DOLLAR ACADEMY

March 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your son/daughter is invited to take part in a two-day assessment expedition with an overnight stay in a tent as part of his/her Duke of Edinburgh`s Award at Bronze level. The purpose of this expedition is for candidates to demonstrate their expedition skills such as route planning, navigation, campcraft, fitness and teamwork.

Candidates must plan and carry out an assessment expedition with the minimum of assistance from staff. Groups will therefore **not** be accompanied by staff on their expedition route. Assessment and safety checks will be carried out by staff who will visit candidates at their campsite and who may shadow the group for part of their route.

The expedition involves strenuous walking with heavy rucksacks. Foul weather conditions may be encountered; candidates must have a reasonable level of physical fitness and be in good health before embarking upon the venture. Only pupils who have completed Bronze expedition training (including the satisfactory completion of a training expedition) are eligible for assessment. Candidates must attend **all** training, preparation and equipment return sessions – these will take place after school on the Wednesday (until 6pm) and Thursday (to 5pm) prior to the assessment expedition, with kit return on the Tuesday after the expedition (until at least 4pm).

Competency in the following areas must be demonstrated by candidates for the successful completion of an assessment expedition:

- Physical fitness
- General organisation
- Care of equipment and co-operation with staff in expedition store procedures
- Commitment to group expedition preparation and route planning
- Care for the environment

Assessment groups are expected to follow their planned routes unless foul weather, illness or injury necessitates a change of route. All candidates will be issued with a booklet giving advice and guidance on Bronze assessement expeditions which should be read in conjunction with this letter. This can also be obtained from the website.

All assessment expeditions will take place in the Ochil Hills over the following weekends:

***30th April – 1st May**

7th – 8th May

14th – 15th May

21st – 22nd May

Pupils who play **cricket** or **tennis** for a school team should check their availability with their team coach.

Pupils who are involved in the **school shooting team** or **pipe band** should consult with Mr Stewart.

NOTE: pupils MUST be attend the after-school preparation sessions on the Wed and Thur prior to their expedition to be eligible to take part in the assessment.

*An **additional training expedition** will run from 4pm on Friday 29th – Saturday 30th April for pupils that missed this expedition last Autumn. These pupils will not be able to take part in the first assessment weekend.

Candidates will take part in one of these expeditions. In each case the expedition will leave Dollar on the Saturday morning, returning on the Sunday afternoon. It is not possible to give an accurate finish time on the Sunday – this will vary between groups Once pupils have returned to Dollar, they will have access to a mobile phone to arrange collection. The expedition will conclude with a 20/30 minute debrief before pupils leave.

Candidates have been provided with a list of necessary equipment and should note that carrying the correct equipment is compulsory. Assessors will carry out an equipment check with all groups at the start of each expedition. Certain items of equipment are available for hire from the school stores and these are indicated on the equipment list provided. A **cash** hiring fee is required to contribute towards the cost of hired items from each tent group member (£5 for a tent, £2 for stove, with fuel included, £1 for a compass). Late return of kit impacts on staff and preparation for subsequent expeditions, so it is vital that pupils follow return instructions for the following week. The initial £30 that was previously paid included the cost of this expedition, so there is no additional Parentpay fee.

Please note that the use of mobile phones by candidates is strictly prohibited during the expedition. The use of mobile phones goes against the ethos of isolation and adventure which is an essential part of these trips. It can also lead to a false sense of security in remote mountain areas in which mobile phones often do not work. The inappropriate use of a mobile phone will result a candidates failing that assessment. Pupils, however, will be expected to carry a sealed mobile phone for use in an emergency situation and this will be checked during their end-of-expedition debrief.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me in school by e-mail at scheuerl-sl@dollaracademy.org.uk

Yours faithfully,

Dr S Scheuerl
DofE Assistant Award Manager & Expeditions Organiser

Please complete and return this permission slip to Dr Scheuerl in D01*in person* no later than **Monday 14th March.** Places will be allocated strictly in the order in which permission slips are handed in; pupils that have not filled in basic details in their DofE app have to do this small task before their form is accepted.

Pupil name: …….....

I would like to share a tent with (one or two names):

PERMISSION SLIP

Please complete the following form and return to Dr Scheuerl by Monday 14th March.

I, …….....parent/guardian of ……..…….....in Form Class ……. have read the information about the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh`s Award assessment expeditions and give permission for my son/daughter/ward to take part on (**circle** first-choice of assessment weekend):

30th April – 1st May **7th – 8th May**

14th – 15th May **21st – 22nd May**

If your son/daughter/ward did not complete the training expeditions in Autumn, please also circle the dates below to give permission for them to attend this additional training expedition.

29th (from 4pm) – 30th April