

January 24

Dear Parent/Carer

Ref: Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award

The school currently offers students the opportunity to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze level in Year 10 and Silver in Year 12.

Background

The aim of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is to provide young people with an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding programme of personal development, which is of the highest quality and widest reach. Young people doing their DofE programme complete four different types of activity, the **first three must be carried out in their spare time** and not during school hours and the **fourth has to be completed at a time determined by the school**.

The four are:

- Volunteering: undertake service to the community. This develops compassion, commitment and the confidence to make a difference.
- Physical: improve in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities. This develops fitness, enjoyment and, depending on the activity, teamwork.
- Skills: develop practical and social skills and personal interests. This helps young people to realise their unique potential and gain greater self-esteem.
- Expedition: plan, train for, and complete an adventurous journey in the UK or abroad. This develops teamwork and leadership, and challenges young people to push themselves beyond their expectations.

The Award Scheme is a fantastic opportunity for youngsters to further their skills of independence and leadership and is highly regarded by higher education institutions and employers. **The Award Scheme requires persistence and commitment** and it is therefore the responsibility of the participant to find and arrange the activities that they will undertake for their volunteering, physical and skills sections. **The school can offer advice but cannot find or organise the activities.** Participants should also ideally choose something new to them; there is an extensive list of activities that are acceptable on the DofE website www.dofe.org

The Silver Award At Northgate – Training And Expeditions

The participants will be trained for their expeditions on **Wednesday afternoons from 3.20 - 4.00pm**. The training sessions will start in **April** and will cover:

- First aid and emergency procedures
- Awareness of risk and health/safety issues
- Navigation and route planning
- Food and cooking
- Country, Highway & Water Sports Code

Participants must attend all of these sessions as they are a compulsory part of the award and without this essential training they will not be able to take part in the expeditions. If you

think your child will be unable to attend the sessions, then please do not apply for a place as **there are no alternative times for the training to take place.**

Participants will undertake **two** expeditions, a Practice Expedition and a Qualifying Expedition, the latter of which will be assessed by a Duke of Edinburgh Accredited Expedition Assessor. Participants will be in groups of approximately 7 for each expedition. They will walk for 3 days and camp for 2 nights. They will carry all their equipment whilst walking and will be assessed on their ability to plan a route, navigate, work as a team and cook and look after themselves at camp. Participants will be remotely supervised through the use of pre-arranged checkpoints. Participants will be accompanied at the campsite in the evening.

The **Practice Expedition** will take place on the North Suffolk Coast on **Monday 8th to Wednesday 10th July 2024**. The **Qualifying Expedition** will take place on the North Norfolk Coast on **Monday 15th to Wednesday 17th July 2024**.

The cost of **each expedition is £110.00** and includes:

- The hiring of transport for the expedition trip
- 2 nights camping
- The use of tents, cooking stoves and pans, maps, compasses and first aid kits
- Insurance
- A contribution towards staff cover costs

Participants will need to bring the following equipment: a rucksack (minimum 60 litres), sleeping mat, sleeping bag, waterproofs, suitable walking shoes/boots as well as warm clothes. They will also be responsible for providing their own meals.

Enrolling On The Award

In order to officially enrol on the Award Scheme there is a participation fee of £25.50 which goes to the DofE Charity and there will also be a small charge of £3.50 towards training material. The **total enrolment fee** is therefore **£29.00**.

Unfortunately places on the Award Scheme are **limited to 26** as we do not have the ability to facilitate larger numbers. If numbers exceed 26 the names of students that have returned all of the relevant paperwork will be entered into a ballot and places on the Award Scheme will be allocated by random lottery, and any payments received returned in full if a student is unsuccessful. **Please ensure that you discuss this with your child, as it is important that they understand that a place is not guaranteed.** To see the reasons why the Local Authority, Senior Management and Governors have all agreed to this process, please see the Frequently Asked Questions in the Learning/Extracurricular/Educational Visits section of the Northgate website. If you have any questions or queries regarding the random lottery process, please contact our Educational Visits Coordinator, Miss Armstrong, via email (visits@northgate.suffolk.sch.uk).

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is about commitment and persistence and therefore if the successful participants do not show that they are in the process of completing their three activities or do not turn up to the training sessions then they will not be allowed to continue with the award through the school.

Important Paperwork

Students wishing to apply to take part in the Award Scheme will need to make sure that the relevant paperwork is returned to school by **Friday 1st March 2024**. This includes:

- The **enrolment payment of £29**. Our preferred method of payment is online via the School Gateway, where you will have the option to pay by debit card, credit card or instant bank transfer; we would be grateful if you could pay by bank transfer if at all possible, as this results in a lower transaction fee being charged to the school. If you have not already signed up to the School Gateway, please see the Northgate website in Parents/Schoolcomms for further information.
- The **completed enrolment form** (from the DofE section on the school website under 'Learning Outside of the Classroom').

This should be put into an envelope and placed into the box marked 'Office Post' situated next to the school reception. The envelope should have the following information marked clearly on the outside:

- Your child's name
- Your child's tutor group
- DofE Silver Award

It is essential that the items above are brought into school by the deadline as students cannot be enrolled without them. Students not successful in securing a place will have their money returned in full.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss this further, then please feel free to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Ms A Turner & Mr S Songhurst

Joint DofE Coordinators