



ST MARGARET'S
SCHOOL

Duke of Edinburgh and Outdoors Education Protocol

Reviewed and updated February 2023

Next review: August 2023

St Margaret's Duke of Edinburgh and Outdoors Education Protocol

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. This policy outlines St Margaret's School (the School) approach to managing Duke of Edinburgh Award (DoE) expeditions.
- 1.2. This policy has been written in accordance with the information provided by the Duke of Edinburgh Award guidance, including the National Guidance from the OEAP (Outdoor and Expeditions Advisors Panel) Handbook for DoE Leaders and the DoE Expedition Guide. It also is to be read alongside the School's Educational Visits Policy (EVP), Visiting Speakers' Protocol, Mobile Phone Use on Trips Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy has also been written in accordance with relevant government and HSE health and safety guidance.
- 1.3. The School recognises that outdoors education can form a key part of any child's learning experiences, teaching them skills for life and promoting good mental health and attitudes toward conservation, voluntary services and the environment. The School offers a series of outdoors programmes such as Duke of Edinburgh, the Year 9 Outdoors education Award and World Challenge.

2. Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 2.1. The Head is responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of this protocol and has delegated responsibility for this to the Head of DoE, EVC, Head of Co-curricular and Vice Principal for day to day running. The identity of the Head of DoE, EVC, Head of Co-curricular and Vice Principal can be found in the staff handbook.
- 2.2. Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 2.3. The Head of DoE has overall responsibility for planning, organising and running DoE expeditions in accordance with this policy and Award licensing requirements.
- 2.4. Delegated leaders may assume coordinating roles for individual awards, the Year 9 outdoors award and World Challenge.
- 2.5. At all times leaders of any expedition must adhere to the DoE guidelines and the School's EVP.
- 2.6. All School staff must be experienced and trained at the time of going out on expedition work.
- 2.7. The School may use an external organisation to assist with expeditions, training, planning and support of leaders and staff in School. These will be sought through

following the relevant checks and by following the School's **Visiting Speakers' Policy**.

- 2.7.1. Before the School uses an external organisation to assist in this way, the School will ensure that the external organisation has the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge and an AALA licence or if overseas, a similar local accreditation.
- 2.7.2. If the external organisation has neither of these, the School will make the appropriate checks in accordance with government guidance on health and safety on educational visits. The School will have an agreement with the external organisation that makes it clear what everyone is responsible for.
- 2.7.3. Where appropriate, the School will require the external organisation to confirm that they follow the guide to the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom as the basis for planning and risk assessment. **Paragraphs 4.3 and 8 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022** also apply as to assessment of venues and providers.

3. Aims

- 3.1. To ensure that all DoE expeditions, outdoors awards and overseas outdoors challenges are planned and implemented in accordance with legal responsibilities, Award Licensing requirements and recognised good practice, in a way which maximises the safety of pupils, staff and volunteers.
- 3.2. To provide a framework of responsibilities and considerations which must be applied at all times in the planning and implementation of any DoE expedition, outdoors award or overseas challenge on foot.

4. Planning an Expedition

- 4.1. All expeditions should be planned and organised in line with the appropriate body's guidance e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, World Challenge etc. as well as the School's EVP. Where appropriate, the School will follow the guide to the [British Standard for Adventurous Activities](#) Outside the United Kingdom as a basis for the planning.
- 4.2. If it is necessary for any part of the expedition to be organised in such a way that it will not comply with the Educational Visits Policy then this must be highlighted by the relevant Head of DoE to the Head, Educational Visits Coordinator and School's Designated Safeguarding Lead, who must sign off on any changes.
- 4.3. All events must include a work planned and informed risk assessments.
 - 4.3.1. Where the expedition is outside the UK, the School will follow the guide to the British Standard for Adventurous Activities Outside the United Kingdom as a basis for the risk assessment.
 - 4.3.2. Where adventure activities such as caving, climbing, trekking, or water activities are involved, a higher level of risk assessment shall be

undertaken. These activities will be identified and risk assessed beforehand.

