

15/04/2024

Dear Parents and Participants

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S GOLD AWARD - TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an integral part of the RGS journey for many students. As a school we strongly believe that challenging students outside the classroom provides an educational environment for students that allows them to have the opportunity to express individual character and values.

Please ensure you take some time to read through the information below thoroughly as it contains a number of important details.

Times & Locations

Friday 19th April

- Meeting Place: RGSHW by the minibuses
- Students to arrive from 6.15am onwards for a 6.30am departure
- Travel to the Brecon Beacons

Monday 22nd April

- Meeting Place: RGS HW
- Students to be collected no earlier than 8.00pm – Please be aware that there is no guarantee of our specific return time as it will depend on how long it takes teams to complete the course, and the subsequent journey home.

Expedition Food

All groups need to plan for and provide food for the duration of their programme. As part of the training teams will be instructed in the competent and safe use of the stoves. To facilitate this, teams will need to provide and cook a simple hot evening meal on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Please note teams must cook as a group not individually. Stoves (incl. pots/pans) and fuel are provided to all students on arrival.

Friday 19th April

Lunch Please provide suitable lunch food as a group (stoves cannot be used).
Evening Meal Please provide suitable evening meal food as a group. All groups are required to cook a hot meal.

Saturday 20th April

Breakfast Please provide suitable breakfast food as a group.
Lunch Please provide suitable lunch food as a group (stoves cannot be used).
Evening Meal Please provide suitable evening meal food as a group. All groups are required to cook a hot meal.

Sunday 21st April

Breakfast Please provide suitable breakfast food as a group.
Lunch Please provide suitable lunch food as a group (stoves cannot be used).
Evening Meal Please provide suitable evening meal food as a group. All groups are required to cook a hot meal.

Monday 22nd April

Breakfast Please provide suitable breakfast food as a group.
Lunch Please provide suitable lunch food as a group (stoves cannot be used).
Evening Meal Enjoy a hot meal at home!

You should also provide additional snacks and non-fizzy drinks. [Expedition Food](#) is a useful site to research ahead of your training. Please note that all expeditions are Nut-Free zones.

FAQ - Pot Noodles and Instant Pasta are not always appropriate for expedition. Ready food pouches "Wayfarer or Adventure Food" etc are a good item, however they can be costly and also weigh a considerable amount. As part of the DofE 20 conditions, students must prepare "one substantial meal a day". While it may include something like "Wayfarer or Adventure Food", I would advise that boys still need to consider how they substitute this with additional items to meet the criteria. This may include adding a dessert to their evening meal, cake/custard etc. Teams on training often note their need for additional snacks during the day so please take this into account when planning your menus.

Expedition Kit

Training is designed to give students the opportunity to learn and practise with the equipment they will carry on the assessed expedition as well as giving them the opportunity to experience walking with a full pack.

Core personal kit – Due to the nature of the trip as well as the type of terrain teams will be operating in, it is essential that students have the items listed below. Students who forget or who do not have appropriate equipment may be withdrawn from training/assessment by the instructors.

- **WALKING BOOTS** - students must have appropriate walking boots with ankle support, due to safety guidelines students attending in trainers or non-suitable footwear will be unable to participate)
- **RUCKSACK** 65ltr - not 40-55ltr, must have waist and chest strap
- **WATERPROOF JACKET & WATERPROOF OVER-TROUSERS** - not school jackets, Superdry etc or Down jackets. I cannot stress this area enough as we have seen a number of students attend local training with clothing that is not fit for purpose
- **X2 1 Ltr WATER BOTTLES**
- **SLEEPING BAG & CAMPING MAT**– 2.5 or 3 seasons (2-5 degrees rated)
- **FLEECE** - not a hoodie
- **HEADTORCH** & spare batteries

If you are unsure about any equipment we are happy to check items so please do let us know and we can discuss. A limited supply of kit will be available on loan, at no cost, from the RGS DofE stores. We currently do not have any rucksacks available.

Group kit consisting of tents, maps/compass, stove (incl. pots/pans) and fuel are provided to all students on arrival. Any other group kit items (eg: toilet roll, tin opener) must be organised by groups themselves.

IMPORTANT - Waterproof your equipment – sleeping bag stuff sacks are not waterproof and neither are rucksacks! Ensure you use sealable dry bags for anything that you don't want to get wet.

The DofE kit list can be found [here](#).

Medical

The School holds on file a record of students' medical information and this will be available to all staff during the trip. If there is any specific or additional information assessors should be aware of, please let Matron know in advance. All students should carry personal medication with them and it is advised that students issued with either an Epi-pen or inhaler should bring a spare with them on expedition.

Lyme Disease – Though the risk is low it is prudent for us to highlight this specific issue. Ticks that may cause Lyme disease are found all over the UK but can be more common in larger remote areas such as National Parks. Most tick bites are harmless and only a small number of ticks are infected with the bacteria that cause Lyme Disease. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/> .

Comms

Please be aware that we operate on a 'no news is good news' policy - if you don't hear from us, all is well!

Key Points for Participants

- Make sure you fill your water bottles before you leave home. You will need at least 2-3 litres
- Mobile phones can be carried on training but are for emergency use only. You should carry phones in a taped bag. Normal school rules apply and you are expected not to use them until the training course is completed.

I would ask all participants to be aware of the DoFE Teams group as a useful tool for sharing knowledge as well as a forum to discuss and prepare ahead of their trip. I am very much looking forward to the weekend and seeing you all there. Make sure to check you have all your kit ready a few days ahead. Bring some warm clothes, suitable boots and a good sleeping bag along with your food.

We would like to remind all participants that they are expected in school as normal following their training. We appreciate that the training is tiring, but this is not an authorised reason for absence.

If you have any questions, please feel free to come see me in School House over the next few days or email me on dofe@rgshw.com.

Good luck & enjoy!

D Clatworthy FRGS
Director of Co-Curricular Education