



ABINGDON

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

22 May 2015

Dear Parents,

*Parents of Fourth Year Students
Duke of Edinburgh Award Silver 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 six month period for two of the three sections and over a nine month period for either the physical or skill section. 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 Silver level: walking, canoeing and sailing. 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.

If your son wishes to complete the expedition section by canoe he must have completed his Bronze Award and have completed his Bronze Expedition by canoe. Boys that have completed their Bronze DofE this year will be contacted by Mr Newton regarding continuing to Silver DofE. Boys wishing to complete their expedition by Sailing should get in touch with Mr Simmons for further information.

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.

Abingdon School, Park Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 1DE

Tel: 01235 521563 Fax: 01235 849079

www.abingdon.org.uk

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.

Walking Expeditions: Practice expedition between £95 and £105.00 approx
Qualifying expedition around £110.00 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 and sailing are slightly higher due to increased travel and hire costs – please refer to the canoeing and sailing letters.*)

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 Walking Expedition Dates

Sat 12 Sept:	09.00-12:00	Training session
Fri 18 Sept	09:00 – Mon 21 Sept 19:00	Practice expedition
Sat 27 Feb:	09:00-12:00	Route-planning
Sun 26 June:	14:00 - Wed 29 June 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.

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
Miscellanies camping gear.

Maps

Joining the Scheme

Please find attached to this letter an application form. Please complete this as soon as possible and return it via the Masters' Common Room, along with a cheque made payable to 'Abingdon School' for £55.00.

As previously mentioned, numbers are limited, mainly due to capacity in the areas that we run the expeditions. **Boys who have completed their Bronze Award by Friday 3 July will have priority** followed by boys who have nearly completed Bronze 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. Once boys have been allocated a place boys will be notified by email; this will be before September. Parents will be notified should their son not be successful.

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 Gold he will need to have completed all sections of the award at Silver and for it to have been signed off on eDofE before the end of July 2016.

Yours sincerely

Mathew Dempsey - DofE Co-ordinator
mathew.dempsey@abingdon.org.uk



Enrolment form for Silver AWARD (minimum entry age 15)

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 Bronze 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 four activities: Skill, Physical, Volunteering 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 football /science 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 / canoeing / sailing (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 3 July. Cheques for the £55.00 enrolment fee should be made payable to "Abingdon School".