



The Cottesloe School

Bucks County Council Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions Policy

Recommended by:

Teaching, Learning & Achievement Committee: Date: 9 March 2017

Adopted at Full Governing Body Meeting Date: 28 March 2017

Signed by R J Collis DL, Chair of Governors:

Review date: Any legislative change



The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

EXPEDITION POLICY

Buckinghamshire County Council

Version 4 – Sept 2016



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Abbreviations & Terminology

AALA – Adventurous Activity Licensing Authority: An organisation that is part of the Health & Safety Executive. AAPs must hold an AALA licence to offer expeditions in Wild Country.

Assessor Network – A panel covering each 'Wild Country' area within the UK. Centres must notify each area using Red, Green and Blue forms at least 6 weeks prior to the expedition. In addition they can provide access to assessors if required (formerly – 'Wild Country Panel').

BCC – Buckinghamshire County Council.

BEAL – Basic Expedition Assistant Leader: A nationally recognised qualification, NVQ Level 2. Governing Body is Sports Leader UK

BEL – Basic Expedition Leader: A nationally recognised qualification, NVQ Level 3. Governing body is Sports Leader UK.

Centre/Unit: An organisation who run the DofE Award under the licence held by the Operating Authority or other Licensed Organisation.

CLA – Countryside Leaders Award: A regionally recognised qualification. Governing body Strong Roots Training.

Close Supervision – where the Supervisor is close enough to intervene if necessary, in order to offer support and guidance and/or to stop mistakes being made. (Ref: DofE Expedition Guide:13th Edition p.165).

Daily Report Form – A form used to note 'clear days,' minor incidents, notes of importance for expeditions (see appendix 3).

Direct Supervision – where the Supervisor is in direct contact with the team and is accompanying them. (Ref: DofE Expedition Guide:13th Edition p.165).

Expedition Team – Must be between 4-7 participants.

Expedition Variation – where participants have individual needs that mean one or more of the 20 conditions cannot be met ((Ref: DofE Expedition Guide:13th Edition p.14 and *The 20 conditions of the Expedition Section* – www.dofe.org).

Incident Report Form – A form attached to the 'Serious Incident Cards' found on EVOLVE, used to note details of severe incidents/crises.

HML – Hill & Moorland Leader: A nationally recognised qualification. Governing body is the Mountain Leader Training Board. Replaces the Walking Group Leader award.

LLA – Lowland Leader Award. A nationally recognised qualification. Governing body is the Mountain Leader Training Board. This must include the Expedition Skills Module.

ML – Mountain Leader: A nationally recognised qualification. Governing body is the Mountain Leader Training Board.

MOD – Ministry of Defence.

NGB – National Governing Body. An organisations that administers an award such as the Mountain Leader Award.

OA - Operating Authority: the organisation that holds the licence to manage the award, maintain good practice & standards and monitor the Units/Centres who operate under their licence. In the case of Buckinghamshire they are employed through Buckinghamshire County Council.

Ratios

Please read ratios carefully and understand that at times ratios refer to the number of staff to participants and at other times refer to the number of staff to groups.

Staff to participants will always be written in this format **1 : 7**

Staff to groups will always be written in this format **one to four**

Remote Supervision – Where the Supervisor remains out of site and hearing of the team and allows them to get on with the expedition without any intervention. (Ref: DofE Expedition Guide:13th Edition p.165).

Supervision Plan – A form designed by the DofE for noting potential supervision options for groups, the form can be downloaded from the DofE website (www.dofe.org). This should be used in conjunction with the location specific risk assessment.

Unit Agreement (formerly SLA) – is an agreement between the Operating Authority and a Centre/Unit who run the DofE Award.

Foreword

This policy booklet contains the following sections:

TITLE	CODE	PAGE No.
Abbreviations and Terminology	N/A	2
Foreword	N/A	3
Expedition Planning Process	DofE001	4
Walking expedition staffing ratios	DofE002	5
Expedition Supervision Arrangements	DofE003	6
First Aid	DofE004	6
Staff Documentation	DofE005	7
Serious Incident and 'Near Miss'	DofE006	7
Walking Expeditions at Gold Level – additional guidance	DofE007	7
Using Approved Activity Providers (AAPs)	DofE008	8
The Variation Process	DofE009	8
EVOLVE & Notification	DofE010	10
Quality Assurance & Positive Development Strategy	DofE011	11

This document is designed to support and guide Local Authority Schools / Centres working under Bucks CC DofE license please see page 13 for update.

