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October 2023

Dear Students and Parents/Carers

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD ENROLMENT

I am writing to tell you about the Gold DofE award (Bronze and Silver) and how you can enrol through Edgbarrow School. You can start the Gold award once you turn 16. There are no other pre-requisites (you don't need to have completed Bronze or Silver) however, a completed Silver award will cut down the time you need to spend on the longest sections from 18 months to 12 months. Please see time commitments section at end of this letter. [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org) is full of advice about the award.

Participants can still be accruing evidence in their various sections as we will backdate their enrolment date to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (or beyond with special permission from DofE regional office) or from when they turn 16.

Please fill in the DofE enrolment form using this link if you would like to enrol on the Gold award scheme. Please also complete this link if you would like to start your Bronze or Silver Awards.

<https://forms.gle/GvM91tRF3KZqk6GM7>

(If the link does not automatically work, copy and paste it in to your browser)

Participants will need to provide their DofE ID number if they have undertaken Bronze or Silver. This is especially important if they are new to the school. We can help participants to group themselves with others who want to do the same type of expedition.

I will be writing to parents of students who have filled in the google form to request payment later in the term. If you decided later in the year, or even in Year 13 you would like to take part you will still be able to register. We will then enrol students as and when payment is received.

The payment of £50 covers the DofE enrolment charge, a contribution towards the school DofE award license and other associated admin costs. Please be aware that this payment is purely for enrolment and that the expedition section is to be undertaken and paid for by participants entirely independently.

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> year that Edgbarrow has been supporting the D of E award and the 9<sup>th</sup> cohort of Gold participants. Last year we supported in excess of 150 participants (including over 10 at Gold level). 4 years ago we also received our first staff invites to the Gold award ceremony at Buckingham Palace to witness some of our recent leavers receive their award.

## The Independent Expedition Section

In 2017 we stopped facilitating the expedition section at Gold level as it was getting difficult for us to staff the 5 day trips and justify taking students out of lessons during term time. Despite this we have seen record numbers of Gold participants completing expeditions in the subsequent years. These were independently organised in school holidays and we believe the process of organising and travelling to and from the expedition locations leads to a greater sense of achievement, responsibility and independence in our participants. Many of those participants are now nearing completion of their whole award. We are still here to support the completion of other sections.

One of the challenges for students organising their own expeditions is forming a group and then knowing how to contact suitable companies known as Approved Activity Providers (AAP's) who can help them organise their expedition. Once a group has been sorted, participants should consider and agree their preferred mode of transport (walking, cycling, sailing, paddling, horse riding etc) desired destination and expedition dates before choosing and contacting the AAP. Once details have been agreed all financial exchanges and medical/consent paperwork is exchanged directly with the AAP. I must stress that the school cannot be involved in these transactions or be seen to direct you to one AAP rather than another. A list of possible AAP's can be found on the D of E Website: <https://www.dofe.org/opportunity-finder/approved-activity-provider> . If students are unable to form a viable group (4-7 members (8 if canoe or kayaking)) for expedition then they could join an "open" expedition with an AAP where smaller groups or single students from different schools/colleges are brought together to form a viable group.

## Guidelines to successful activity completion

1. **Backdating** You may backdate the start of any section to the 1<sup>st</sup> of September so you can be gathering evidence for activities that are ongoing or already underway even before you have received your login. In exceptional circumstances, following agreement, some evidence can be backdated further as long as the participant is 16 or over at the start of the section. Please ensure you are collecting valid evidence if you are already undertaking sections and planning on backdating once enrolled.
2. **Overlapping with Silver.** You don't have to have finished Silver to start Gold, but you must have finished at least one section and have finished the relevant section at Silver before you can start that section at Gold. There is a strong incentive for finishing Silver as it allows you to shorten your longest sections to 12 months instead of 18 months
3. **Assessors** must be over 18 and cannot be a relation of the participant
4. **Minimum evidence** to enable completion of a section is a written, dated and signed assessors report and a timesheet/diary documenting the weekly progress and tasks undertaken. The timesheet should be initialled by a supervising adult (not necessarily always the assessor). Please be aware that there are additional levels of approval required for Gold to ensure that the integrity and kudos of achieving the Gold award is maintained. Evidence therefore needs to be more detailed and carefully recorded.
5. **Gold residential** should be a 5 day/4 night activity or project which requires you to stay overnight and work with other adults or young people who you don't know. You can do it with a friend but there shouldn't be a group of friends doing it together. If you have undertaken such an activity over the summer holidays this can be counted as long as you were 16 or over at the start.

## Time commitments

- Volunteering 12 months of 1+ hours a week
- Physical & Skill – 1 x 6 month and the other 12 months.
- If you haven't completed (or aren't planning on completing) Silver there is an additional 6 months required in 1 of the 2 longer sections making a total of 18 months.
- Residential – 5 Days and 4 nights

- Expeditions – 4 days and 3 nights.
- **You have until your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday to complete** the award but we strongly recommend that you try and finish it before leaving school!

Sixth Formers are encouraged to engage in a programme of enrichment on a Wednesday afternoon. This time can be well spent by participating in one of their weekly activities as part of their DofE Award.

If you would like any further information, please contact me on the address below.

Kind Regards



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