They also give a false sense of security. Signal is not always available, or batteries may die, and students need to be prepared to use alternative ways of calling for help should something happen, for example finding the nearest habitation or shop.

We will be doing training with students on when they need to call for help, and when they need to deal with a situation themselves. E.g. realising they've taken a wrong turn isn't necessarily the time to call for help. They may just need to work out where they are on the map, and back track for 20 minutes.

Expedition handbooks states: "Persistent or deliberate misuse of mobile phones may lead the assessor to conclude that the team cannot fulfil condition two of the 20 conditions: to be isolated, unaccompanied, self-sufficient and remotely supervised."

On the practice and expedition walks students' phones will be placed in sealed envelopes. They will have school provided mobile phones for use in emergency.

We have tried to provide you with everything you need to know with regards to the expeditions. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

We hope that these expeditions will give your child an amazing opportunity to develop their independence, build friendships and enjoy the outdoors. Thank you again for your support.

Yours sincerely,

**Miss O'Regan and Miss Speakman,
Duke of Edinburgh Link Teachers**
i.oregan@kaa.org.uk j.speakman@kaa.org.uk

Expedition Kit List

Got it	Packed it	Item needed
Clothing		
		1 pair of walking boots (broken in)
		2-3 pairs of socks
		2-3 t-shirts
		2 fleece tops or similar
		2 walking trousers (warm, NOT jeans)
		Underwear
		Flipflops/trainers/sandals (optional for camp site use)
		1 pair shorts
		Waterproof jacket
		Waterproof trousers
		Sun hat
Personal Kit		
KAA		Rucksack
		Rucksack liner (or 2 strong plastic bags)
KAA		Sleeping mat
		Sleeping bag
		Torch (plus spare batteries)
		Expedition food (including emergency rations)
		Water bottle
		Knife, fork, spoon, plate, mug (plastic)
		Wash kit/toiletries/plasters
		Sun cream
		Small towel
		Watch
		Plasters
Group Kit		
KAA		Tent
KAA		Stove
		Tea towels
		Sponges
		Plastic bags (for rubbish etc)
KAA		Map & map case
KAA		Compass