This policy has been effective since April 2015 and continues to be the one that must be followed by Local Authority DofE schools / centres working under Bucks CC license. Directly Licensed Centres (DLC's) are welcome to utilise this policy and Evolve, however please note that advice about DofE issues and Expeditions should be sought from South East Region Office.

This document primarily covers walking expeditions; however suggested ratios/qualifications have been added for water based activities as these have become more popular. For expeditions using other modes of transport please request specific guidance.

All resources named in this policy can be requested from Bucks Outdoor Education Advisor.

If you have any questions or are in need of advice, then please do not hesitate to contact the Outdoor Educational Advisor, details below.

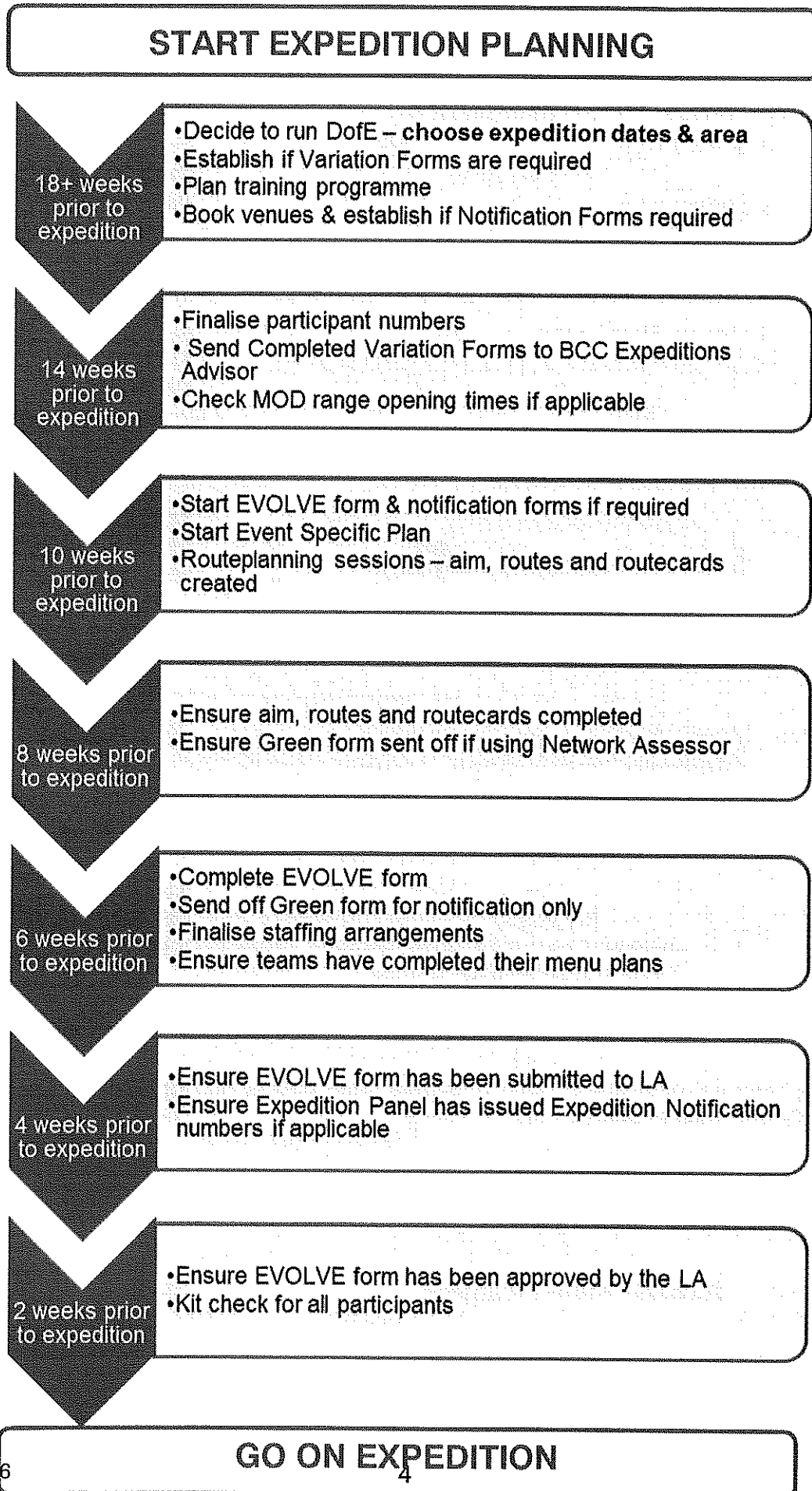
Buckinghamshire County Council Contact:

Outdoor Education Advisor: Robert Williams

Email: rwilliams@buckscc.gov.uk

Mobile: 07703 120580

Expedition Planning Process (DofE001)



Walking expedition staffing ratios and supervision (DofE002)

Training exercises – Direct supervision

Practice Expeditions – Direct and close supervision

Assessment Expeditions – Normally remote supervision, using close when necessary

- Groups must be trained and supervised by appropriately qualified staff
- Ratio of 1:7 (1 qualified instructor to one walking group)
- There should be a minimum of 2 staff members on any trip

Qualification and Supervising ratio LOWLAND (e.g. Chiltern Hills, New Forest, Forest of Dean)

Expedition Type	Minimum Expedition Leader Qualification	Minimum Leader to Team ratio	Minimum Expedition Staff Qualification	Minimum Staff to Team ratio
Practice	LLA/BEL/CLA	One to four	Experienced Adult	One to two
Assessment	LLA/BEL/CLA	One to four	Experienced Adult	One to two

MOORLAND/UPLAND (e.g. Dartmoor, Peak District, Yorkshire Dales)

Expedition Type	Minimum Expedition Leader Qualification	Minimum Leader to Team ratio	Minimum Expedition Staff Qualification	Minimum Staff to Team ratio
Practice	HML/WGL	One to two	Experienced Adult	One to one
Assessment	HML/WGL	One to two	Experienced Adult	One to one

MOUNTAIN (e.g. Snowdonia, the Lake District, the Cairngorms)

Expedition Type	Minimum Expedition Leader Qualification	Minimum Leader to Team ratio	Minimum Expedition Staff Qualification	Minimum Staff to Team ratio
Practice	ML	One to two	Experienced Adult	One to one
Assessment	ML	One to two	Experienced Adult	One to one

Example

1. 7 young people on a Gold practice in one group would be accompanied by one ML. They would need another competent / experienced adult of the opposite gender on the trip, but this person does not need any specialist skill or experience. **HOWEVER**, 8 young people undertaking an identical expedition must be in two teams. So they need 2 ML holders, but no assistant.

2. 14 Young people on a gold assessed would only need one ML holder and one competent assistant, as they are deemed competent by their supervisor and the expedition has undergone an approval process, **AS LONG AS THEY ARE ONLY IN 2 TEAMS**.

3. 16 Young people on a gold practice trip and in 4 groups need 4 ML/WGL holders (one walking with each group). **BUT**, when they come to the assessed, they need 2 qualified and 2 experienced. However, if 2 drop out, and the groups decide to merge into 2 teams of 7, when it comes to the practice and qualifying, they only need 1 qualified and 1 competent / experienced assistant, as there are only 2 teams.

Expedition Leaders should also hold:

- Current First Aid Qualification: Lowland minimum 8hrs, Moorland/Mountain minimum 16hrs (*more details in first aid section*)
- DofE accredited Expedition Supervisors Course
- Enhanced DBS check (previously CRB check)

An Experienced Adult should have:

- Knowledge of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Knowledge of the expedition environment
- Should have sufficient technical abilities to be self-sufficient in the environment
- Should be known to the Expedition Leader
- Should **not** be a parent of a participant

A designated Expedition Deputy Leader should be named who is competent to perform the duties of the Expedition Leader should the need arise.

If you are unsure about any of the above, please contact the Outdoor Education Advisor.

