

10 March 2011

Dear Parents

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Silver Expedition Groups, Session 2011-2012

I am writing further to the recent Parents' Information Evening and the Rector's letter of 25 February regarding the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and in particular the expedition section. I would like to commend the pupils for the way in which they have organised their groups and ensured that the forms were collated and submitted to me on time. At this stage there are significantly more pupils seeking places than are currently available under the published timetable. However, as you will be aware, Mr Williamson and I spoke to S3 on Tuesday and outlined the following proposal as a means of meeting the large demand. We feel we can offer two additional options: Walking (Gold weekends) and Sailing (OYT yacht)

1. Walking

We are able to offer 20 additional places for S4 pupils to do their Silver training and expedition on the Gold weekends at Craighower Outdoor Centre. The dates for these weekends are

2011 Training Weekend

Friday 26 to Sunday 28 August

2012 Training Weekend

Friday 16 March to Sunday 18 March

2012 Assessment Course

Saturday 30 June to Friday 6 July

Depart Beaton Road 7.30am – Saturday 30 June

Return Beaton Road 9.30pm – Friday 6 July*

*** please note that this option extends into the Summer holidays: The exact dates and cost have yet to be confirmed.**

2. Sailing

In addition, the School is willing to offer two sailing expeditions through the Ocean Youth Trust (OYT). Each yacht takes a maximum of 12 pupils, together with a skipper and trained crew, meaning that we could offer an extra 24 places. This option depends upon there being sufficient demand among the pupils to make it cost effective. OYT includes a weekend induction, 5-day practice expedition, 5-Day final expedition and a course of theory comprising five twilight sessions in School and two planning sessions. At this stage it is likely that the final expedition (on two yachts) would run from 20 - 24 June 2012, with a practice expedition on 4 - 8 June and the total cost would be **£950**, assuming a full complement of crew. I shall be speaking to Nick Fleming from OYT very shortly to confirm these details.

We have asked pupils to consider these additional options carefully. I appreciate that this will involve some reorganisation of the groups. Mr Williamson and Mr Macleod will hold a meeting for all pupils to coordinate and finalise this process; pupils will be advised of the time and venue shortly. It is important to stress that it is only by maximising this extra capacity, both in Walking and Sailing that we can hope to offer places to all pupils. In this respect, I cannot, at this stage, make a firm guarantee that every single pupil will get a place. I hope you find this information helpful, but should you wish to discuss the matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me at my usual e-mail address (mcdougallj@hutchesons.org) or telephone the school.

Yours sincerely

Mr J D McDougall
Depute Rector