- 4.3.3. Should an event involving climbing or watersports (including swimming), this would constitute a 'higher risk' event and special care should be taken to ensure that the risks are properly identified and assessed beforehand. This should include assessing the need for instructors and/or lifeguards and any health and safety guidance specific to the activity, such as the guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisor Panel.
 - 4.3.4. Once the expedition is planned and the risk assessment is completed, 'higher risk' activities as defined above, should not be added during the expedition without a further risk assessment being completed.
 - 4.3.5. The School will have an appropriate emergency response plan and a communications plan in place—see also **Section 9 and Appendix 6 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022.**
 - 4.3.6. Only trained and experienced staff such as assessors are able to sign off on risk assessments for expeditions such as DoE.
- 4.4. Staff signing up to more challenging expeditions and schemes such as World Challenge must be prepared to give up their summer holiday a long time in advance and be committed to support children as they fundraise, meet with parents and actively support. They should also be familiar with and able to negotiate challenging terrain. Staff will be given appropriate training as particularised below. Many of these are considered to be trips of a lifetime, but the staff must see their primary role as the teacher in a position of trust and in loco parentis the person in charge of their wellbeing and safety.

5. Expedition Supervisor and Assessors (DoE)

- 5.1. The Head of DoE or an appropriate person nominated by them will have overall responsibility for the planning, organising and running of any expedition. Those running individual expeditions are known as coordinators.
- 5.2. The Expedition Coordinator, identified by the Head of DoE will support by coordinating the planning pupil participation days and parent talks in advance of practice and real expeditions. They will also be in charge of remotely coordinating, tracking and monitoring expedition group progress and coordinating supervisory activity as required. They will be supported by on the ground supervisors.
- 5.3. DoE Group Supervisor: Each DoE Expedition group will have a nominated Group Supervisor who will have overall responsibility for the supervision and safety of the group in accordance with the expedition supervisory plan. This may be a member of trained School staff or an outdoors educational company member as checked and approved by the School. They are usually joined by Assistant Group Supervisors on expeditions.
- 5.4. DoE Assistant Group Supervisor: An Expedition group may have an additional Assistant Group Supervisor to assist the DoE Group Supervisor. On larger

expeditions they may also be supported by staff who help for the day at the campsite or to fulfil a specific pastoral role or managing equipment/ hostel accommodation or evening supervision. These are usual School staff members known to the children and are listed as '*any other member of staff*' on the trip paperwork and have had their functions explained to them and been provided with relevant training, as per the School's EVP.

5.5. DoE Assessor: All Expedition Assessors must be trained and accredited at the appropriate level. For Duke of Edinburgh Awards, the Expedition Assessor must be accredited by the Expedition Assessor Accreditation Scheme (EAAS).

6. Expedition Terrain

6.1. DoE Expeditions will normally take place within the following terrain:

- Bronze – normal, rural countryside which can be familiar and local to the pupils
- Silver – normal, rural open countryside or forest which is unfamiliar to the pupils. The environment should be more demanding for pupils than at Bronze level.
- Gold – wild country (remote from habitation) which is unfamiliar to pupils. The environment should be more demanding for pupils than at Silver level.

6.2. Year 9 outdoors Award will normally take place in a combination of St Margaret's Grounds, local countryside or terrain close to Bronze Level DoE.

6.3. World Challenge will be overseas in a challenging and unfamiliar terrain reflecting something similar to Gold DoE.

7. Expedition Supervisor Training

7.1. Training, support, assistance with kit, paying for food on the expeditions and hostel shelter as opposed to tents are all ways in which we can build and maintain a team of people ready, able and willing to support these initiatives.

7.2. All expedition Staff will be required to have undertaken where possible, or be prepared to undertake:

- DoE Course/ Qualification Head of DoE/ Designated Person
- Expedition Coordinator
- Expedition Supervisor
- Expedition Volunteer
- DBS Check for external and internal staff
- Expedition Assessor
- First Aid
- Administering of Medicines [Educare]
- Orientation with the 'E DoE' platform

For new staff to the programme or the School:

- Expedition Supervisor

- Induction –to include elements of the DoE Award or similar, map reading, guided walking, equipment, requirements, safety etc.
- Intro to DoE

These will be coordinated across the year by the Head of DoE. Looking after staff in order to ensure the longevity of these expeditions in school is also important. If staff feel they need more or different training they should see the Head of DoE or the EVC.