Expedition Supervision Arrangements (DofE003)

- If the minimum staff Bucks CC ratios cannot be met, the Operating Authority should be contacted to discuss appropriate supervision plans.
- Expedition staff will employ a range of supervision styles depending on the terrain, weather conditions and competence of the group.
- When NGB qualified staff are supervising two teams on assessed expeditions, the supervisor must be able to reach either team in the event of an emergency. This means both teams must be in the same area.
- Expedition staff will be familiar with the terms 'Direct Supervision', 'Close Supervision' and 'Remote Supervision' as described in the DofE Expedition Guide, 13th Edition, p165.
- The Expedition Leader will perform a detailed location specific risk assessment, identify all local hazards on each group's route.
- At Silver Assessment and Gold level, groups may not be directly supervised overnight but participants must be checked into their camp in the evening, especially if wild camping. Participants must also know how to access staff overnight if issues arise, and clearly understand their escape routes and what to do in an emergency. This should also be clearly stated in the parental letter and event specific plan.

Additional guidance:

- Clearly state how participants will be supervised, whether staff will be on the same campsites and define what 'wild camping' actually entails in the parental letters.
- Where necessary set up a base camp for the duration of the expedition and consider access to shelter or bunkhouse/camping barns.
- Assess how realistic it is for teams/leaders to access additional staff in an emergency. This will depend on how remote the routes go and the availability of phone reception.
- Plan for the worst case scenario by ensuring you have thought through and noted contingency plans and escape routes.
- For assessed events try to liaise with your assessor to ensure teams are not over/under supervised.

Late Back Procedure

- A formal written late back procedure should be included with the ESP.
- It is expected that one person will be nominated to control **all** communications with the Home Contact and Mountain Rescue, and then control distribution of search parties.

First Aid (DofE004)

- All staff should hold a current first aid qualification. The recommended course is a 16hr outdoor-based course such as an ITC or REC accredited course.
- Expedition staff should carry a substantial first aid kit and spare personal medication for participants in their group e.g. epipens, inhalers.
- All participants to have undertaken at least basic first aid training (in accordance with the DofE training syllabus).
- All participants must carry personal first aid kits/personal medication plus the group must share a larger first aid kit to cover more substantial first aid issues.

Staff documentation (DofE005)

It is expected that all staff on the expedition will carry the following documents:

- Event Specific Plan (or relevant risk assessments)
- Critical Incident Procedures.
- Medical Summary sheet (to include staff details).
- Summary list of all staff contact details & the emergency contact details.

The Expedition Leader & Expedition Deputy will carry in addition to the above:

- Hard copies of all the 'Consent Forms'.
- Emergency contact details including doctors information for all participants & staff.

Serious Incident & Near Miss (DofE006)

Where a 'Serious Incident' or 'Near Miss' has occurred an Incident Report should be completed. This should be attached to EVOLVE and emailed to the Buckinghamshire County Council Outdoor Education Advisor who will then investigate & liaise with the Incident Team at DofE Head Office. For severe incidents the events Emergency Contact is asked to keep both Buckinghamshire County Council and the DofE Duty Officer up to date on the situation.

Examples of a Serious Incident/Near Hit as defined by DofE Head Office are:

Serious Injury, Fatality, Emergency Services Call Out, Minor injuries (requiring GP or hospitalisation), Conflict with landowners or other members of the public, Near Miss

Centres are also expected to follow their own policies to conform to Health & Safety expectations such as internal investigations & RIDDOR forms.

Walking Expeditions at Gold Level – additional guidance (DofE007)

Gold events are required to take place in Wild Country areas and a thorough training programme should be implemented to prepare participants for the challenges they will face. The practice expedition(s) should reflect the assessment process as much as possible with areas being identified that match the assessed location in terms of:

- Navigation
- Type of terrain, topography & steepness of terrain
- Remoteness
- Style of camping
- Weather (where possible)
- Journeying
- Duration

