

TON/hcl

March 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Gold D of E Practice Expedition

I would like to take this opportunity to write to you regarding the Gold Practice DofE Expedition to the Black Mountains.

Your son/daughter should have now been working on other sections of the DofE assessment which include the Skills section, Physical section and Volunteering section and recording this evidence. I have been impressed that several students have worked diligently on these sections, completing their uploads on the edofe system but there are some students who have yet to upload any evidence and I would encourage you to speak to your child and ensure they have started this process.

Expedition Information

The Practice Gold Expedition will take place in the Black Mountains on the **20th April – 24th April**. Students will need to meet at NSB swimming pool car park at **7:45am** on **20th April**. They should travel in their outdoor/ expedition clothing. Trainers can be worn on the minibus for the journey, but they will need to change into walking boots as soon as they get there. If they desire, they can bring a change of clothing for the journey home, but this must be packed into a small bag and this will be left along with their trainers on the minibus. Students should arrive back to NSB at **6:30pm** on **24th April**. However, this is dependent on students walking to their route plan and leaving camp on time! It will also be very much reliant on the traffic. Participants will telephone on approach to Northampton with an up-to-date ETA.

Cost

The previous letter stated that £225 should have been paid by April 2022. If you have made this payment thank you, if it is still outstanding, please make your payment via Parent Pay.

Medical Forms

I would like to thank you for your co-operation with the medical forms. The school has a medical form which needs to be filled out each time a trip goes out. In addition to this, BXM have asked you to complete their medical form and that is because they are running the expedition. If you haven't completed either I will be in contact.

Equipment

Your son/daughter should now be well versed in what equipment they need to take on expedition. A kit list was issued at the meeting on Tuesday.

This expedition is the longest the participants will have undertaken so far; therefore, they will need to work on the packing of the expedition rucksack - "Light is Right" will be a very useful mantra. Students must work on their own clothing and equipment as well as that of the team. Communication with others in the team will be essential – this is a vital skill that some of the groups found difficult during previous expeditions.

The most important part of carrying any equipment is that it is watertight. With the weather being unpredictable, I would highly recommend the use of a specifically designed **waterproof rucksack liner or garden sack** and not black bin bags unless heavy duty. There is nothing worse than a wet sleeping bag!

Tents, Stoves, and fuel will be provided by BXM; however, **students must remember to bring their own mess tins to use on the stoves.**

They must have a **waterproof coat and bottoms** for this expedition. If you or your child is unsure, please check with Mrs O'Neill. Previous expeditions have highlighted that coats that were only shower proof were not suitable for a four-day Gold expedition.

Mobile phones should **not** be used on the expedition, they can bring them to use on the minibus and to phone Parents after the expedition, but during, they will be sealed in a plastic sandwich bag so available if an emergency arises.

Pre-expedition expectations

If your son/ daughter participates in sporting activities, they should cope well with the demands of a Gold expedition, the challenges of steeper terrain and the carrying of a well packed rucksack. If new boots (**not walking trainers**) or rucksacks are to be used on the practice expedition, they should be thoroughly broken in and well fitting. So, I recommend a few days out over Easter. Although students have been fully advised, they may need you to encourage them to do this, as this will make the expedition much more comfortable and ultimately more enjoyable.

Food is not included in the price. As with other expeditions students need to provide their own food and be self-sufficient for the duration of the 4-day expedition. Again, this was addressed at the planning meeting to give students ideas, but pre-planning and practicing their menu can have a positive impact on the expedition.

Students on the day of departure will be stopping at the services, therefore, food/snacks/lunch can be purchased at the services. This will be repeated on the returning journey so students will need money for the services.

Emergency Contact Number 07968530221
Emergency Contact Mr Kneeshaw

Please do not use this mobile telephone number unless it is an emergency.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on
toneill@nsb.northants.sch.uk

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. O'Neill', with a large, stylized initial 'T' and 'O'.

Mrs T O'Neill
Head of Geography
D of E Manager
EVC

*BXM is the expedition company we use to support NSB with their Duke of Edinburgh expeditions
<https://bxmexpeditions.co.uk/>