

9th July 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an integral part of the RGS journey for many students of the school. For many that journey starts with their enrolment in the Bronze Award in Year 9. As a school we strongly believe that learning outside the classroom provides an educational environment for students that allows them to express individual talent and explore new approaches to challenges.

My personal belief is that memorable experiences lead to memorable learning and that education in its broadest sense is not just about delivering a curriculum. It is about giving students at RGS the chance to extend their life skills; it is about the enjoyment and excitement of venturing out into the real world, with all its capacity for uncertainty, surprise, stimulation and delight.

I apologize in advance for the length and detail of this letter, but I want to ensure we are as clear and informative as possible to aid in your participation in the programme. We will be aiming to run an information evening for parents and students in late September and I will update you further upon our return in the new school year.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award,

DofE is the world's leading achievement award for young people, and is highly regarded by universities, colleges and employers. It encourages young people to develop independence, commitment, leadership and teamwork through being involved in a personalised programme of activities.

It will inspire your son to make a difference to the local community, learn new skills, become fitter through sport and expeditions and increase his confidence. The School fully supports the Award, recognizing its unique value for developing skills and attributes in RGS pupils.

Completing the Award

The award is achieved by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections. These sections are:

- **Volunteering** - helping someone, your community or the environment
- **Physical** - becoming fitter through sport, dance or fitness activities
- **Skills** - developing existing talents or trying something new
- **Expedition** – planning/training/completing an adventurous journey (this section is organised by the School)

You can find information here on how long it takes to complete the programme and the amount of time that needs to be given to any one specific section (**DofE Timescales**). However, on average it is a minimum of **3 months** to complete at Bronze level.

NB. The length of time taken for all the Awards is stated in months, but please note that your son must show **regular** activity and commitment during this time of **at least an hour a week**. He cannot achieve an Award in a short burst of enthusiasm over one weekend!

Places available for 2020/21 enrolment & cost

125 places for Bronze – Enrolment cost £120

Explanation of costs:

- DofE Welcome Pack, eDofE account, certificate and badge (on successful completion)
- Cost of the staff running and administering the DofE award at RGS
- Licence fee to DofE South East Regional Office
- In school training sessions
- Dedicated in school support for the duration of the programme
- Maps and navigational equipment
- Access to group kit and camping equipment (tents, stoves, etc)
- School insurance
- Certificate and badge upon successful completion

The following are not included:

- Cost of the expedition section
- Personal camping/trekking equipment (RGS has a supply of loan kit if required))
- Additional costs relating to completion of other sections of the Award.

NB: We would not want any RGS parent to not consider this opportunity due to cost. If you would find this financially difficult, please contact me in strictest confidence, as there may be funding available to assist you.

COVID-19

Both the School and DofE are aware of the impact COVID-19 is causing globally and want to ensure the programme is flexible to meet student needs and allow them to achieve their award. We are working closely with DofE to ensure all participants are kept updated of any changes as well as offering additional support to students to allow completion of Skill, Volunteering & Physical sections

Training & Expedition

DofE is not just about the expedition, but we know it is an important part of the programme and one that students look forward to and enjoy.

At this point, we have no provisional dates assigned. Traditionally expeditions have run in late March and early April of any given year. When we return in September, I will send out further information to all participants based on any updated government guidelines with a provisional outline of when and where training and qualifying expeditions will run.

Ultimately, we want to ensure we deliver a safe environment for students to complete their awards. With advice and guidance changing weekly, our aim is to continue to deliver a challenging expedition in line with the normal DofE structure towards the end of the Spring term, but this will be reviewed in September and I will be in contact to advise should a different approach be required.

Based on running a traditional style expedition section:

- Bronze Training, Practice (2 days) & Qualifying Expeditions (2 days) £160-£195*

***Please note the final cost will be decided at the end of the Autumn term once we know exactly how many boys are signed up for each level. However, the above figures should give you a rough indication.**

Kit

Please refer to the **DofE Essential Kit List**. Full details of what group kit will be supplied what kit you must supply yourselves will be issued by the end of the autumn term. A limited supply of kit will be available on loan, at no cost, from the RGS DofE stores

How to apply

1. Log into Parent Pay **before Wednesday 30th September**, look up either “**DofE Bronze 2020**” and pay the Enrolment fee. **NB: If you are unable to pay online, please contact the Finance Office to pay by an alternative method.**
2. Complete the Combined Programme Planner on this link and email it to dofe@rgshw.com as a photo/scanned image or post/hand in a hard copy to the Resources Centre, marked for the attention of DofE **before Wednesday 30th September**.
3. Your son can start any of his activities immediately. **It is essential that all activities are selected from the approved DofE Programme Ideas List**. If an activity is listed under Physical, it cannot be used for Skills and vice versa. If you or your son are unsure about an activity he has selected, please contact DofE@rgshw.com as soon as possible for clarification.
4. Welcome packs will be sent to you directly from DofE once you complete your eDofE registration, however, you can access Digital Welcome Packs here.
5. On receipt of the enrolment fee, we will process your son’s application and he will receive an automated email to his RGSHW email address containing his eDofE login details. *(Please note that no refunds are available after the 30th September should your son chose to withdraw from the programme)*

I wish your son every success with the Award, but in the meantime if you or your son require any more information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

D Clatworthy

Director of Co-Curricular Education