



The Castle School
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Year 11 Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions: Updated information for Students and Parents January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As you know, we were unable to run the D of E expeditions as planned last summer. Since then I have been giving careful thought as to how we can deliver these expeditions before our students leave the school in July. I am also all too aware of how the pandemic is causing anxiety and stress for our young people and I do not want the pressure of planning and training for an expedition to add to this. However, even more importantly, I do not want them to miss out on such a life-affirming, fun and overwhelming positive experience that the expedition offers, especially when they have already missed out on so much.

Therefore, we have decided to condense the practice and assessed expeditions into one three-day two-night expedition that will cover the majority of the training, the planning and also the assessed expedition itself. This will be based at Kilve Court Residential Education Centre and in order to complete the required training and planning, each expedition group will have a dedicated Kilve instructor who will train them in the skills they need and assist them to plan the expedition. This will take place on the first day. Kilve's instructors will then run the assessed expedition on the second and third days with Castle staff providing overnight supervision, pastoral care and overseeing the running of the expedition.

Dates for the expedition are:

Friday 9, Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 July 2021

This solution negates the need for the majority of the weekly training and planning meetings which we are currently unable to run due to lock down. There will still be the need for some meetings to check kit and confirm arrangements and when students return to school I will confirm when these will be. Please ask your children to check their school emails for details when they return.

Clearly, I am hoping that many of the current restrictions will have been lifted by the summer. However, if needed there are numerous ways of adapting this plan to accommodate remaining restrictions. My overriding aim is to provide an experience as close as possible to the one they would have had before the pandemic.

Further details will be sent closer to the time but I have included the current expedition kit list. If required, all equipment can be hired for a very reasonable cost from Somerset County Council's Youth Equipment Store which is based at Kilve Court. Please email if you would like further information about this. (Please note that tents, stoves, gas and maps are provided by the school.)

Volunteering, Physical and Skill Sections

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has made various changes to their normal criteria to help participants to continue with these sections during the pandemic. Details can be found here [#DofEWithADifference - The Duke of Edinburgh's Award](#)

In addition, participants do have until they are 25 years old to complete the Award, although experience shows that if they do not complete the Award before they leave school it can often fall by the way side. Therefore, I would encourage all participants to do as much as they can to complete all sections before they move on to the next stage of their education/employment.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me by email: bslade@castle.somerset.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Slade', written in a cursive style.

Brendan Slade
Trust Premises Manger – The Castle Partnership Trust
D of E Coordinator – The Castle School