



Dear Parent/Carer,

Duke of Edinburgh Award (Silver) – Expedition Update

It was with great disappointment, that following the Easter break, two of our Silver expedition students made the decision to withdraw from the programme. This meant that the team only had 3 remaining participants. To qualify for the Duke of Edinburgh Award, each team must have between 4 and 7 members.

Since this time, we have attempted to recruit new members to the team, from either the remaining bronze cohort or from eligible year groups, that could join as a direct entry Silver candidate. While one student was keen to join, unfortunately they were ineligible due to their age.

Our activity partner, Simonside Outdoor Adventure, has offered your child a place on their forthcoming open expedition. These alternative dates are:

Monday 22nd – Thursday 25th July – Silver kit collection, training and practice walk
Monday 12th – Thursday 15th August - Silver kit collection and qualifying walk

We understand however, that for 2 of the children, these dates are unsuitable.

What are my choices now?

- 1) Simonside Outdoor Adventure will make our dates known to other schools, to see whether there is any one that wishes to join us. However, as their dates have already been pre-planned for some time, it is not certain that we can attract any participants. As a reminder, the dates that we have planned are:

Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd September – Silver Practice walk and training
Friday 4th – Sunday 6th October - Silver qualifying walk

- 2) Should the alternative open expedition in July be a suitable alternative, you can join as an individual. If you would like to select this option, please let me know and I will help support you in organising this trip.
- 3) Your child can continue with their Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections and can complete their expedition at a later date, either with their new 6th form provider or on a future open expedition with Simonside Outdoor Adventure (dates TBC, but likely to start in Spring 2025).

Once again, I am saddened that we have been unable to keep the team together, a first in our history of running the programme, and we hope that all students are able to secure an alternative for their expedition. Should Simonside confirm that they have students wishing to join us, I will inform you immediately.

Finally, we had a parents evening planned for **Tuesday May 14th between 5:00pm and 5:45pm.** This will include the new bronze cohort who are about to embark on their first expedition. As such, there is **no requirement** for you to attend this meeting.

I would also suggest that any expedition payments are put on hold for the foreseeable future until an alternative solution is confirmed, and should you have paid any to date, these can be refunded at your request.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Ford-Hutchinson (Character Development Champion/ Duke of Edinburgh Manager)
Mr Ward (Head of Geography)