

# Forest Way Duke of Edinburgh Expedition 2023

## Bronze Expedition

Forest Way students participated in the schools first ever DofE expedition this term as part of their Bronze award qualification. 48 students are currently completing the award which consists of 4 sections— Skills, Physical, Volunteering and an expedition. The students participated in all of the expedition activities over the 2 days, these included off site walking, outdoor camp skills, putting up tents and teambuilding activities. All activities were differentiated to suit the individual student's needs and abilities. The range of activities on offer included;

- Walking in Bradgate Park, map reading work
- Wildlife photography
- A visit to Hicks Lodge
- Forest School session
- Putting up tents
- Taking down tents
- Teambuilding activities

## Overnight Camp

29 students were able to participate in the overnight camp, sleeping in either a tent, or one of our two classrooms in the croft building. Nighttime activities included;

- Cooking food for their evening meal
- A glow stick lit forest walk at night
- Archery by torchlight
- Toasting marshmallows on the campfire
- Hot chocolate before bed
- Sleeping in tents in the rain
- Spending the night away from home

For many of our students it was the first time that they been away from their parents overnight. They were incredibly brave and not one of them complained or showed any worries throughout the whole two days!

Our staff are extremely dedicated to supporting the students and 26 of them slept overnight. 2 staff members also did a waking night which ensured that someone was instantly available in the night should a student need anything. A huge thank you to all of the staff for being so generous and giving up their time to ensure that all of the students who wanted to camp overnight were able to.

## Oaks 8

The student in Oaks 8 loves cooking and was able to enhance their skills in the kitchen. They also joined our camp after school for a short visit and enjoyed having a good look around all of our tents and sitting in one of the big tents. They were able to share their beautiful singing voice with the camp.

## Oaks 5&7 Bradgate Park

Oaks 7 students joined forces with Oaks 5, they split off into two groups. One group hiked around the park, the other used the pathway to visit Lady Jane Grey's house.



## Toasting marshmallows around the campfire.



## Oaks 9

Oaks 9 visited Hicks Lodge for the Walking section of their expedition.

### Forest schools



### Hot choc time



### Bedtime



## Enjoying a marshmallow



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## Oaks 10 Bradgate Park

Oaks 10 students joined forces with Oaks 11, they split off into two groups. One group hiked around the park, the other used the pathway to visit Lady Jane Grey's house.



Post 16 and staff camp set up outside of the croft building.



## Oaks 11 Bradgate Park

Oaks 11 also helped with setting up and taking down staff tents.



## Gallery of pictures



## Catering for staff

Many thanks to Paul & his team for keeping us all well nourished. The sausage butties in the morning were a highlight.



## Wildlife Photograph competition winners

All of the students participated in a wildlife photography competition whilst out on their expedition.

Oaks 7 are our winners with this fabulous photo of a stag they spotted whilst walking up to the Old John Monument.



# Thank you for supporting our expedition

## Police Cadets:

Without the advice and equipment loaned from the Police Cadets organised by Anthony Jones we would never have been able to complete our overnight camp. This was our first ever expedition and as a school we have no overnight camping equipment such as tents etc. When we got in touch with Anthony he did all he could to make our camp a success. We are incredibly grateful for the loaning of tents, roll mats and rucksacks. They have kindly offered to support the expedition next year by providing the same equipment, although our hope is that we can do some fundraising and obtain our own equipment.

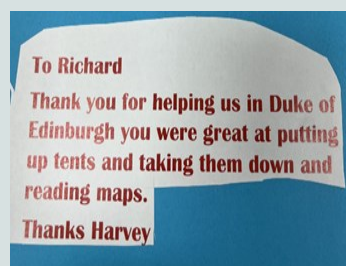
## Ford and Slater DAF

Richard Brown is an employee of Ford and Slater DAF whose wife works at Forest Way School. When he heard about our DofE expedition he kindly offered to support us. Richard is an Army Cadet instructor and DofE trainer and has a vast experience as he has completed DofE Silver award.

Richard attended both of our practice expedition days at the start of the Autumn term and was able to help students and staff to practice both their camp and navigating skills.

Richards employers generously granted him two days off work to attend both of our final expedition days. Many thanks to Ford and Slater DAF for allowing Richard to be able to support our expedition and take two days out of work.

On both days Richard joined the hiking groups at Bradgate Park and was able to teach the students basic navigating skills whilst also working on soft skills such as teamwork and never leaving a friend to fall behind.



## Keyham Lodge:



Kieran Dexter works at Keyham Lodge School which is part of the Discovery Trust schools. Keyham Lodge supported our expedition by allowing Kieran two days out of school and a big thank you to them. Kieran was then able to be our DofE expedition assessor free of charge. This helped us to keep our costs low.

We are so grateful to Kieran for not only offering to assess the students completing the expedition but also for the time he spent advising during our planning stage. He was able to share his expertise on various team building activities, timings along with the logistics of running the two days.

## We need your help:

Our first ever expedition was a huge success, the students feedback has been incredible. We have learnt an awful lot and are already beginning to plan next years.

**We would love to have our own camping equipment and expedition kit for our students to be able use during their practice activities as well as the final expedition.**

**We understand that things are difficult in the current economic climate but if you or any of the companies that you have links with are able to donate in any way please do get in touch.**

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