

5th November 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

SILVER & GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Our goal at RGS is to ensure that all boys who choose to challenge themselves and step outside their comfort zone are given the opportunity to develop skills and build new perspectives whilst being supported in a structured framework which allows them to set themselves up for success and achievement. I am incredibly excited to be able to offer your son the inspiring opportunity to enrol for his Silver/Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award and very much look forward to supporting him over the next year.

In order to ensure that the Award remains both a challenge and aspirational we have made some small changes to both the Silver & Gold programmes. Silver groups will be undertaking their expeditions in the Brecon Beacons to give them the opportunity to explore and experience some wild and remote places and regain the traditional expedition feel of DofE. Gold groups will also have a revised walking expedition in the Lake District to enable them to take on a challenge that will cause them to step outside their comfort zones and overcome some real obstacles. Alternatively, Gold candidates may choose to complete their expedition via a river journey, kayaking down the River Wye. We hope these changes excite the boys and give them the opportunity to undertake a real adventure.

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.

Why undertake the Award?

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. In this competitive world, it helps your son stand out from the crowd and shows that he is dedicated, organised, motivated and a team player, characteristics which universities and employers alike are looking for at their institutions.

The School fully supports the Award and recognises its unique value for developing skills and attributes in RGS pupils. It is a great way for RGS pupils to be recognised for their achievement in all the things they probably already do both in and out of school.

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 **6 months** to complete Silver & **12 months** for Gold (18 months if you sign up without completing Silver first). Your son must be aged 15 to sign up for Silver & aged 16 for Gold (please note that the expedition section for Gold can only be completed while in the 6th Form)

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! Finally, all DofE activities **must** be completed by his 25th birthday.

Spaces available

40 places for Silver- 30 places for Gold

Cost

1. Silver Enrolment	£117
2. Gold Enrolment	£124
3. Silver Training, Practice & Qualifying Expeditions	£385- £415*
4. Gold Training, Practice & Qualifying Expeditions (Walking)	£575- £595*
Gold Training, Practice & Qualifying Expeditions (Kayak)	£785 - £815*

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

Explanation of costs:

- DofE Welcome Pack, eDofE account, certificate and badge (on successful completion) (£22 Silver, £29 Gold inc)
- Cost of the staff running and administering the DofE award at RGS
- Licence fee to DofE South East Regional Office
- Training, Practice and Qualifying expeditions
- Maps and navigational equipment
- Access to trekking kit and camping equipment
- Updating and replacing of equipment and clothing that is loaned to pupils and staff
- Campsite fees
- Training, Supervision and assessment by Wilderness Expertise – our Approved Activity Provider
- eDofE account
- School insurance
- Certificate and badge upon successful completion

The following are not included:

- Food during the expedition weekends (this will be discussed, agreed and sourced by teams in advance)
- Personal camping/trekking equipment (RGS has a small supply of this kit to assist those in financial difficulty)
- 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.

Training & Expedition dates

4 – 7 July 2020	Silver Practice
4 – 8 July 2020	Gold Practice
18 – 22 July 2020	Silver Qualifying
18 – 23 July 2020	Gold Qualifying

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

Kit

Please refer to the [DofE Essential Kit List](#). Full details of what kit will be supplied by the AAP and what kit you must supply yourselves will be issued by the end of term. A limited supply of kit will be available on loan, at no cost, from the RGS DofE/CCF stores.

How to apply

1. Log into Parent Pay **before Friday 22nd November**, look up either “DofE Silver 2019” or “DofE Gold 2019” 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 RGSHW email address containing his eDofE login details.
3. Your son can start any of his activities immediately or retrospectively from 1st September 2019. **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 Mrs Henry DofE@rgshw.com as soon as possible for clarification.

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 me on dec@rgshw.com or 01494 551404 or Mrs Henry on DofE@rgshw.com.

Yours sincerely

D Clatworthy

Director of Co-Curricular Activities