

9th July 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

SILVER & GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Experiential learning serves as a foundation for personal and group discovery. Learning outside the classroom provides an educational environment for students that allows them to express individual talent and explore new approaches to challenges. By nurturing their creativity, imagination, and exploration, we allow classroom concepts to become real and relevant through experience. 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 our students 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 apologise 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. I have also included details around our approach in relation to COVID 19 and additional information for those already enrolled in Bronze & Silver Awards looking to progress.

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 his 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, the 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 **6 months** to complete Silver & **12 months** for Gold (18 months if your son signs up without completing Silver first). Students can sign up for Silver from Y10 but must be a minimum of 16 years old for Gold.

NB. The length of time taken for all the Awards is stated in months, but please note 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! Finally, all DofE activities **must** be completed by his 25th birthday.

Places available for 2020/21 enrolment & cost

Royal Grammar School
Amersham Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP13 6QT

Telephone
01494 524955

Facsimile
01494 551410

Email
admin@rgshw.com

Website
www.rgshw.com

Headmaster
Philip Wayne

Registered No. 07492198

- 50 places for Silver – Enrolment cost £120
- 35 places for Gold - Enrolment cost £127

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 & Certificates of Achievement

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

DofE issued Certificates of Achievement directly for the 2020 season. These are designed to recognize anyone at Bronze & Silver level for their efforts and dedication in completion of the Skill, Volunteering & Physical sections. They also allow participants to move onto the next award level (however, students still need to complete the expedition section to achieve the full Bronze/Silver award should they chose).

Any payments made towards Silver or Gold expeditions that did not take place in 2020 will be carried over to 2021.

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 June and early July of any given year. When we return in September, I will look to 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.

As part their COVID-19 response DofE have released guidance on their flexible approach. These include the use of school grounds as well as the ability to undertake expeditions locally and a reduction of the practice expedition to 2 days as well as the ability to use indoor accommodation or return home. Students moving on from Bronze may use their Silver Practice as their Bronze Qualifying.

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 and remote expedition in line with

the normal DofE structure towards the end of the summer term, but this will be reviewed in September and I will be in contact to advise should a different approach be required.

NB: Participants must successfully complete both the practice and qualifying expeditions to complete the section and achieve their Award.

Based on running a traditional style adventurous expedition to areas such as the Brecon Beacons & Lake District

- Silver Training, Practice (3 days) & Qualifying Expeditions (4 days) £395- £425*
- Gold Training, Practice (4 days) & Qualifying Expeditions (5 days) £575- £595*

***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 and what kit your son must supply himself will be issued nearer the expedition date. 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 Silver 2020**” or “**DofE Gold 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. On receipt of the enrolment fee, we will process your son’s application and he will receive an automated email to his RGS 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)*
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. (clarification/approval of activities is advised before starting them to ensure students are not spending time on an activity that cannot be approved at a later date)
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](#).

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

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