7.3. The Head of DoE is responsible for identifying individual training requirements and booking appropriate training courses.

7.4. The Head of DoE will maintain a centralised record of staff training and competency assessments completed.

8. Expedition Supervisor Role Competency

8.1. Following appropriate training, an individual will be expected to achieve competency through a supported structured developmental programme, described below, before they will be eligible to perform the role.

8.2. Process for Bronze and Silver Level Supervisors:

8.2.1. It is expected that Supervisors will have already had some experience of this in their previous school or at St Margaret's or first demonstrate competency by carrying out the role of Assistant Group Supervisor, working with a more experienced Group Supervisor, or have completed the Expedition Supervisor Training Course.

8.2.2. Once the Head of DoE is satisfied that the staff member has demonstrated sufficient knowledge, understanding and skill in the role, they will be considered 'competent' in that role.

8.3. Process for Gold Level Supervisors: Gold Expeditions are required to take place in 'Wild Country'; Expedition Supervisors will be required to possess a high level of experience, technical ability and knowledge of operating in Wild Country environments. Individuals holding a National Governing Body Qualification (NGBQ) such as Mountain Leader (Summer) will be considered competent to supervise a group in Wild Country.

8.4. In most cases the School will employ the services of an outdoors education company with staff qualified in these areas to support and run Gold. However, for School staff who may be asked to lead, individuals not holding a NGBQ will be required to demonstrate competence as follows:

- Produce and maintain an up to date expedition/walking log book, for submission as required by the Head of DoE.
- Carry out the role of Assistant Group Supervisor (Wild Country), working with a competent Group Supervisor on a number of Gold Expeditions.
- Undertake DoE Expedition competency training as required by the Head of DoE.

- Demonstrate a high level of experience, technical ability and knowledge of operating in Wild Country environments during an independent assessment by an appropriately qualified and experienced competent person.
- 8.5. When the School employs the services of an outdoors education company to support and run Gold, it will ensure that the company is an Approved Activity Provider as approved by DoE (“AAP”). If the AAP is not approved by The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority, the School shall carry out appropriate checks should be made before engaging the AAP.
 - 8.6. A person will be considered competent to carry out the independent assessment if they possess an NGBQ, and have recent and relevant experience of operating in Wild Country environments and current knowledge of DoE Expedition Supervisory requirements.
 - 8.7. The independent assessment of competence for a Group Supervisory will be normally valid for a 3-year period and is not valid in, or transferable to, any other Licenced Organisation.
 - 8.8. The Head of DoE may remove an individual’s assessment of competence following any evidenced concerns about their ability or performance within the role.
 - 8.9. Individuals holding Expedition Supervisor accreditation previously issued will be considered competent in the role identified until the expiry date has been reached.
 - 8.10. The Head of DoE will ensure that appropriate records are maintained to support and evidence training, qualifications and competency of CPD.

9. Expedition Supervisory Plans

- 9.1. Group Supervisors will be required to complete and submit an Expedition Supervisory Plan for their group for each day of the expedition, to the Head of DoE, prior to the start of the expedition.

10. Supervisory Ratios

- 10.1. Usually expeditions will err on the side of caution and take slightly more staff than government advised ratios ask for. If for any reason staff are unable to attend an expedition and replacements cannot be found the Head of DoE should inform the EVC as soon as possible.
- 10.2. Bronze and Silver Expeditions: There must be a minimum of 2 Group Supervisors within any DoE Expedition that takes place. If there is more than 1 group on expedition, each group must have a Group Supervisor allocated.
- 10.3. Gold Expeditions: There must be a minimum of 2 Group Supervisors within any DoE Expedition that takes place. If there are both male and female pupils then there should be a male and female supervisor. There must be a Supervisor per group on the Expedition.

- 10.4. The Head of DoE will identify an Expedition Coordinating Team and additional Supervisor(s) that may be required to support the Expedition as required, particularly in the case of Wild Country Expeditions.
- 10.5. If there are both male and female pupils then there should be a male and female supervisor. Care, thought and attention must be given to groupings, who shares tents and supervision. Often a talk with the child's Head of Year can support the coordinator's grouping choices.

