

07 October 2021

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Silver & Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Awards
Years 10-13, 2021-2022**

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 have the opportunity to express individual talent and explore new approaches to challenges. By challenging students to nurture creativity, imagination, and exploration, we allow classroom concepts to become real and relevant through experience. Education in its broadest sense is not just about delivering a curriculum, it is about giving students at RGS the chance to expand their life skills; it is about the enjoyment and excitement of venturing out into the real world.

I apologise in advance for the length and detail of this letter. I want to ensure we are as clear and informative as possible to aid in what we hope will be many of your sons' participation in the programme.

The following should give you a great insight to why it is such a memorable and fun programme –

Silver - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqHrGnY_Ktg

Gold - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q86Sa6DVwwA>

DofE Information Sessions - 13th & 28th October

A virtual session run directly by DofE for parents, designed to help you understand how to best support a young person through their DofE Award. - <https://www.dofe.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Parent-Information-Sessions-2021.pdf>

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](#)). 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 15 years old to sign up for Silver & 16 years for Gold.

NB. The length of time taken for all the Awards is stated in months. Please note he 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 2021/22 enrolment & cost

50 places for Silver – Enrolment cost £127

35 places for Gold - Enrolment cost £134

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 your 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.

Expedition Section

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.

- Silver Training, Practice (3days, 2 nights) & Qualifying Expeditions (3 days, 3 nights) £395- £425*
- **Provisional Expedition dates:**
26th - 28th March 2022 Training/Practice Expedition (**based in the Chiltern Hills**)
1st – 3rd July 2022 Qualifying Expedition (**based in the Brecon Beacons**)
***(Expedition assessment will depart after school on the 30th June)**
- Gold Training, Practice (4 days, 4 nights) & Qualifying Expeditions (4 days, 4 nights) £575- £595*
30th June - 3rd July 2022 Training/Practice Expedition (**based in the Brecon Beacons**)
***(Expedition training/practise will depart after school on the 29th June)**
- 14th - 17th July 2022 Qualifying Expedition (**based in the Lake District**)
***(Expedition assessment will depart after school on the 13th July)**

****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.**

Residential Section

For those undertaking their GOLD award this is an additional section outside of Volunteering, Skills, Physical & Expedition. We advise that you check with the school before booking your Residential section to ensure it meets the DofE criteria. A 'residential' for Gold DofE means a programme that spends 5 days and 4 nights away from home on a shared activity with people that you have never met before. Your residential can have any focus or include any activities that you wish, a guide can be found [here](#).

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 Monday 1st November**, look up either “DofE Silver 2021/22” or “DofE Gold 2021/22” 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 1st November 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.
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 me or Mrs Turney (dec@rgshw.com / jdt@rgshw.com).

Yours sincerely

D Clatworthy FRGS

Director of Co-Curricular Education