



June 2026

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am delighted to outline the final arrangements for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Qualifying Expedition for Year 9.

As confirmed previously, the expedition will take place on **Friday 3 July 2026 to Saturday 4 July 2026** and will take place in The Cotswolds.

Qualifying Expedition Details

As a requirement of the Bronze Award, our students will compete a two-day and one-night expedition to Hayles Fruit Farm, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, GL54 5PB. www.haylesfruitfarm.co.uk 01242 602123

Students are expected to arrive at school by **7.00am on Friday 3rd**, heading to the canteen - and will be due back at school by **6.00pm on Saturday 4th**. The time of return is largely dependent on the progress the participants make on the last day and any issues we may encounter driving back – this time may therefore change. I will email you during the day on Saturday and provide a clear time for arrival and likely time that participants can be taken home.

Qualifying Expedition Details

The qualifying expedition for many is the highlight of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Students will be assessed on their ability to meet the 20 Conditions of DofE across the weekend, by accredited Expedition Assessors.

Students are assessed as a team, and thus if one person in a walking group fails to meet one of the twenty conditions – the whole team is liable to fail. Students are reminded that whilst out on expedition they are representing North Leamington School and should behave in a wholly responsible manner which is in keeping with the expectations of a pupil at our school and following the Countryside Code at all times.

During the expedition, our students will be walking in the Broadway/Winchcombe area of the Cotswolds, heading to our campsite at Hayles Fruit Farm, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, GL54 5PB.

Expedition Kit Distribution – 1st July 2026 3.15pm – 4.00pm

On the Wednesday before our expedition, students will have a final meeting and go through the process of signing for their expedition kit – supplied by North Leamington School. The kit provided is expensive and students are expected to return their kit in the condition it was loaned out. Missing, or broken kit caused by misuse will incur a charge for replacement.

All kit borrowed will need to be returned and signed back in, but this will be done on the following Monday morning at 8.00 am.

School will provide the following kit:-

65lt rucksack, tent (shared between 2/3), cooking stove & fuel, roll mat, first aid kit, map (1 per group) and compasses. All other expedition kit, including clothes, sleeping bag, utensils, and food will need to be supplied by home. *Students may use their own rucksack provided it is a minimum of 65lt and tent so long as it is 2-3 person*

On **Friday 3 July** students should arrive at school no later than **7.00am** for their departure via coach to their drop off location in the Cotswolds. Whilst out on expedition, students are expected to walk independently. Students will need to use their learned navigation skills and follow their planned route at all times.

Part of the Duke of Edinburgh qualifying expedition, qualifying will need to complete several camp craft based tasks upon their arrival at camp.

This will include:-

- Setting up a tent 3 metres from any neighbouring ones
- Taking down of the tent
- Cooking a substantial meal on a meths stove
- Maintaining their area neatly and tidily to ensure kit is accounted for and orderly stored.

As a school we have enjoyed a great relationship with the campsite owners at Hayles Fruit Farm. Whilst we want our expedition to be a memorable one, this should not come at the expense of disruption of members of the public and potentially other school parties who will be accessing the campsite that weekend. We will be always expecting respectful and appropriate behaviour whilst at camp; also ensuring no litter is left behind. No student should be entering any tent which is not theirs at any time, and Students will be expected to be in their tents by 9.30pm and lights out by 10.00pm. The expedition is a tiring process, and will need to be well rested ahead of the Day 2 walk.

Saturday 4 July - Students are expected to be up by **6.00am** on Saturday morning. Walks are scheduled to commence by **8.00am** and completed by **3.00pm** to ensure a timely return to NLS. The walking groups will receive a short de-brief upon the completion of their day two walks. During the de-brief they will be asked for their reflections on their DofE experience and informed of the outcome of their qualifying expedition. Following this, they will be transferred back to North Leamington School. **Students will take their kit home with them and dry out tents and bags, clean Trangias and other equipment.** Students are asked to return them on Monday 6 July between 8.00 and 8.30 am, meeting Mr Barrett at the DofE storage container.