11. Equipment

- 11.1. The Head of DoE is responsible for auditing and managing the equipment the School owns for expeditions. Auditing includes taking reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that the equipment is safe and appropriate for use by staff and pupils. However, the expedition use of it is managed by the particular trip leader in charge. This usually involves counting, looking at the usability of and ordering more tents, stoves, trangeas and compasses and maps as needed. It will also involve taking reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that the equipment is safe and appropriate for use by staff and pupils in the context of the particular trip
- 11.2. Trip leaders should test the kit for future expeditions and ensure that pupils have dried out/returned kit safely after use.
- 11.3. The Head of DoE will also maintain a kit list for each award, sharing this with parents and pupils, with recommended suppliers and brands to suit all budgets and to ensure pupils can be out safe in all weathers. No pupil should get on a minibus or coach without their bags being checked for the correct equipment. Staff leaders should factor in time for this prior to departure.
- 11.4. The Head of DoE is in charge of the GPS trackers which they may decide to use at their discretion.
- 11.5. In accordance with the School's EVP any award coordinator or person leading any expedition is nominally the 'Trip Leader' and therefore also responsible for following School procedures for planning. This includes collecting Trip Phones from the EVC [as many as needed per leader of each group], first aid kits [as many as needed per leader of each group], checking medical details with the School Nurse. Before undertaking any off-site activities or educational visits, the trip leader should assess what level of first aid provision is needed and identify any additional items that may be necessary for specialised activities. They will look after the first aid equipment and facilities and call the emergency services when required. In the case of pupils participating on a trip who carry an epi-pen, an additional epi-pen must be carried by a member of staff on that trip.

Staff and pupils will be informed of the location of first aid equipment, facilities, the first aider or appointed person. Parents or carers will be informed of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable, of any first aid treatment given. Sections 2.1b and 7.4 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022 also apply.

For further information on this please see the Educational Visits Policy and Mobile Phone Use on Trips Policy.

- 11.6. Staff may decide to take with them additional food for children and staff; camping chairs or equipment for colleagues accompanying the trip. They may also take a few spare waterproof warm clothing articles. These should be from a clearly demarcated clothing kit which is known about, and not an item of the staff's own clothing. Out on the hills staff are advised to remember that they are there in the capacity as a member of School staff and their primary objective is to safeguard children in their care.

No member of staff should share any item of their own equipment with a pupil, including clothing. No member of staff should break teaching standards code of conduct, or which is classes as a low-level concern or which gives rise to a safeguarding concern.

- 11.7. Staff are able to obtain petty cash from the school finance office and/or are able to charge back staff costs through expenses in the usual way.

12. Transport

- 12.1. Smaller groups on expedition in the UK will usually travel the venue via train or the School's minibuses, with a qualified minibus driver on staff driving. Ideally there will be two qualified minibus drivers in each minibus.
- 12.2. In the school minibuses there will always be at least two members of staff, spread out across the bus. The same high levels of care, duty and professionalism staff are expected to exhibit at school are expected during minibus trips like this. Risks associated with transport will be identified and managed as far as reasonably practicable. The School's emergency response plan and communications plan will be followed — see Section 9 and Appendix 6 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022.
- 12.3. Issues with the minibus must be reported to the bursary as soon as possible.
- 12.4. Larger groups may decide to opt for coaches, but are asked to bear in mind additional costs which might prevent some pupils from accessing the awards as a result. The same level of high standards of care and behaviour are expected on a coach. It is important when booking (see the Schools' EV policy for how to do this) it is stipulated that the requisite storage for equipment, numbers of seats on a coach and seatbelts are a non-negotiable. Trip leaders will need to call the company in advance to check all details are as they should be.
- 12.5. Any mode of transport used must factor in timings, rest stops, food stops, management of groups, ease of access to planned destinations especially if a minibus or coach is being taken to the countryside with less well maintained roads and access to campsites etc.
- 12.6. For older and smaller groups, it might be the case that parental consent is sought for pupils to meet staff at the destination.
- 12.7. See also Section 7.3 of Educational Visits Policy 2022.

