

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Your child has shown an interest in joining our Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Gold Award group. This is an internationally recognised award for young people, designed to encourage them to develop independence, commitment, leadership and teamwork through being involved in a personalised programme of activities. It may provide a great opportunity to keep busy over the long summer and beyond in the current situation.

Similar to the Bronze and Silver Awards, Gold is split into sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skill, and Expedition. There is also an additional Residential Section for the Gold Award. The timeframes are summarised in the table below.

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Expedition	Residential
12 months	One section for 6 months and the other section for 12 months		Plan, train for and undertake a 4 day, 3 night expedition in wild country	5 days, 4 nights on a shared activity or course with people you don't know
Direct entrants (who have not completed Silver) must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.				

The award takes at least 12 months to complete and requires regular commitment to various activities. In school we will focus on the Expedition Section in year 12 and the start of year 13, while supporting the completion of the other 4 sections. I thoroughly recommend the residential gets completed before the start of year 13 for the best chance of completing the award, but I appreciate this may be difficult in the current climate.

This [link](#) offers some suggestions for what participants could do for each section as well as a planning sheet for students to complete. It is important that there is progression from the Bronze and Silver level and students should set themselves more challenging targets within each section.

#### Expedition Section

The Expedition section requires participants to undertake an assessed 4 day backpacking expedition. The area that the expeditions take place will be wild country and will involve more remote campsites. It will be physically challenging. Before this, participants need to attend expedition training sessions and take part in a practice expedition. Training sessions for the expedition will take place throughout the year, I will liaise with the group to find the best time for this. More details on this will be provided when students have enrolled. The practice expedition will be Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024, with the qualifying expedition planned for the start of year 13, September/October 2024.

Participants will be expected to have their own personal kit. School can provide tents and cooking equipment. Sheldon has a limited number of individual items (sleeping bags/rucksacks/waterproofs/fleece) that students can borrow for the events. Enrolment onto the award does include a discount card for a number of outdoor retailers.

## Costs

There are costs to participating in this award, which I have identified below:

DofE registration fee, license fee cost and insurance - £45

Practice & Qualifying Expeditions – transport, campsite fees – approx. £100 per expedition

I am going to be trying very hard to keep the expedition costs as low as possible and would not envisage the total cost for the award to be more than £250. If you need assistance with any of these costs please get in contact with me.

If your child would like to take on the challenge of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award please complete the enrolment form by clicking [here](#) and make a payment of £45 which can be made via parent pay by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October. There will be a parent information evening for all three levels of the award on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October. This will take place in the assembly hall at 6pm.

I look forward to guiding them through this award. Please encourage your child to have a look through the DofE website which has lots of useful resources to help them decide on whether to take on this challenge.

Yours Sincerely

Emma Langdon

Duke of Edinburgh Award Leader

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