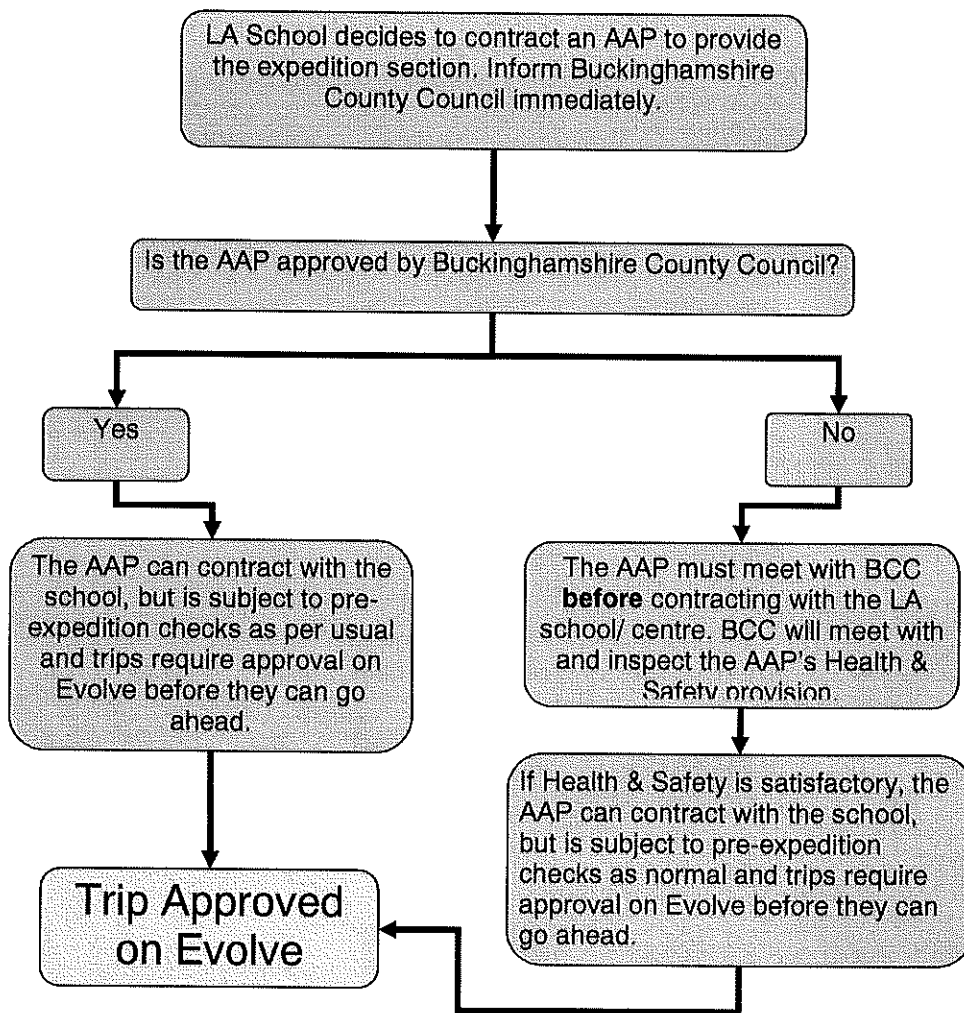
For direct entrants (those who have not completed the previous level of the DofE award) then a bridging expedition is a good opportunity to bring participants up to the same level as those who hold a Silver award. Normally a bridging expedition is a long weekend in wild country and would still be expected to go through the same EVOLVE notification as any other DofE event and follow the appropriate policies.

Overseas Expeditions

If you plan to run an overseas expedition this must be agreed by the Outdoor Education Advisor before participants are enrolled onto it. Please submit an over view of the plan including information on the training programme, practice and assessment.

Using Approved Activity Providers (AAPs) (DofE008)

Approved Activity Providers are organisations that are licensed by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to offer one or more sections of the Award to participants, usually the Expedition or Residential sections. AAPs are still subject to the same requirements as Buckinghamshire centres – an Evolve form must be submitted and is subject to BCC approval and all ratios listed in this document must be met. **An establishment staff member is still required to be present at all times for pastoral support.** The AAP Process Map below will show the procedures:



The Variation Process (DofE009)

Where participants have individual needs that mean one or more of the 20 Conditions cannot be met, they may apply for a variation to enable them to complete their DofE expedition.

The Expedition Variations application form must be submitted at least 12 weeks before the planned expedition, and after discussion with the BCC Outdoor Education Advisor.

