



# Sandringham School

'Everybody can be Somebody'



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Letter No: 64/2022

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022

Dear Parent / Carer,

## Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award 2023

I am delighted that your child is taking on the challenge of undertaking their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. The Gold Award requires considerable initiative on the part of the candidates and students must be the 'drivers' of their own Award. The Award is designed for those who are self-motivated, proactive and able to rise to this challenge. Success depends upon the commitment and willingness of the individual. Participants will also find that the Gold Award represents an incrementally greater challenge to that presented by the Silver Award. Staff are on hand to advise students on activities for each of the sections of the Award, which also includes a residential element at Gold and, as ever, the DofE website is full of invaluable information. To ensure that the residential fulfils the requirements set by the Award Scheme, unless a residential is booked through the D of E website, students must complete a **residential request form** and return this to Miss Borman or Mrs Cuneen in good time for it to be submitted for approval by County. If a student does not follow this system, there is a possibility that they will undertake a residential but DofE will not accept the activity. All paperwork is available for students on **Gold DofE GoogleClassroom code za6ioap**. Residentials should not be booked during term time.

At Gold level, the expedition involves a 4 day, 3-night expedition to an area designated as 'wild country'. As at Bronze and Silver levels, participants must complete an unaccompanied expedition. Although participants are exposed to the ordinary risks associated with anyone who ventures into wild country, these will be kept to a minimum by the training given and the appropriate level of supervision that we offer. Students undertaking their Gold DofE will combine their training and practice expedition in the Dark Peak District, in addition to the training and expeditions undertaken at Bronze and Silver.

The undertaking of an unsupported, adventurous expedition in 'wild country' is part of the essence of the Gold DofE programme and therefore it would not be appropriate, or even permissible, for leaders to be in contact with the teams around the clock. We will, however, ensure that we see groups during the day and ensure they have safely arrived at their campsite. In the unlikely event that a student has not reached a sufficient skill level or does not have a sufficient level of fitness for the expedition, I will speak to the student and parents concerned well in advance of the expedition to discuss their participation.

	Dates	Location
Training / Gold practice expedition	25 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> April	Peak District
Gold qualifying expedition	7 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> July (Expedition 8 <sup>th</sup> - 11 <sup>th</sup> )	Lakes
Expedition presentations	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	1.15pm – S2



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Students will begin their route planning and have all of the necessary paperwork explained on the ELD on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January. Training will take place Thursday lunchtimes and **participants must attend** these in order to facilitate the safe and smooth running of the scheme. Students have a copy of the dates for these sessions. These will cover topics including kit, considerations for wild camping, river crossing (it will be stressed that students should **NOT** be crossing rivers and under no circumstances if it is deeper than ankle deep), reviewing emergency procedures and menus.

### **Route Planning**

Students will work in their expedition teams to plan their routes for the practice expedition in the Peak District and for their assessed expedition in the Lake District. They must also prepare route cards and tracings. These will be checked by Miss Borman. Both their practice and assessed expedition routes are required to be sent away, along with various other paperwork, to the DofE wild country panel. This must be done a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the expedition. To reduce the impact on students closer to their exams each group is required to meet the deadlines set. Miss Borman will be available at lunchtimes and some days after school to answer any questions on routes and planning. **The deadline for assessed route plans/tracings is Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January for both Peak District and Lake District paperwork.** These will be sent off to the wild country panel/assessor for final approval.

### **Kit**

I am not suggesting that students need to go and spend vast amounts of money on top range equipment, however, all students must have a good waterproof jacket and trousers, boots should have ankle support and a sturdy sole and students need an adequate sleeping bag. Also, group members are expected to provide their own compass and map of the area they will be walking in. Walking using printed off sections of maps is not permissible. School will provide an additional map per group reflecting good practice and safety in carrying a spare. All participants **MUST** have correct expedition clothing and be properly equipped, as the danger from the elements and remoteness is considerably greater in wild country. On the Gold expedition students will be met by their assessor the day before they set off to discuss their route, expedition aims and for a kit check. **Students will not be allowed to even start the expedition if the assessor feels they are not adequately equipped.** I have copied the link to the recommended DofE kit list below:

### **Kit List:**

<https://www.dofe.org/shopping/dofe-expedition-kit-guide/>

### **Mobile Phones** (cameras)

Students are not allowed to use mobile phones throughout the expeditions, even for photos for their presentations. Each group will take a phone in a sealed envelope for use in case of emergency. Please be aware that there may not be reception in remote areas or valleys.

### **Food**

Please provide adequate rations for the four days. Students should aim for 2-3000 calories per day. Start looking at packets when shopping and try some recipes at home. Aim for minimum washing up, weight and bulk. Participants need to make four packed lunches, three hearty breakfasts and three cooked dinners. They should also have a variety of suitable snacks to eat during the day. Students are also required to carry emergency rations which are not part of the 'planned menu'. It is very possible that the assessor will ask to see emergency rations at the end of the expedition. For good advice on what to bring and what not to bring, go to [www.indieoutdoors.co.uk/dofe/food\\_for\\_dofe\\_expeditions.html](http://www.indieoutdoors.co.uk/dofe/food_for_dofe_expeditions.html) We will look at menu planning and share ideas for expedition catering.

There will be a brief **information evening on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm**, which parents / carers are invited to attend. Students are also welcome to attend. If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The costs of the training / expeditions in the Peak District and Lake District have been broken down into 2 instalments.

A non-refundable deposit of £150 to be paid by 1<sup>st</sup> December, a second payment of £150 to be paid by 31<sup>st</sup> March and a DofE Gold County enrolment fee of £31 to be paid via ParentPay in the usual way. If students wish to hire any school equipment, they should complete a hire form well in advance of the expedition, as there are other expeditions close to the Gold expeditions dates.

Yours sincerely,

Vikki Borman  
Responsible for Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award