

October 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils,

Thank you for your interest in joining a group of Year 10 pupils to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Bronze Level.

The application process for Bronze DofE is by means of a letter, written by the pupil, explaining the reasons why they wish to be part of the DofE scheme. The decision over which pupils will get a place on the scheme is taken by me and other DofE leaders in the school. **Our decision is final and non-negotiable.**

We are only able to enrol a maximum of 49 pupils to take part in the DofE scheme. This is due to a number of factors which include safety whilst on expedition, the amount of equipment we have available and the costs of hiring minibuses and paying for fuel. We are also limited by the amount of qualified DofE supervisory staff. All of our DofE staff are unpaid volunteers and over the course of a year take part in 4 or 5 expeditions, all of which take place either during their weekends or in the case of a Gold expedition, during summer holidays. In addition the training all takes place during lunchtimes and after school.

We do expect 100% commitment to the scheme and I have outlined what is involved below:

The Award consists of four sections:-

1. Volunteering

This is about choosing to give time to help people, the community or society, the environment or animals. For the volunteering activity, you need to choose to give time to do something useful without being paid.

2. Physical

For the physical activity, you need to choose any sport, dance or fitness activity that requires a sustained level of energy and physical activity. For example, playing a sport regularly and showing personal improvement would count.

3. Skills

For a skills activity you need to choose an activity that will allow you to prove you have broadened your understanding and increased your expertise in your chosen skill. It should not be a physical activity, for example horse riding, as this counts towards your Physical section, however, you could choose to learn about caring for horses.

All of the above activities must be pursued for three months but one section must be continued for a further three months and all must be started before the expedition. All sections require a diary or activity log to be completed and signed by a supervisor/manager after each session.

4. Expeditions

Two weekend expeditions are undertaken at Bronze level, a practice followed later by an assessed expedition. Each consists of at least 12 hours walking (6 hours each day) with all the necessary kit (no more than 25% of a pupil's body weight) and overnight camping. Staff will supervise the expedition at various points, and will ensure groups are safe. They will check that tents are erected properly and that food is cooked safely. The sites we use are safe and reliable and after a hard day walking campers usually retire very early. Members of staff will also camp at the same sites as pupils.

Training

This will be given during school time, at lunchtimes. It will give pupils an opportunity to cover practical skills such as putting up tents and using stoves. They will also plan routes, learn country codes, gain knowledge about equipment, navigation, first aid, safety and emergency procedures. **Full attendance to training sessions is expected**, so sessions will need to take priority over coursework, rehearsals and other lunchtime activities.

All four sections have to be completed to gain the Award.

The dates for the 2025 expeditions are as follows

Practice Expedition – 14th/15th June 2025
Assessed Expedition – 19th/20th July 2025

Costs

- **Registration with DofE costs £28.** This covers enrolment with the online eDofE scheme, the insurance that DofE provides and other running costs of the scheme. This payment is non-refundable.
- **The charge for the practice expedition and the assessed expedition combined will be £130.** To cover the cost of hiring minibuses, the kit van, fuel, vehicle insurance, a meal allowance for staff and independent assessor expenses. This cost also includes a contribution to the annual licence fee enabling the school to run the DofE award and course fees for leaders. Plus maintenance and replacement of school loaned equipment.
- **There will also be an admin charge of £6 per pupil.** This is to cover production of resources, letters and other costs associated with printing and administration.
- **The first payment of £34** will be due once your child has been offered a place.
- **Total cost payable to the school is £164**
- **Pupils will also need £6.50-£8** to pay for their campsite at the time of the expeditions.

Additional costs will include the purchase of walking boots (walking shoes are not suitable) and other personal items of equipment. I will explain to pupils during the weekly sessions exactly which items can be borrowed from school.

Letters of application for the DofE Scheme are due by Wednesday 16th October

Further information can be found on the official DofE website – www.dofe.org

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Smith – Bronze DofE Leader