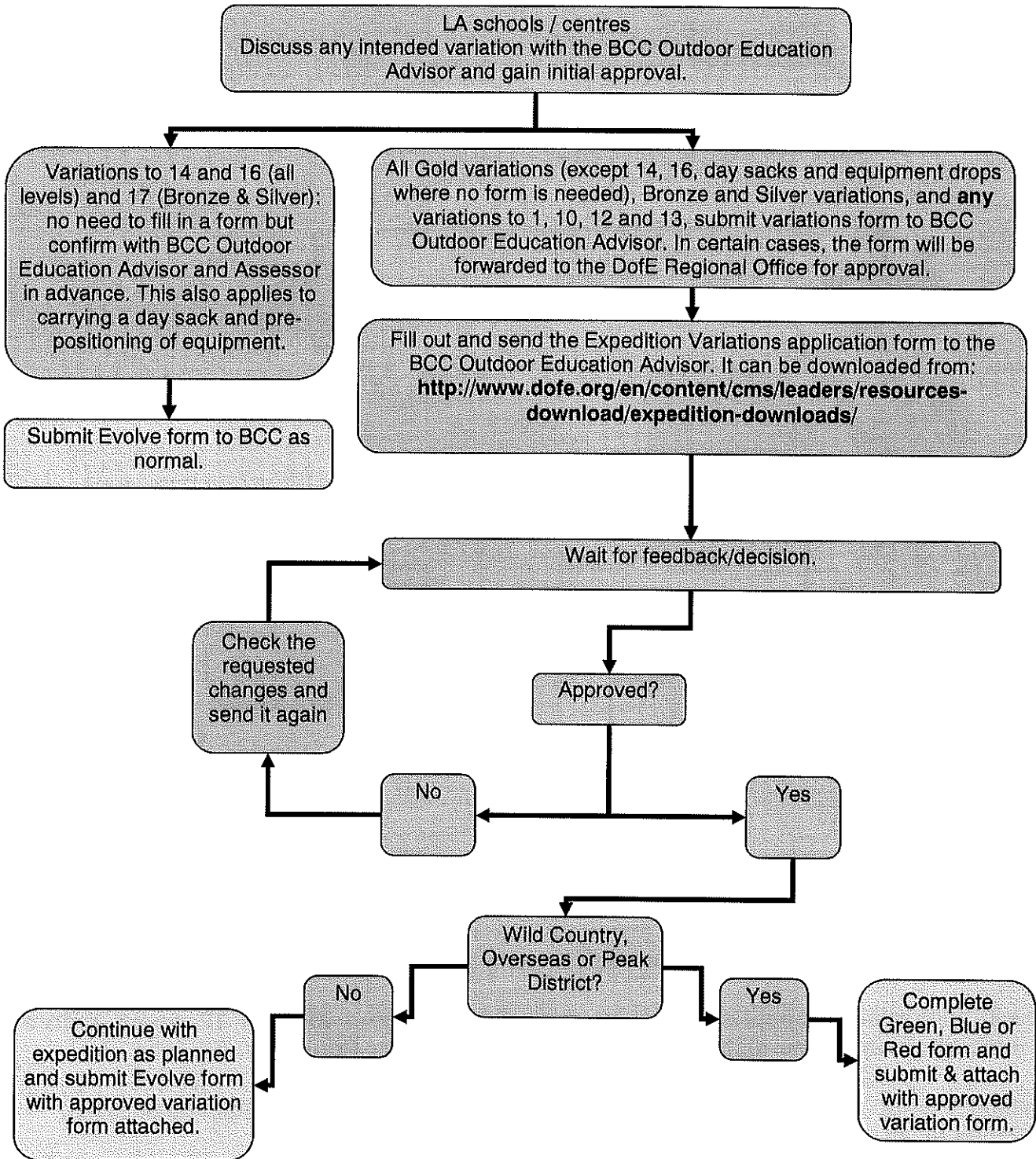
If the variation is for an overseas expedition, then advice should be sought as soon as possible. The process requests centres to provide:

- An explanation as to why one or more of the conditions cannot be met
- A suitable alternative plan that leads to minimal impact
- Additional risk management (where appropriate)

Some examples of reasons to apply for variation are:

- A participant who is unable to carry a full expedition rucksack for medical reasons
- A participant who requires a carer or worker to support for the duration
- Where a participant is unable to safely cook and requires a member of staff to support

Whatever the variation involves the following steps should be followed:



EVOLVE & Notification (DofE010)

For expedition events to count towards a participant's DofE Award the expedition must be approved through EVOLVE.

