

8 May 2026

Dear Students and Parents/Carers

## **Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award**

As we get closer to expedition practice and the expedition dates, we provide further information about equipment hire and the important upcoming events.

### **Equipment**

Students will need to have all the necessary equipment, as per the Google Classroom task before Easter. Should they need to hire boots or a rucksack, they can do so at a cost of £10 per item payable via [Wisepay](#). Students will also need tents and stoves to cook on. Again, these can be hired at a cost of £20 per stove or tent (2 or 3 person), but students should talk to the other members of their group to decide exactly what they already have and what they would need to hire. All items can be kept until after completion of the Qualifying Expedition. Tents are either two-man or three-man. Each group will need two stoves.

So that we can keep track of what has been requested, please complete the [Equipment Request Form](#) once payment has been made and include the Wisepay reference.

Students will have been provided a route card, but they will need to transfer their route onto their maps. If they are unsure how to do this, they can seek assistance from a member of staff. However, all maps will be checked and amended where necessary during the morning before they leave. The walk, about 6 miles, will take place either in the morning or afternoon. It is VITAL that students bring their map AND Expedition Route Card with them. They will be accompanied by a responsible adult, in case of difficulty.

For the remainder of the day, students will receive information and training.

### **Bronze Practice Expedition Saturday 6 – Sunday 7 June 2026**

The practice expedition will start at Parmiter's School (please note the change of location from previous years) and finish at the Whippendell Woods car park, which is on Grove Mill Lane. It is compulsory for all students and they will be expected to make their own arrangements for travel prior to the start and at the end of the expedition.

Groups will depart from Parmiter's and they will be given a departure time between 11.00am and 3.00pm on Saturday 6 June. The groups departing first will walk in the morning and receive training on camping and cooking when they arrive at the campsite. These groups should arrive at Parmiter's no less than 15 minutes before their departure time. The groups departing later will do some campsite training before they leave, they will be given specific instructions as to when they should arrive. Teams arriving earlier than their allotted time will not start the expedition sooner.

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**Headteacher: Mr A Smith MPhil (Cantab), NPQH, FCCT, FRSA**

High Elms Lane, Garston, Herts WD25 0UU

admin@parmiters.herts.sch.uk | www.parmiters.herts.sch.uk | 01923 671424 | Thomas Parmiter Sports Centre 01923 682805

The walk should finish between 3.00pm and 5.00pm on Sunday 7 June, although students will ring when they are near to finishing. Please be aware that the Whippendell Woods car park will get very congested, often with parents arriving early in anticipation of their group's arrival. To minimise this disruption, lift-sharing is encouraged where possible and parents should wait for a call from their child before arriving at the car park.

In the event that a student misbehaves on the Expedition, parents/carers will be required to pick them up from the campsite. Be this during the day or in the middle of the night. Lack of consideration for the safety and well being of the other students or members of the public will not be tolerated.

Students will require the printed maps and route cards that they have already been provided with for day 1, and **two copies of the OS Explorer Map 172 per group** and **two compasses**. They must bring all their kit, including tents, stoves and rucksacks. They are expected to carry their rations, which will include 2x lunches, 1x hot evening meal and 1x hot breakfast, plus snacks. Students will also need to carry sufficient water each day (they can fill up overnight). They will not need money for the Practice Expedition. The groups will be given all they need to plan the expedition and they must arrange a meeting with their leader in school, so that these plans can be checked. A suggested kit list is available in the Training Manual. If students need to hire equipment, they should fill in the [Equipment Request Form](#) as soon as possible after payment has been made via [Wisepay](#). Blister plasters and sun cream would be a sensible inclusion in their first aid kits and waterproof jacket and trousers are essential! ALL EQUIPMENT IS TO BE INSIDE RUCKSACKS, as explained in training.

For both the Training and Qualifying Expeditions, mobile phones and smart watches are not allowed. Therefore, mobile phones must be sealed in an envelope with plenty of tape and placed inside a waterproof bag before arriving at the start, which will really speed things along. Smart watches should not be brought, however, it is very important for groups to be aware of the time during the day, so groups should organise for at least one standard analogue or digital watch per group.

Please note that, if a student does not come into school or take part in a school activity on the Monday following the Practice Expedition, they will not be allowed to attend the Final Expedition unless they have a doctor's note explaining why they were unable to attend school.

### **Bronze Qualifying Expedition** **Thursday 2 to Friday 3 July 2026**

Exact locations (inc maps required) and timings are still to be confirmed. However, students will need the **[OS Explorer Map 181 \(two per group\)](#)**.

Students must bring all their own kit, including tents, stoves and rucksacks. They are expected to carry their rations, which will include 2x lunches, 1x two course hot evening meal and 1x hot breakfast, plus snacks and emergency rations. They will also need to carry sufficient water each day (they can fill up at the campsite on Friday morning). Groups will be given all they need to plan the expedition and they must arrange a meeting with their leader so that these plans, routes, menus, Expedition Route cards **AND THEIR FULL KIT PACKED INSIDE THEIR RUCKSACKS (LESS FOOD)** can be checked **prior to the expedition**. If this is not done, students will not be allowed to go on the Qualifying Expedition. Blister plasters and sun cream would be a sensible inclusion in their first aid kits and waterproof jacket and trousers are essential! All equipment used by students on the Practice Expedition should be checked for completeness, dryness and cleanliness well before the Qualifying Expedition.

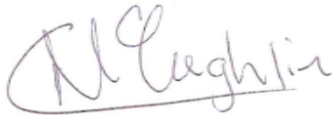
As part of the expedition, students are required to give a group presentation to their assessor on a subject of their choice connected with the expedition (known as the 'team goal') - such as local geography, flora, fauna, etc. If it is not considered to be of a sufficiently high standard, students cannot complete their Award. Therefore, students should undertake some research prior to embarking upon the Expedition.

In the event that a student misbehaves on the Expedition, parents/carers will be required to pick them up from the campsite.

There will be staff at various points along the routes and at the campsites during the evening. Due to the nature of the Award, we operate a remote supervision policy. As such, a mobile phone number is provided for emergencies. Please ensure that your child has written down the number in case they need it. Students will only be allowed to use mobile phones in emergencies, in accordance with the regulations of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, so **please do not try to contact them during the Expeditions and do not ask them to contact you**. All students need to have the DofE phone number: **07837 417235** and this should be their first point of contact (and yours) in case of problems. The phone is on the EE network, which has the best reception in the area, but you should be aware that reception can be patchy due to the remote location. However, there is reception at the campsite during the night. Students and parents may also ring the school directly (**01923 671424**) and they will call us on a different number if the above number is unobtainable.

It is very important that parents/carers and students realise that students will need to be self-motivated to complete the Award successfully; the whole ethos of the Award is that students should take responsibility for themselves and become more independent. To that end, they should organise their sections and expeditions themselves, identifying any items that need to be purchased and who is responsible for bringing the shared kit.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mr McLaughlin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mr McLaughlin

On behalf of The Duke of Edinburgh Team