



From: The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Leader, Mathew Dempsey

25 May 2018

Dear Parents,

**Parents of Third Year Students
Duke of Edinburgh Award Bronze Level**

Introduction

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award offers a personal challenge through its balanced programme of activities. Boys are encouraged to serve others, acquire new skills and experience adventure. It is non-competitive, being based on individual improvement and achievement, reflecting personal choice, initiative and perseverance and in, some cases, leadership.

When boys sign up for the Award they will be provided with a welcome pack, and a logon ID and password for the eDofE recording system. The welcome pack contains various leaflets, a 'Keeping Track' booklet for recording progress within the various sections of the award, and a discount card for use in various outdoor shops.

Boys joining the Award should be aware that it is their award. This means that it is for them to motivate themselves to complete the skill, volunteering and physical sections. The amount of time required for each section is contained on the Award website; however it equates to approximately one hour a week over a three month period for two of the three sections and over a six month period for the remaining section. Many boys are allocated one of the places only to drop from the scheme during the year because they do not motivate themselves to continue, by which time it is too late to reallocate their place. Please ask your son to consider if he can commit to the time required to complete the award before applying. In most cases Boys at the school can use something they are doing in school to satisfy the criteria as long as it is outside normal lessons. For instance, music lessons can be used, as well as many Other Half clubs and sports. The only section that is arranged for them is the Expedition section. This is so that we can ensure that they are safe and that the criteria of the award are met. In school we offer three types of expedition at Bronze level, walking, sailing and canoeing. Further details of when the walking expeditions take place are further on in this letter and in the school website calendar. Further details about completing the expeditions by canoe and sailing will come from Mr Johnson and Mr Simmons respectively.

The award's website www.dofe.org is the best source of information and is updated frequently with new ideas and information. Potential participants are strongly advised to look at the site before applying for a place on the Award in school.

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Costs

The major costs associated with the scheme are for the joining materials and travel expenses for the expeditions, although every effort is made to keep these to a minimum. For planning purposes some costs are detailed below based on previous years' expeditions. There is also the initial enrolment fee.

Enrolment fee £55 This includes initial registration with eDofE, a welcome pack, completion certificate and badge (on completion), contribution to licencing cost and contribution to safety and expedition equipment maintenance and replacement.

Expeditions: Practice expedition £40 approx
 Qualifying expedition £50 approx

These are per boy to cover items such as travel, campsite fees, maps, cooking fuel and maintenance of the school kit. (*Costs for canoeing and sailing are slightly higher due to increased travel costs.*)

Expedition Training

Expedition training and planning is organised centrally. Many of the boys will have completed much of the training during the Expedition Skills option of their 3rd year service activity or through the CCF. It is **essential** that your son attends **all** the remaining planning and training sessions so that his eDofE account can be signed off showing that he has completed the mandatory training and has reached an acceptable level of competence. It is also essential that boys work together as a group. Groups will also be required to plan their expedition routes in readiness for the assessed expedition. Dates for both the training day and planning sessions are below.

Communication with boys is done via email using their school email addresses only. Some other more general information can be found on the DofE noticeboard in Big School lower corridor. All letters for trips etc are sent to both boys and parents via email only.

Training and Walking Expedition Dates

Saturday 16 March 2019 9am -12pm	Training session
Monday 6 May 2019 8am – Tuesday 7 May 2019 6pm	Practice expedition
Saturday 18 May 2019 9am -12pm	Route-planning
Sunday 16 June 8.30 - Monday 17 June 2019 7pm	Assessed expedition

Boys **must** take part and complete both expeditions and the training mornings. Failure to do so will result in them not completing the expedition section and therefore not obtaining the award at that level. Therefore please consider if your son will be available for both expeditions and the training before applying for him to join the award. Training and expedition dates for canoeing and sailing will come from Mr Johnson and Mr Simmons respectively depending on uptake.

Joining the Scheme

To join the scheme boys and parents should complete this google form together. It will only count if it comes from a parents e-mail account. The form should be completed by Friday 22 June 2018.

The form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeKc1XFfa4Vyffw2DMS-adsjhE1qBownxVTM_waO8w7UFseojw/viewform?usp=sf_link

Once boys have been allocated a place they will be notified by email. Due to the time it takes to set boys up with an eDofE account this may not be until the summer holiday. Boys who are allocated a place will also receive, prior to the induction briefing, an email with their logion ID and password to the eDofE system.

Finally boys need to be aware that, although the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme is not time-constrained (up to age 25) they should attempt to complete each element within a specified time, and that this will require a consistent effort and commitment on their part to achieve.

Please make sure your son is aware that to progress on to Silver they will need to have completed all sections of the award at Bronze and for it to have been signed off on eDofE before the end of the summer term of their 4th form year (July 2019).

Yours sincerely

Mathew DempseySaturday
DofE Co-ordinator, Abingdon School.