

Important information.

Please read carefully before signing the permission slip to be fully aware of the implications of involvement in the Academy's summer expedition programme.



DOLLAR

ACADEMY



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January 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Your son/daughter, as part of his/her Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Gold level, has to take part in expedition work to satisfy the demands of the Award. Expeditions at Gold level involve four days of strenuous walking with heavy rucksacks and three nights camping in tents. These expeditions take place in wild, remote countryside and foul weather conditions may be encountered. The experience is usually an arduous one and much is expected from Gold candidates. Therefore pupils must be physically fit and in good health before embarking on such ventures. It is essential that candidates prepare themselves fully beforehand - training walks with boots and heavy rucksacks are recommended.

Only candidates who have **completed** the Silver Award by the last Monday in February or who have permission to take part in the direct entry Gold Award (this usually means new pupils to the school) will be eligible for involvement in Gold level expeditions. Registration for the Gold Award and successful submission of details for the volunteering, physical and skill sections is also required. Direct entry candidates must also complete a Bronze training expedition in May.

In school preparation

All Gold candidates must attend an expedition training and preparation day before taking part in our expedition programme. Training/preparation days will take place on **Monday 1st June** or **Monday 8th June 2020**. Expedition groups will be given safety briefings, plan the routes for their assessment expeditions and visit the expedition stores to collect equipment. This is an essential part of our expedition preparation and attendance at one of these days is **compulsory** for all Gold candidates before involvement in the training expedition.

Gold training expedition

The emphasis on the training expedition will be to further develop the necessary expedition skills of camp-craft, navigation, load carrying and teamwork. Pupils will be accompanied by qualified and experienced staff but may be asked to tackle certain parts of the expedition route on their own in order to develop their independence and navigation skills. Candidates who complete their training expedition and are judged to be competent, will be allowed to take part in an assessment expedition. Competency in the following areas must be demonstrated:

- Physical fitness
- General organisation
- Carrying the correct clothing and equipment
- Care of equipment and cooperation with staff in expedition store procedures
- Commitment to group expedition preparation and route planning

Gold assessment expedition

Candidates must plan and carry out an assessment expedition with the minimum of assistance. Staff, therefore, will not accompany groups on their expedition route, but will check that groups reach their campsite safely and may shadow candidates closely in the event of poor weather conditions. Assessment will be carried out by external assessors who will also visit candidates at their campsite, and who may shadow the group for part of their route.

Candidates are being given a choice of two sets of dates:

Group 1 (maximum of 28 places)

Preparation day 1: Monday 1st June

Training expedition 1: Tuesday 2nd June – Friday 5th June West Highlands/Cairngorms

Assessment expedition 1: Monday 15th – Friday 19th June Wester Ross

OR

Group 2 (maximum of 28 places)

Preparation day 2: Monday 8th June

Training expedition 2: Tuesday 9th – Friday 12th June West Highlands/Cairngorms

Assessment expedition 2: Monday 22nd June – Friday 26th June Wester Ross

Candidates must choose to join *group 1* or *group 2*. There are separate arrangements for those who wish to also perform in the school musical – see below.

A charge of £180 per pupil (paid using Parent Pay) will be made to cover the cost of all maps, transport, staff and pupil accommodation, and assessor fees. This will be made in mid-March when pupil groups are finalised – you will be notified to confirm a place at this time; this is because pupils that are performing in the school musical will be given the option of taking part in both activities, with expedition training during the first week in June and expedition assessment during the fourth week in June. If you may be involved in the school musical, you should select group 1. Boarders should note that they must clear their belongings from their boarding house before the final expedition if they choose group 2.

Candidates have been provided with an equipment list and should note that carrying the correct equipment is compulsory. Pupils without essential safety equipment and clothing will not be allowed to participate in expeditions. Certain items of group equipment can be hired from the school store for a nominal fee. A cash deposit of £20.00 is also payable which is refunded when equipment is returned on time and in good order at the start of next term (late August).

Please note that the use of mobile phones by candidates is not permitted on these expeditions except in emergency situations. The recreational use of mobile phones goes against the ethos of isolation and adventure that is an essential part of these trips and can also lead to a false sense of security in remote mountainous areas in which mobile phones often do not work. The inappropriate use of mobile phones on assessment expeditions could result in candidates failing that assessment. Each group will, however, be asked to carry a mobile phone for use in emergency. Candidates are not to use electronic devices when out on expedition (especially electronic music devices: loudspeakers are forbidden). Groups will be issued with satellite tracking devices so that staff can locate them as a safety measure.

An early notification of commitment by candidates is required so that planning for these challenging expeditions can begin as soon as possible. If you require any further information do not hesitate to contact me in school by phone or e-mail at durran-r@dollaracademy.org.uk

Yours faithfully,

Mr R Durran
Expedition Organiser

Please complete the parent permission slip attached and return it to Mr Durran **in person** by **Monday 24th February, 2020** (places usually fill up before this deadline). Pupils must have registered for the Gold Award and submitted details for at least three sections for their forms to be accepted.

Please note that a **£50 cancellation fee** will be charged in the event of a withdrawal from the expedition programme by a candidate after confirming a place should this be requested before the end of **May 2020**. Unfortunately, last minute withdrawals in June cannot be refunded.

