

## Silver success on the Severn: Duke of Edinburgh pupils conquer the river



Last weekend, the Silver DofE participants embarked on their final expedition, successfully canoeing down a section of the magnificent River Severn (Britain's longest river). The adventure began with an early start as the pupils left school on Friday morning, heading towards the starting point at The Boat House, Llandrinio, north Wales. After setting up their tents and practising rescue drills, the teams took to the river, paddling against the current and conquering small rapids for several hours.

Day 2 brought increased excitement as the pupils efficiently prepared for their journey, setting off before 9am. From my vantage point on the slip-off slope of the meander, I could hear their joyous tones and laughter before catching sight of them. They paddled for over seven hours, facing the challenge of the weighty packs and the bright sun. That evening, they arrived at Montford Bridge, embracing wilder camping, and making use of the river for optional bathing and leisure. Considering Father's Day, the next day, the teams rearranged their route cards, planning for an earlier start to ensure they could get home and spend time with their dads the next day.

On day 3, the pupils were up and on the water by 8:20am, eagerly heading towards Shrewsbury. It was remarkable to witness their efficiency as they prepared themselves, packed their belongings, applied suncream, fuelled up and ready for the eight-hour paddle ahead. Excitement and good humour were evident as the groups eagerly anticipated achieving their expedition goal. Once again, we heard their arrival before spotting them emerge around another meander!

The Duke of Edinburgh team extends their heartfelt gratitude to the pupils for their effort, enthusiasm, and positive attitude, which made our time with them truly enjoyable. Congratulations to all participants on their remarkable achievement.

Mrs Colette McDermott