This is to ensure:

- All expeditions meet the DofE 20 Conditions
- All expeditions meet the policies set by the Operating Authority
- The risk management arrangements are sound, and are supported by the Operating Authority

Timeframes:

- **The event should be submitted by the Head teacher (or equivalent) to the Operating Authority at least 4 weeks prior to it taking place.**
- **Late submission of an expedition event may result in it not being approved. If an event is not approved then it will not count towards a participant's DofE Award.**
- **If you are a LA school / centre operating then your event must be approved by Outdoor Education Advisor.**

Important Information:

- LA schools / centres undertaking **expeditions abroad** should notify the BCC DofE Outdoor Education Advisor as soon as the planning process is initiated.
- Centres **must provide** the Outdoor Education Advisor an over view of the whole training programme to be agreed an overseas expedition is offered to the participants
- The 'Visit Leader' must be a school staff member, even when using an External Provider. The 'Visit Leader' is the school employee responsible for the pastoral duty of care the school owes its students. They should be present throughout the expedition.
- When naming the event include the level of the award, status of the event, centre name and note if it is an overseas expedition.
- If it is an assessed expedition the "accredited assessors" should be detailed in the staff documents with their assessor number.
- Variation forms should be attached onto the EVOLVE form as directed.
- Some events may require 'notification' through an assessor network, and Green/Red/Blue forms should be attached.
- **For LA schools / centres the BCC Outdoor Education Advisor should be copied into emails to Assessor Network Panels when submitting Green/Red/Blue forms.**

The Operating Authority will be as supportive with this process as possible and advise that those who are unfamiliar with the system start the process as early as possible.

EVOLVE attachments:

The following documents should be attached to the form:

- Event Specific Plans **including location specific risk assessments**
- DofE Expedition Staff Information Form (qualifications/experience)
- Itinerary
- Variation Forms (as appropriate)

- Incident Reports (as appropriate)
- Green/Red/Blue forms (as appropriate)
- *Daily Report Form(s)

*Daily report forms are not compulsory for any centre event but are a good way of summarising each day of the expedition and consolidating all the information to one location.

In addition to this Expedition Leaders should ensure they review their EVOLVE forms within 2 weeks of returning from the event.

Please see the 'Evolve Form DofE Guidance Notes' document for more information.

Quality Assurance & Positive Development Strategy (DofE011)

The Outdoor Education Advisor or a member of staff from a nominated person may ask to visit one of your DofE events. This is part of our commitment to ensure that the DofE and BCC standards are upheld and the appropriate support and advice is provided:

Aims:

- To suggest different ways of achieving the expedition event
- To create opportunities to streamline processes and increase efficiency
- Ensure that the 20 conditions are being met and if not, highlight ways to achieve them for the future
- Ensure that these policies are being implemented
- Provide feedback on the running of the event
- To identify opportunities for improvements and continuous development

The process is designed to be supportive and not add additional work to what would already be occurring.

The Process:

- You will be notified that we wish to visit your event a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event taking place (unless there are areas of concern the notice may be shorter).
- A clear itinerary will be sent across confirming the extent and interaction that a named member of staff from the Operating Authority will have with the named event
- The visit will then be conducted with verbal feedback given on the event
- Subsequently, within 30 working days of the event a report will be compiled and lodged with both the School External Visits Coordinator & Expedition Leader
- The opportunity to meet and discuss the report further can be requested if felt necessary and appropriate

This will ensure that Duke of Edinburgh expeditions run at a similar standard across the county.

Update on transition to DLC post September 2016

A reminder that the responsibilities of the DofE South East Region Office (SERO), schools / establishments and the Educational Visits Service are explained in Evolve Resources under the tab, 'Further Guidance' (first document in the section below the web links). In brief, SERO is now the point of contact for support that you previously received from the LA DofE Expeditions Adviser. It will advise on all DofE issues and provide guidance and training so that events are supervised by an appropriate number of competent and qualified staff in an area suitable for the level of the Award and the capabilities and needs of the participants. **(Seek confirmation for each event)**. Intensive support with expedition planning will also be provided on request by SERO.