Writing your expedition report

Part of your assessment for your expedition is your personal report and the basic requirements are the same for Gold or Silver - aim for at least one side of A4 per day, plus another page on your expedition aim. Try to write this **as soon as possible** after the trip before you forget the details and lose your route card etc. Keep your route plans, the map and if possible any photographs taken; they all help to add interest and detail. Writing your report is an opportunity for personal reflection – to look back and focus on what you have achieved.

The following headings or key points will provide a framework for your report, which should be written as a **word document**:

- The **dates** and organisational details: e.g. “we were taken by minibus to Incheril on Tuesday 16th of June, after a night spent at Gairloch campsite”;
- The **route** – describe where you went, with location names. Include the start, the finish, campsite details, etc. and mention any landmarks / hills etc. Include drawings or copies of maps if possible with your own description of the places involved;
- The **group** – name names, comment on the personalities and the way the group worked together (or not);
- The **weather** and general conditions experienced on the trip;
- Points of **interest** – animals, flowers, rivers, mountains, ruins - anything you noticed on your trip;
- **Photos** – add *plenty* of these (but not full resolution, see below);
- Include a page or two on your “**AIM**”;
- **Map** – add a copy/photo of your route map (annotated);
- The **story** of the trip – main events, significant meals, blisters or problems. Include reflections on how you felt during the expedition;
- **Lessons** learned – did your equipment stand up to the test? Would you take different clothes or food? Would you like to do more expeditions?

Do try to be honest and express your views but remember that this will carry your name, be read by others and could be published or shared as an example of a participant’s experience.

Your report must be uploaded to your eDofE account as soon as possible after your expedition (the file size limit is 10MB, so you may have to resize photos, or save the document as a pdf). If you have any difficulties with uploading your report, just ask for help via dofe@dollaracademy.org. Gold reports are sent away to an external assessor so you cause hassle if you miss deadlines since reports have to be collated and forwarded.



**YOU MUST COMPLETE AN EXPEDITION REPORT TO
COMPLETE THE EXPEDITION SECTION OF THE AWARD.**

Latest Deadline – Wed 19th August to be uploaded to your eDofE account

June 2020 expeditions. You may select weeks 1 & 3 or weeks 2 & 4.

If you might be performing in the school musical, choose the 1 & 3 option and you will be transferred to weeks 1 & 4

If you are taking Higher Mandarin or Computing you must select weeks 2 & 4

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
June 2020			GOLD		Select either Group One (orange) or Group Two (blue) option	
1 Training Day Captain's Room	2 Practice expedition Day 1/4	3 Day 2/4	4 Day 3/4	5 Day 4/4	6	7 
8 Training Day Captain's Room	9 Practice expedition Day 1/4	10 Day 2/4	11 Day 3/4	12 Day 4/4	13	14
15 Assessment & Travel to Gairloch	16 Assessment Day 1/4	17 Day 2/4	18 Day 3/4	19 Day 4/4	20	21 
22 Assessment & Travel to Gairloch	23 Assessment Day 1/4	24 Day 2/4	25 Day 3/4	26 Day 4/4	27	28
			Last day of Term			



Gold DofE Expeditions PERMISSION SLIP



Circle your chosen option clearly:

Group 1 or **Group 2**

I would like to be in a walking group with (maximum 7 including you; please indicate with whom you wish to share a tent)

Complete and return to **Mr Durran** in person by **Monday 24th February**.

Tick this box if you hope to be performing in the school musical

I, parent/guardian of

..... in Form Class have received the details of the Gold D of E expeditions and give permission for my son/daughter/ward to take part in the expedition programme for **group 1 / group 2** as indicated above (please circle at **top** of page as appropriate). I will pay the expedition fee of £180 using Parent Pay.

I understand that in the event of serious accident or injury to my son/daughter/ward every effort will be made to contact me. Where this proves impossible, I hereby consent to my son/daughter/ward receiving any medical/surgical/dental treatment including a general anaesthetic and/or blood transfusion (please delete as appropriate), as considered necessary by the Medical Authorities present.

I understand that it may be necessary, in exceptional and emergency circumstances, for me or a nominated representative to travel to the site of medical treatment (which may be to the group's location) to take over responsibility for my son/daughter/ward.

Should my son/daughter/ward require treatment for minor ailments, I give permission for expedition leaders or their deputies to administer, as appropriate (*strike out whichever does not apply*):

1. paracetamol and/or ibuprofen (for relief of pain, fever or inflammation)
2. antihistamine (for relief of hay fever, insect bites or other allergic reactions)

I give details below of any other medication, prescribed or non-prescribed, that my son/daughter/ward may need to carry, or those to which he/she is allergic.

I furthermore give permission for expedition leaders or their deputies to help administer these medicines if required.

1. Current medical conditions or concerns of which expedition staff should be aware (please include any relevant condition already notified to the school):

.....
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2. Medication required for this / these condition(s)

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3. Instructions for the administration of any medication being carried to treat the condition(s):

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.....

4. I understand that if my child is not carrying the medication noted at (2) above at the time that the trip begins he / she will not be permitted to participate and I will be responsible for collecting him / her from the intended point of departure.

I can be contacted at the following two UK numbers at all times during the time of the trip:

1. 2.

Pupil mobile telephone number

I confirm that I have registered for the Gold Award and submitted details for the first three sections.

Pupil Signature.....

I confirm that I will submit an expedition report in line with Dollar Academy guidelines before the start of next term in order to complete the expedition section.

Pupil Signature.....

Parent Signature..... Date