

TON/hcl

May 2021

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. We have been impressed that a number of students have worked diligently on these sections, completing their uploads on the edofe system but there are some students who have yet to upload evidence and I would encourage you to speak to your child and ensure they have started this process. Students have now been given the deadline of **28 May 2021** to log on and start these sections and failure to do this will result in them not being invited on the expedition section of the course. They do not need to have completed it but must show evidence of activity at this stage.

**Expedition Information**

The Practice Gold Expedition will take place in the Black Mountains on the **15 July to the 19 July 2021**. With the Covid-19 restrictions and awaiting clearance we can only apologise for the short timeframe in giving notice.

With the changes in regulations and allowances from 17th May 2021 schools have authorisation to take students away on residential within the UK, and we are now therefore moving ahead with the scheduling of the Gold Expedition. If this should change the expedition would be cancelled and all monies refunded.

Students will need to meet at NSB swimming pool car park at **3:45pm 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021**. They should change out of their office dress and should travel in outdoor/expedition clothing. Trainers can be worn on the Minibus for the journey, but they will need 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 **7:30pm** on **19<sup>th</sup> July 2021** 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 cost of the expedition is **£210** this includes training and supervision with \*BXM staff, hire of kit (tents, stoves and fuel) and transport costs. Please pay via parent pay, if you do not use parent pay (which is the easiest way to pay) please contact the

finance department. A Medical/Consent form has also been attached to Parent pay for completion.

This cost **does not** include the Qualifying Expedition which is planned for July 2022 to the Lake District.

### **Payment Plan**

Payment 1: £100 by 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Payment 2 £110 by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### **Pre-Expedition Meeting**

Students are required to attend a compulsory meeting on the **29<sup>th</sup> June** in F8 from **3:25pm to 4:30pm**. The aim of the meeting will be to run through equipment, food, navigation, first aid, emergency procedure and arrange groups for the expedition.

### **Equipment**

Your son /daughter should now be well versed in what equipment they need take on expedition. A kit list will be issued during the June meeting.

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 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. Although students have been fully advised, they may need you to encourage them to do this, as will make the expedition a 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 will be addressed at the planning meeting to give students ideas, but pre-planning and practicing their menu can have a positive impact on the expedition.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on [toneill@nsb.northants.sch.uk](mailto:toneill@nsb.northants.sch.uk)

Yours faithfully

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/>