



# St Augustine's Catholic College

## Duke of Edinburgh Expedition Policy

Below are policy statements relevant to Expedition Supervisors when planning and overseeing a regular D of E expedition for mainstream participants. Participants with special needs may need extra support or different arrangements and specific advice can be requested from the Duke of Edinburgh local staff by leaders of these groups.

Please note that you **must** adhere to this policy **as well as** any policies that your organisation instructs you to adhere to. Should there be any conflict between these policies; advice must be sought from the D of E Award Regional Office.

### 1. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THIS POLICY

- **Expedition Supervisor** – the lead person on an expedition Supervisors must have a sound knowledge of *The Handbook for DofE Leaders*, this *Expedition Guide* and the Expedition Training Framework.” St Augustine's Catholic College Licensed Organisation/Approved Activity Provider (AAP) has the responsibility for ensuring that those who supervise expeditions are appropriately trained and qualified. As a minimum the supervisor must hold the qualifications as detailed below in section 2 and must have completed a 16 hour Outdoor Emergency First Aid Course
- **Expedition Assessor** – holder of a D of E Assessor ID card and accreditation number.
- **Expedition Team** - A group of young people undertaking a D of E expedition. At all levels of D of E, a team is defined as a minimum of four and a maximum of seven participants. However, for methods of travel requiring two participants (e.g. open canoe, tandem cycle) a team can comprise 8 members.
- **Adult helper** – an appropriate adult who assists on the expedition. They do not need to hold outdoor/first aid qualifications but must be DBS checked.
- **Participant** – young person who has enrolled to do a D of E Award and is included in the D of E expedition.
- **Direct Licensed Centre (DLC)** - A Licensed Organisation, which holds a licence to deliver D of E programmes to young people on its own premises.

### 2. ST AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE EXPEDITION SUPERVISION

#### POLICY IS AS FOLLOWS

We acknowledge that each expedition is different and may require additional support to the minimum staffing stated here. However, it should be noted that teams would have been trained to travel independently while being supervised remotely. The staff: team ratio is 1:3 minimum in all cases. More detail of required staffing is below:

**Supervision levels in non-remote terrain (Terrain 1):** For expeditions, comprising three teams or fewer, then as a minimum **one** approved Expedition Supervisor should be in the field with a relevant rural/coastal walking leader technical qualification (e.g. Lowland Leader Award, Coastal and Countryside Walking Leader, BEL or equivalent). For more than three teams, a minimum of **two** Expedition Supervisors (qualified as above) are needed, plus one suitably experienced DBS checked adult helper per three teams. For example an expedition of nine teams would need a minimum of three staff, of which two are approved Expedition Supervisors.

**Supervision levels in remote terrain (Terrains 2 & 3):** For expeditions in moorland (Terrain 2) or mountainous type, terrain (Terrain 3) there must be a minimum of **one** approved Expedition Supervisor per three teams. Expedition Supervisors must hold a full Walking Group Leader/Hill and Moorland Leader/South West Mountain & Moorland Leader qualification for expeditions in Terrain 2 or a

Mountain Leader Award qualification for expeditions in Terrain 3.

