



ABINGDON

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

22 May 2015

Dear Parents,

*Parents of Fifth Year Students
Duke of Edinburgh Award Gold 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 with Cotswold 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 web site; however it equates to approximately one hour a week over a twelve month period for two of the three sections and over a six month period for either the physical or skill section. At Gold level boys also need to complete a residential section over four nights away from home. Some boys are allocated one of the limited 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 reality boys at the school in most cases 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 some 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 Gold level: walking, sailing and canoeing. Further details of when the expeditions take place are further on in this letter and in the school website calendar. Places are limited so early application is advised.

The award internet site '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.

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 £55.00 This includes initial registration with eDofE, a welcome pack, completion certificate, badge (on completion), and a contribution to safety equipment, the DofE centre licence, expedition equipment maintenance and replacement.

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www.abingdon.org.uk

Expeditions: Practice expedition around £120.00 approx
 Qualifying expedition around £200.00 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 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 section of their 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 do a planning task in readiness for the assessed expedition. Dates for both the training days 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 Expedition Dates (Walking)

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Sat 27 Feb: | 09.00-12:00 | Route-planning |
| Fri 15 Apr | 09:00 – Mon 18 Apr 19:00 | Practice expedition |
| Sat 7 May: | 09:00-12:00 | Route-planning |
| Sat 2 July: | 0900 - Thur 7 July 19:00 | 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.

Boy that wish to take part in the Award and complete their expeditions by canoe should contact Mr Newton directly and those who wish to join the sailing group should contact Mr Simmons.

Kit list:

Kit lists are available on the DofE website. The following should give an idea of the items required:

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Rucksack (75ltr max) | Walking boots (not shoes or trainers) |
| Sleeping bag | Woolly hat and gloves |
| Thermarest or Roll mat | 3 or 4 pairs of socks |
| Trainers/flip-flops (for use in campsite) | Torch (head torch is best) |
| Waterproof jacket | Waterproof trousers |
| Underwear | Base layers (t-shirts) |
| Fleece or jumper | Waterproof rucksack liner |
| Walking trousers (not jeans) | Spare clothes (one set) |
| Small amount of washing up liquid | Prescribed medications |
| Mug | Knife, fork, and spoon |
| Cloth for washing up | Matches or lighter |
| Pen/pencil | Small notebook |
| Sun cream | Tuck money |
| Sun glasses | Food |
| Water bottles to carry 2 ltrs | |

School will supply the following items (*when required*):

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Tents | Trangia cooking sets |
| Group first aid kits | Map cases |
| Cooking fuel | Maps |
| Miscellaneous camping kit. | |

Joining the Scheme

Please find attached to this letter an application form. Please complete this and return it via the Masters' Common Room, along with payment for the £55.00 enrolment fee.

As previously mentioned, numbers are limited, mainly due to capacity in the areas that we run the expeditions. **Boys who have completed their Silver Award by Friday 4 September 2015 will have priority** followed by boys who have nearly completed as per their eDofE account. If your son wishes to join the award scheme as a direct entrant please refer to the website to be aware of the additional time scales (up to 18 months). Once boys have been allocated a place boys will be notified by email.

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.

Yours sincerely

Mathew Dempsey

DofE Co-ordinator, Abingdon School
mathew.dempsey@abingdon.org.uk



Enrolment form for Gold AWARD (minimum entry age 16)

Participant's Forenames: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel (landline): _____

Tel (mob): _____ (son)

School email: _____ @abingdon.org.uk

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____

Age (in Sep): _____

Direct entrant: Yes/No

Date Silver Gained: _____

Tutor: _____

House: _____

Signature of applicant: _____

Walking/ Canoeing/Sailing: _____

If the canoeing/ sailing group is at capacity would you like to complete the expeditions by walking? **Yes / No**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award includes five activities: Skill, Physical, Volunteering, residential and Expeditions. To be able to join the expeditions with Abingdon School participants need to have started the other activities and have logged this on their eDofE account. In order to enrol participants need to decide what activities they will be doing; there is lots of information about the possible activities on the DofE website. <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/doing-your-dofe/activities-sections/> Please complete this table.

| Section | The activity you will do. | The name of the person who will assess you (this must not be family) |
|--------------|---|--|
| Skill | e.g. playing the piano / chess club | |
| Volunteering | e.g. helping with beavers or lower school science / football club | |
| Physical | e.g. rugby / tennis | |

Consent of parent or guardian (for young people under 18 years of age)

I agree to my son/ward participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award within Abingdon School and agree that he will be available for all expeditions (walking or canoeing (*as applicable*)).

Please add £55 to our school bill / I have enclosed as cheque for £55 for the enrolment fee.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Name: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Once form is complete please return it to Mr Dempsey via the MCR by Friday 4 September. Cheques for the £55.00 enrolment fee should be made payable to "Abingdon School".