13. Administration and other elements of these awards

- 13.1. Training will be given to staff in order to advise on all the non-expedition elements of DoE, including the eDoE system, who can be an administrative assessor for the Bronze, Silver and Gold, which prefects can be DoE ambassadors, its various components such as volunteering and how pupils can be advised for this, signing off various elements of awards etc.
- 13.2. The Head of DoE will oversee the completion of all elements of pupil awards with administrative support coming from a variety of channels.
- 13.3. The Head of DoE will oversee a system and list of names of those who complete the Year 9 outdoors education award
- 13.4. The Head of DoE will put forward names for those who need to receive certificates on stage in assemblies, Head's Awards, positive postcards home and special mentions for their achievements.
- 13.5. The team will collectively evaluate trips, expeditions, approaches and experiences across the year, feeding back to the Head of DoE for further discussion with the EVC and the Senior Management Team.
- 13.6. That all staff contribute to a positive impression of the schemes and their benefits to everyone in the community is crucial, and one of the main ways of recruiting further staff to lead initiatives in the future.
- 13.7. It is important that any assessor signing off elements of the DoE award does so only when standards have been met. The School does not support signing off of sections for reasons which sit outside of the DoE guidelines. To do so undermines the integrity of the award and creates unfairness between pupils.

14. Evaluation

- 14.1. The School's evaluation process covers planning through to the trip itself. The School will keep a record of any incidents, accidents and near misses and comply with reporting requirements.
- 14.2. Evaluation reports will be the responsibility of the Head of DoE.
- 14.3. Evaluation reports will be made in accordance with **paragraph 4.7 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022** and the forms at **Appendices 7 and 8 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022**

15. Parental communication and consent

- 15.1. In accordance with government guidance on health and safety on educational visits, the School will always inform parents about trips and provide them with the option to withdraw their child. The School will always obtain written parental consent where the trip requires a higher level of risk assessment or is outside normal school hours.

15.2. Paragraph 4.4 of the Educational Visits Policy 2022, which applies to parental communication and consent, will be complied with.

16. Use of mobile phones on Duke of Edinburgh expeditions

16.1. In recognition of the increased needs to ensure safety and whereabouts of students on these specific forms of educational visit, trip leaders will necessarily need an enhanced mobile phone policy to that outlined in the educational visits policy.

16.2. At times around the specific use of mobile phones for the purposes of expedition practice or assessment, the School's usual mobile phone policy will apply.

16.3. Prior to the expeditions

- As part of the pre-departure talk or webinar, parents or guardians are reminded that they should not attempt to call DoE participants during the expedition, in line with educational visits policy and DoE guidelines.
- Any contact must be made through the DoE Manager / Supervisor.
- Students will be briefed on arrangements by the Trip Leader, ensuring they have understood.
- Support will be given to students prior to departure for installation of the correct apps and their uses on their phones.

16.4. Arrangements

- Each group must have a minimum of two mobile phones with sufficient credit / plan and the appropriate charger.
- All phones should only have **OS Locate**, **Life360** and **What3words** apps installed. These are the agreed apps which will be used.
- Prior to departure all phones apart from two are switched off. These are back up phones.
- The two mobile phones that are switched on must have data switched on. These are the safety contact phones.
- All mobile phones must be sealed inside separate bags and checked by the Group Leader.
- The mobile phone bags must only be unsealed in an emergency (accident / more than 1 hour after check-in time / completely lost). Mobile phone bags will then be resealed by the Group Leader at the earliest opportunity.
- All phones must be turned in to the Group Leader at the end of each day's walk. Phones that require charging will be charged by the DoE Supervisor or Manager. Phones are left with the Group Leader at their own risk.
- All phones will then be resealed in bags and returned to groups at the start of the next day's walking.

16.5. Staff Leaders and those accompanying the expedition

- All members of the group may bring a mobile phone. Data and apps pertaining to students should be checked and cleared by the overall Trip Leader at the end of the trip, and then signed off by the EVC at the nearest possible time to the trip ending after this.

16.6. Breaches of the protocol

- In the event of a breach of this protocol, the Trip Leader of EVC will advise the School's DSL immediately. The leader of the School's DoE programme will be informed and advice will be taken as to whether the award can be completed satisfactorily.
- Any team using a mobile phone for any other purposes than those laid out in the policy above may have their assessment deferred (not following the DofE 20 conditions).
- Any staff breach of data or safeguarding protocols will be referred to the DSL in School immediately.