**Please Note:** All additional adult helpers on the expedition must have completed a DBS check.

- **D of E Expedition Conditions:** Expedition Supervisors must make themselves aware of the 20 Expedition Conditions on which their participants will be assessed. ([www.D of E.org/20conditions](http://www.DofE.org/20conditions)). This awareness MUST be communicated to the participants, and other D of E adult helpers.
- **Staff:** When an expedition/activity includes young people aged under 18 years of both genders, the staff team must include both male and female members. All adult helpers (including parent volunteers) present on the expedition must have obtained DBS clearance.
- **Expedition Environment:** A typical Bronze expedition should preferably take place in a rural environment, a good example of which is the Wiltshire countryside. Bronze expeditions in Wild Country areas are not recommended, as this does not allow for progression as participants work through their D of E Awards. Silver expeditions must be in a different area from the participants' Bronze expedition and if going to a Wild Country area, you must train your participants using the **Gold** training framework (see [www.D of E.org](http://www.DofE.org))
- **Notification:** The following activities must be notified for scrutiny and approval obtained from Wiltshire Council a minimum of 1 month beforehand using the Evolve Online procedure:
  - Day hikes of over 5 hours duration in Terrain 1 (for Terrain definitions please see the Supervision Policy above)
  - All day hikes in Terrain 2 and 3
  - Overnight camps/training weekends
  - Practice Expeditions and Assessed Expeditions
  - A permission letter will be sent to the notifier by email together with an expedition authorisation number. The expedition **must not** proceed until this authorisation has been received.
  - All organisations must ensure that the activity has been approved internally prior to the above.
- **Risk Assessments:** A comprehensive Risk Assessment must be completed before the activity/expedition. This must comply with St Augustine's Catholic College's usual requirements for outdoor activities.
- **Permission conditions:** Permission for all expeditions and training activities is given on the condition that they should not go ahead in extreme weather, i.e. freezing temperatures, torrential rain/flooding, heatwave, gales etc. Expedition Supervisors are expected to postpone an expedition (or call off if the expedition is in progress).
- **Parent contact:** Before the expedition, the Expedition Supervisor must ensure all parents of participants have received a nominated emergency phone number in case they should need to contact the Expedition Supervisor. The Expedition Supervisor must have access to the participants' consent/health information at all times during the expedition.
- **Supervision:** Whilst on expedition, the Expedition Supervisor will use appropriate methods of supervision, depending on the ages and ability of the team and the level of the D of E Award. On a regular Assessed expedition, remote supervision should be used, and where direct/close supervision is necessary, interaction should be minimal. Teams should understand that, should a problem occur, they are expected to resolve it themselves. However if they have tried and cannot, they can and should contact their Expedition Supervisor for advice. Participants must be made aware of contact procedures with the Expedition Supervisor.
- **Campsites:** Expedition Supervisors of Bronze expeditions are required to camp on the same campsite as their participants, but with plenty of space between themselves and the teams and should interact only if needed. For Silver and Gold teams, the Expedition Supervisor does not need to be on the same campsite but **must** be staying overnight in the area in case of any problems and should register their contact details with the participants' campsite owners. Adults are not to socialise with participants at the campsite.
- **Campsite facilities:** Campsites should provide a minimum of a clean water source and sufficient toilet facilities. Farm campsites are an ideal choice. Use of commercial campsites is not recommended, however if these are used participants may **only** use toilet block facilities. Wild camping is optional for Silver and Gold participants, however, appropriate training must be delivered to minimise environmental impact (litter, toileting, water etc).
- **Adult/team interaction:** To encourage self-reliance and to maintain the quality of the

- expedition experience, Expedition Supervisors must ensure that all adults keep interaction with the team/s to a minimum on the expedition. This includes time spent at the campsite.
- **Water:** In hot conditions, adults may top up participants' water bottles at checkpoints if needed. Water **must** be made available should the conditions require it.
  - **Use of Stoves:** Participants must receive thorough training and demonstrate competence in the correct use of stoves. Stoves **must** be kept at least 2 metres from any tents. In all cases, the Expedition Supervisor **must** ensure that fuel, stoves, tents and participants are well managed at the campsite. We recommend the use of Trangia stoves. At Bronze level, use of gas canisters is the recommended fuel option, however, this is not mandatory. If using meths, supplies of fuel must be located well away from cooking areas and **never** brought to a stove to refuel.
  - **Expedition Assessors:** The Expedition Supervisor should make initial contact with their expedition Assessor at least 3 weeks before the expedition to allow time for any queries to be raised. We recommend you personally speak to the Assessor to discuss the expedition as soon as they are engaged, as the relationship between Expedition Supervisor and Assessor is an important one, and should be established early on. Remember that the Assessor is present to see that the 20 conditions are being met throughout the expedition but if you feel they are overstepping their role, please use a professional approach to sensitively deal with any issues, aiming to reach agreement. If you need to do so please keep a record of events and comments, and contact St Augustine's Catholic College Operating Authority to discuss any issues after the event.