Dress and Equipment Students should be dressed appropriately for two days walking in the summer: with all kit and food they will need for two days, including at least **2x 1 litre** re-fillable water bottles. Students are reminded that they must be wearing walking boots and have a waterproof top and bottoms accessible in their rucksack even if the forecast is dry. Students must bring a packed lunch to eat on Friday and Saturday; a meal that they can cook on a Trangia on the Friday evening and a breakfast such as a porridge pot that they can eat on Saturday morning. As they are walking somewhere in the region of thirty kilometres over the two days, snacks and carbohydrate heavy foods are advised to ensure they have the necessary energy to complete each day. Essential equipment is listed below:

Walking boots, waterproofs, sleeping bag, a change of clothes for camp, trainers/flipflops, packed lunches, dinner to be cooked on a Trangia (e.g. dry pasta, boil-in-a-bag meal), breakfast (hot chocolate, porridge pot), water bottle, plastic bag for litter, utensils, medication, sun cream, sun hat, wristwatch, sweets & snacks

Further information including a more comprehensive kit list; meal planners and camp etiquette can be found on our DLH space [Duke of Edinburgh - Home](#)

Behaviour: Whilst we want our expeditions to be memorable, this should not come at the expense of disruption of members of the public and potentially other school parties who will be accessing the campsites at the same time. We will be expecting respectful and appropriate behaviour at all times whilst at camp; also ensuring no litter is left behind. No student should be entering any tent which is not theirs at any time, and are expected to be in their tents by 9.30pm and lights out by 10.00pm. The expedition is a tiring process, and students will need to be well rested.

Mobile phones: It is a condition of Duke of Edinburgh expeditions that students do not use their phones so we will be 'bagging' the students' phones when we first get on the coach before we leave on Friday morning. Because our mobile phone policy does not allow phones to be out of bags, students should keep their phones in their bags until they are about to get on the coach. At this point they can be removed and placed in a pocket on their person whilst they board the coach. From there, phones will be sealed in a bag on the coach and then placed in their rucksack when we arrive at our start point. Students are reminded that any phones brought on the expedition should be turned on with the ring volume on loud so that they can be heard should a member of staff need to contact them during the expedition.

If students want to bring a battery pack to extend the life of their phones, they are welcome to do so and that can be bagged alongside the phone to ensure the phone remains charged.

Equally, if you would rather your child did not have their phone on them, that is perfectly fine – I would only ask that they ensure that amongst their walking group (between 4 and 7 students per group) they have at least two phones on them.

Can I please make it clear that anyone found using their mobile phone on expedition outside of the agreed parameters will immediately fail and this is non-negotiable.

During the weekend, students will be given the staff mobile numbers of **07918 335230** which will be carried by another member of our staff and **07386 685678** which I will have with me. If you have any concerns over the course of the weekend, please contact me using one of these two numbers.

All participants are asked to store this number in their phones (if they are bringing them) and to download the **what3words app** as well. Please note I will not have this number until the day of departure, so all communications need to come through the email below up until that point. In the unlikely event of extreme weather conditions, a decision will be made by myself to prematurely end the expedition; students will be returned to school.

Medication: Any student taking medication is responsible for remembering to bring those items. Asthma sufferers especially are reminded to bring their inhalers, and those requiring EpiPens must ensure they are present. In terms of medicine, parents/carers must acquaint themselves with the policy here: [Link to Policy on Supporting Students with Medical Needs](#). Parents/Carers will need to ensure they pass on all medicines (prescription or over-the-counter ones) with a copy of the Parental Agreement (consent) form found on page 7. If you need a paper copy of the form provided for you, please ask me.

Students are reminded that to access the expeditions – they must have completed two out of their three units (SKILL, VOLUNTEERING, PHYSICAL) and have evidence that they are working towards the third.

If at any point you need to speak with myself regarding any aspect of the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact jbarrett@northleamington.co.uk.

Yours faithfully,



Mr James Barrett

DofE Manager

Tel: 01926 338711 x8614