

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Ambition • Service • Kindness

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April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Silver DofE Expedition 2026 (Year 10) 3 days and 2 nights (minimum 7 hours per day)

I hope you find the following information useful regarding the forthcoming training and commitment required to be successful at the final expedition stage of the Award scheme. Students have been planning the expedition weekend (practice) from school to Drimpton, school to Cattistock, and Cattistock to Winyards Gap.

Key Dates

Practice weekend (full kit and overnight)	Friday 5th June – Sunday 7th June
Deadline for all assessors' reports	Friday 26th June
Assessment weekend and completion of Silver Award	Friday 26th June – Sunday 28th June.

Practice Expedition - breaktime on Friday 5th to Sunday 7th June

This involves students working in their teams to prepare their own route cards and section maps for the parts of the route that they will be leading. Each student will lead a part of the route, which will take them from Beaminster to Drimpton, Beaminster to Cattistock, then Cattistock to Winyards Gap. They will need to be self-sufficient for this, carrying all their equipment in a rucksack. Deadlines will be set for completing the route cards in order that they can be checked by staff and amended if needed.

For obvious reasons, the pace of group, their navigational skills, speed of setting up the tent, cooking, eating and washing up, it is impossible to predict what time collection will be, but they should be finished and ready for pick-up sometime between 2pm and 4pm on the Sunday at Winyards Gap. Only students who have started and are close to completing all three sections should be taking part to avoid any unnecessary expense by parents on kit etc.

Deadline Friday 26th June

All three assessors' reports (Volunteering, Skill and Physical) need to have been submitted via students' personal DofE accounts. Students can see me on Wednesday lunchtime in Library computer room if they need any help.

Kit List

A kit list is attached (this can also be found on the DofE website). It is important that the kit list is checked carefully, as without the right kit students will not be properly prepared for the expedition expectations, and in some cases will not be able to take part.

There will be a kit check prior to leaving on both the practice and assessment expeditions. School will provide the following group kit: a stove (with pans), gas, map and map cases (if needed). Tents need to be double skinned, not beach tents or pop-ups. Students should carry nothing except a map (in a case) in their hands. All other equipment should be in, or attached securely to the rucksack (not hanging off).

Assessment - breaktime Friday 26th to Sunday 28th June

Students must have had an opportunity to speak to the Assessor before leaving on the Sunday, so please don't take your children home without checking!

Meals

It is expected that students will cook and eat one substantial meal. There are many options available, so to be brief, the meal should include protein, carbs and vegetables, as well as being hot. Tins of spag bol, with pre-cooked pasta, macaroni cheese and beans, curry and pre-cooked rice are all great ideas. Pot noodles, plain pasta or cooking from raw (or any boiling for more than a few minutes) are not acceptable. Students will have training on this.

Mobile phones are NOT permitted on the expedition

Staff will look after phones for students. Each team will have an emergency phone which will be wrapped, waterproofed and sealed. Students should make sure their phones are charged before they give them to staff.

Teamwork and Fitness

This expedition will be successful if students co-operate, communicate, are reliable and prepared to do their bit. As staff, we cannot insist that certain students are put with others, so it is very much down to the students themselves to create a team of effective collaborators. However, all students need to be fit enough, which is a personal responsibility, in order to be able to physically meet the requirements of a three day walk (minimum of 7 hours per day), carrying all of their own equipment.

If this is a concern for any student then there is still time, and perhaps they could ask their PE teacher for some fitness training during PE lessons, as well as getting out and walking (hill work) at weekends and evenings.

If you have any further questions, please email me at jwagstaff@beaminster.dorset.sch.uk

Kind regards

J Wagstaff
DofE Leader

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