### 3. MOBILE PHONES

St Augustine's Catholic College Operating Authority requires that each team must carry a fully charged, nominated mobile phone for emergency use only. The Expedition Supervisor must have a working mobile phone available at all times and must carry the phone numbers of the participants' phones.

Participants must be made aware that this is a safety precaution and **they will not "fail" an expedition** if they contact their Expedition Supervisor for advice with a genuine problem.

We require that a Mobile Phone Policy is discussed and agreed as part of the participants' training and the policy is also sent to participants' parents, so that everyone understands the communication arrangements for the expedition. Your policy should include the following advice:

- Mobile phones are to be used for verbal communication between Expedition Supervisors/adult helpers and teams only. Recording of photos or video for use towards Expedition Aims is also allowed. No social use of phones in the evening is allowed.
- Any communication with persons outside the expedition is banned – except for emergency services in the case of a life-threatening situation. If parents need to contact their child, it must be done via the Expedition Supervisor/nominated emergency number. This is a particularly crucial rule if an emergency should occur. If calls/messages are received on the team's phone they should be ignored - unless from the Expedition Supervisor or other expedition staff.
- If using text messages, the recipient should always acknowledge receipt of the message.
- Part of the ethos of the Expedition section is to disconnect participants from everyday life and encourage team interaction and to this end use of personal MP3 players/iPods, radios, social media/internet etc should not be allowed at any time on expedition. This includes use of these functions on mobile phones.
- **Emergency Contacts:** All expeditions must have an Emergency Contact (base/home contact). The Emergency Contact is not a member of the expedition party and should be a person unrelated to anyone on the expedition. They should ideally be contactable on both a landline and mobile (if they will not be at home the whole time). The Expedition Supervisor must copy the next-of-kin details of all members of the expedition (including all adults) and give to the Emergency Contact before leaving for the expedition. The Emergency Contact must know what they need to do in the event of an emergency so that Expedition Supervisor can deal with events at the time. Whilst on the expedition, a "second" must be identified who will take over managing an emergency if the Expedition Supervisor should be the subject of the

emergency.

#### **4. CRITICAL INCIDENT PROCEDURE:**

A major incident is defined as:

- A fatality whilst on expedition
- A participant or adult is the subject of a 999 call-out or is admitted to hospital
- A team or individual has been missing with no contact for over 4 hours during the day, or is missing with no contact as darkness falls.

In the event of a major incident on an expedition or training activity, the following procedure must be followed:

- The Expedition Supervisor (or their “second” as defined in section 16 above) must take charge of the situation and activate the expedition’s Emergency Procedure that was planned during the expedition preparation phase. This will include dealing with the immediate needs of the people affected and other teams on the expedition, liaising with emergency services, and contacting the expedition’s Emergency Contact to advise what needs to be done by them.
- The Emergency contact must follow the emergency procedures of the DLC, which would normally involve
  - Informing the Emergency Services (if appropriate).
  - Informing the home contact.
  - Informing the DLC’s Press Officer and the D of E’s Duty Officer. The DLC Press Officer in consultation with the D of E Duty officer, will be responsible for drafting and issuing any statements; handling any media enquiries; and arranging any interviews. Accurate updates will need to be provided to both parties as more information becomes available. This ensures everyone is informed and media enquiries can be directed to the correct contact.
- On the next working day, the Expedition Supervisor should notify the basic facts about the incident to the D of E Manager, and a detailed written Incident Report should be supplied as soon as possible after this.

Signed by: J C Alsop (Head Teacher)  
Date:

Signed by: M Keates (Chair of Governors)  
Date: