

8 April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Duke of Edinburgh expeditions & COVID-19

It is with regret that I am writing to make you aware that in light of the school closures, we have been forced to postpone all Duke of Edinburgh expeditions for our Bronze, Silver and Gold cohorts. This was an extremely difficult decision to make and we understand there will be a great deal of disappointment amongst students not least because it tends to be the most exciting part of their award. We have been considering the best course of action for a number of weeks, and trying to delay the decision but in light of it remaining unclear when schools are likely to reopen, it has left us with little choice but to postpone all expeditions until we return to school.

I want to reassure you that participants' efforts will not go to waste and when the situation changes they will be able to complete their expeditions and receive their DofE award. When school reopens, we will be working with Get Outside the Classroom to rearrange the expeditions and will not be charging parents anything further for students to complete their award. These expeditions may take a slightly different format, given that our current cohort of students are likely to be in Year 10, 11 and 13 by the time these expeditions resume. There will inevitably also be other considerations, but the overarching goal will be to enable participants to successfully complete their DofE award.

Our students have worked extremely hard on their DofE awards to date; most of them have already completed up to 75% of their sections and it would be a real shame for that hard work not to count towards a completed award. We urge all parents to continue to support participants to finish the award they have started, and in many cases have committed so much time and energy to already.

Skill, Physical and Volunteering sections

It is important to say that the other parts of the award can continue and the DofE have made a number of changes to the normal requirements in light of the COVID-19 pandemic so that participants can finish their Skill, Volunteering and Physical sections from home. Please continue to upload your evidence (photos and Assessor Reports) to eDofE. If you find your current Skill, Physical or Volunteering activities have had to stop, you can change it by logging onto eDofE via the link below and applying to change it (this has to then be approved by us so please click Submit). You will also find creative and inspirational ideas for your new choices in another link below.

Some examples for changes could be:

- **Volunteering:** helping out with DIY or in the garden, carrying out essential errands for a neighbour, the Missing Maps activity online could be done on daily exercise (of course observing Social Distancing) – other ideas are on the DofE website.

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- **Physical:** walking/cycling/running outside as part of daily exercise, Joe Wicks (The Body Coach), Le Mills on Demand, Fly LDN live yoga classes on Instagram, School of SOS online dance routines via Instagram, walking the dog, using home gym equipment, Wii Fit programmes. Whatever participants can do to remain active will really help their physical and mental well-being during this uncertain time.
- **Skill:** it's really easy to pick up new skills at the moment that might be of help to participants themselves and wider family, e.g. painting, photography, tracing your family history, cooking, DIY, knitting, playing a musical instrument, art & craft, gardening, astronomy, electronics, keeping livestock, pet care, learning about military history, dog training, singing, vegetable growing, snooker/pool, chess, project about the RNLI, candle-making, cake decoration, ceramics, drawing, fabric printing, furniture restoration/'upcycling', woodwork and many more!

Click for more [Section Ideas](#)

With so much time at home, we strongly recommend that students log onto eDofE to find out which stage they are at in each section, upload any Assessor Reports they have or can get hold of, and change any chosen activities where these cannot be continued in light of social distancing measures. Whatever participants' new activities might be, please ensure they remain within Government guidelines for staying at home and that participation does not put them or anyone else at risk. Whilst this situation is obviously not ideal, there is a great opportunity here to practise the notion of social responsibility and participants may find their volunteering can support others in the community.

Assessor Reports and evidence:

- Where they can, participants should obtain an Assessor Report from their original assessor to support your participation so far by email or directing to your eDofE account by giving your assessor the start and end date you were with them and your eDofE ID.
- Where this can't be done, a statement from you as parents/carer verifying their participation to date.
- For any activity participants are now doing at home, they will still need an Assessor Report. As you know, the DofE ask that parents should not be assessors. However, this will be acceptable if participants keep an activity log/personal diary of their participation, take photos and have a written Assessor Report from a parent/carer.

Helpful links for participants:

[Flowchart](#) – keeping DofE Awards going during COVID-19

[FAQ for Participants](#) – encourage your child to read these to take ownership of their award from home

[Opportunity Finder](#) – if participants need to choose a new activity

[Changing your activity on eDofE](#) – step-by-step guide to changing an activity on eDofE

We will be understanding when we sign off participants' new activities, but please ensure they add a bit more information and a few more photos to demonstrate how they have completed they section. Participants should aim to stick to the 1 hour per week of Skill/Physical/Volunteering where possible, but if not, participants can participate in smaller time frames that add up to 1 hour, for example 2 x 30 mins. A record of all participation should be kept using the Activity Logs which can be accessed [here](#)

If your child has forgotten their password for eDofE, they need to type in their username and click '*forgot password*'. This will send a '*reset password*' link to the email address participants originally set up on their

account. If your child has forgotten their username or for any other queries relating to section choices, evidence or logons, please contact Mrs S Hill (shill@lymmhigh.org.uk).

We would like to wish participants the very best with their continued participation in DofE awards and look forward to seeing and verifying all the fantastic and inventive activities they come up with.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Dixon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Natalie Dixon

Assistant Headteacher