



December 2016

Dear Parents

**Bronze Practice Expedition**

I am very pleased with the commitment that your daughter has shown during lunchtime sessions, and I am writing to let you know the details of the Bronze level practice expedition in the Peak District.

Area: White Peak District; Bakewell area

Dates: 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Transport: 4 Minibuses/Kit van

The supervisory staff are made up of volunteers from the school staff, as well as volunteers who have a long established link with the unit, and volunteers who are ex students of the school who have completed the award at gold level. Volunteers are not paid and so I would like to publicly thank all those involved!

We plan to **leave** from **Spalding Bus Station** at **7.30 a.m.** on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June and should return to **Spalding High School** on Sunday evening between 7-8 p.m.

The expedition will not be assessed and candidates are expected to put into practice the lessons learnt in school.

The charge for the practice expedition **and** the assessed expedition in July **combined** will be £75, to cover the cost of hiring minibuses, the kit van and diesel. Participants will also need about £5/£8 to pay for their campsite. Participants should also bring **spare dry clothes** to leave on the bus.

**Please note that the expedition fee is non-refundable except for exceptional medical circumstances, in which case a doctor's note will be required.**

I have included a combined Permission and Health form. This form should be returned along with the fee **as soon as possible** please (cheques made payable to **Spalding High School**).

Equipment will be made available in the week prior to the expedition. I would also add a reminder that it is the participants' responsibility to ensure that all equipment borrowed is returned clean and dry. If washing waterproof kit please do not use any kind of soap. **It also goes without saying that school is not to be missed following the expedition!!** Thank you for your understanding.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER: 07896799878 (for use only in real emergencies please)

Yours sincerely



Richard Garbett – DofE Manager

## **Volunteering, Physical Activity and Skills Section**

Hopefully all Bronze students are now well underway with their Volunteering, Physical and skills sections of DofE. I am requesting that all students have completed all three sections before we go on expedition. This will ensure that all students pass their awards with no problems. DofE is of huge benefit to students and I would like to draw your attention to the lifezone section on eDofE

<https://www.dofelifezone.org/>

This outlines the importance of DofE to future employers and shows how the DofE Award can help students in the world of life after school.

## **Equipment**

We are more than happy to supply groups with the necessary equipment for an expedition. We would, however, like to raise awareness that DofE is a charity and has absolutely no funding apart from that which we raise ourselves (some of us were on Santa's sleigh with the Rotary Club this Christmas!). Groups, therefore, must ensure that they take care with borrowed equipment and return it clean and ready for the next group that borrows it. Good quality equipment is expensive (one Trangia stove costs £75, one compass costs £15, one rucksack costs £30, Bronze tents cost between £50-£70 each etc) and we struggle to replace badly treated or broken kit.

## **Use of Mobile Phones**

Could I please ask you to read these recommendations regarding the use of mobile phones. Problems have arisen during previous expeditions because of the use of phones.

- Please could parents refrain from ringing students during an expedition.
- If there is a problem, we will ring parents to inform them.
- Mobile phones are carried by students for **use in an emergency** only.
- It is not necessary for students to bring more than one mobile phone.
- If a group know they are going to be over an hour late reaching their campsite or reaching the end point on the Sunday, then they should turn on their mobile phones in case a member of staff needs to contact them.
- GPS technology on mobile phones **should not** be used.
- The ethos of the Duke of Edinburgh Award being a 'non-contact' expedition where students are putting into practice navigational techniques, teamwork and coping with the challenges of such an expedition by **themselves**, is spoilt by the unnecessary use of phones. Please adhere to the recommendations above. There have been occasions where DofE groups from other schools have not passed their expedition because their assessor had observed them using their phones excessively whilst they were walking.

## **Official advice from DofE:**

The expedition section is designed to develop self-reliance and self-confidence through isolation and remote supervision, overcoming challenges and managing risk as an independent team of peers. Mobile phones can seriously undermine these outcomes and compromise the team's attitude and approach to the decision-making process during their expedition. Using mobile phones on an expedition can destroy the sense of isolation and solitude core to the learning and self-reliance of the expedition section. While useful additional safety tools, the DofE strongly recommends that mobile phones be used for emergencies only.