LA schools and centres that are Directly Licenced must continue to follow the County DofE Policy and submit their expeditions on Evolve for approval by the Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA).

Academies and Independent organisations may choose their DofE policy and choose to enter their expeditions on Evolve. If entered on Evolve, 'approval' by the OEA will be by request and within the scope described in the document in Evolve. Academies are advised to continue entering their expeditions on Evolve because amongst other reasons it is the usual place to refer for information in a visits emergency.

The new arrangements will take time to bed in. In the meantime, if you would like to talk over, please feel able to contact me.

Robert Williams: 0770312058
rwilliams@buckscc.gov.uk

Responsibilities of Schools / Establishments and the DofE under Direct Licencing and support from Educational Visits Service (EVS)

This document outlines the responsibilities associated with becoming a DofE Directly Licensed Centre (DLC) and what can be expected from the EVS with regard to DofE expeditions.

1. School / Establishment Responsibilities.

Schools / Establishments need to be aware that once they have transferred to a DLC there will not be a Local Authority DofE Expedition Advisor who can support/challenge the planning of DofE visits or ensure compliance with the DofE 20 conditions. This support should instead be sought from the South East Regional Office (SERO) via the DofE Operations Officer. Once set up as a DLC the school / establishment will be responsible for the following relating to their expeditions:

- Appointing a DofE Manager who will oversee and approve expeditions;
- Ensuring expeditions conform to the adopted DofE Policy including appropriately qualified supervision and appropriate numbers of supervisors;
- Ensuring that events take place in an area (permission sought from the network panel) appropriate to the time of year, the level of the Award and within the competency and capabilities of the participants;
- Ensuring that a sound Event Specific Plan has been completed and where using Evolve, all the fields have been fulfilled and relevant documents attached;
- Ensuring expeditions comply with the 20 conditions of the DofE;
- Referring to the DofE Operations Officer for DofE advice and answers to questions regarding the above four points and any other DofE aspects;
- Alerting the DofE Operations Officer when they need additional expedition support with the planning stages;
- Selecting and assessing the suitability of DofE Activity Approved Providers (AAP's) where a school chooses to use them for their expeditions.

2. What can you expect from your DofE Operations Officer?

Following the transfer to Direct Licencing SERO will provide the support that centres previously received from the Local Authority DofE Adviser. The DofE Operations Officer will be responsible for:

- Providing guidance and training for the school DofE Manager in order that s/he can ensure DofE events are supervised by competent and appropriately qualified staff in compliance with the adopted DofE Policy and that events take place in an area appropriate to the level of the Award and the capabilities of the participants;
- Advising and supporting on all DofE issues and responding to expedition questions by phone / emails or by attending meetings;
- Providing training for DofE roles;
- Holding meetings for DofE Managers and leaders to keep them updated;
- Auditing DofE delivery to groups and quality assurance;

Where schools / establishments require more intensive support with the expedition planning stages they should notify their DofE Operations Officer who will be able to ensure this support is provided from SERO.

3. Support from the Educational Visits Service (EVS)

The role of the Local Authority DofE Adviser will transfer to SERO following Direct Licencing. The EVS as part of its Service Level Agreement with Academy and Independent schools will approve the below aspects of DofE Expeditions if they choose and they use Evolve to notify their expeditions. Maintained schools must conform to BCC DofE Policy and use Evolve. Additionally the EVS will make a judgement about safety for maintained schools in its role representing the LA as the employer. The school may be referred back to SERO for further advice and support.

The EVS will:

- Approve that the fields of the Evolve form have been filled;
- Approve that the itinerary attached to Evolve is clear about the venues and timing of the event;
- Approve that both numbers for each of the two Emergency Contacts are potentially accessible out of school hours;
- If running during school holidays, include the expedition in the spread sheet of events for which an LA emergency support rota is in place;
- Receive reports of incidents and near misses.

Where an Independent school is currently using Evolve for DofE events only and does not wish to carry on using Evolve, the account will be closed. If an Independent school wishes to continue using Evolve for their DofE visits and/or other school visits they will be charged the same as an Academy.