



September 2018

### Year 10 Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your son has expressed an interest in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. This highly-regarded Award recognises personal development through regular participation in a programme of activities in four 'Sections':

- **Volunteering (Service):** undertaking service to individuals or the community
- **Physical:** improving in an area of sport or fitness activities
- **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests
- **Expedition:** planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK.

Participants must commit an average of an hour per week for each of the volunteering, physical and skills sections, two of which must be carried out over a period of 3 months and the remaining section over 6 months. They record their progress online through the 'eDofE' system. While it is an intention of the Award to encourage participants to push themselves and try new things, students can count activities they already do, and records can be back-dated a few weeks from the date of registration. Ideas and guidance on these activities – as well as more information about the Award in general – will be given in training sessions and much can be found at [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org).

The boys will be given advice and guidance but will be responsible for arranging and recording their own activities in the first three Sections, while the Expedition Section is organised through school. Participants must train in the necessary skills and complete a Practice Expedition under closer supervision before being allowed to carry out their Assessed Expedition more independently. This will involve walking and navigating in a group, camping overnight and carrying all their own equipment – including meals and cooking equipment – to safely complete a planned journey of about 25km over two days. The dates for these two trips are as follows:

**Practice Expedition:** Fri 29<sup>th</sup> - Sun 31<sup>st</sup> March or Fri 26<sup>th</sup> - Sun 28<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
**Assessed Expedition:** Friday 7<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Boys who are concerned about clashes with sports fixtures will be able to choose between the Practice trips, but attendance on one of them will be essential to be allowed on the June Expedition.

The March/April trips will be based at Jobbers Wood; this should keep the cost minimal (£12 last year inclusive of most meals). The second trip will cost a little more owing to the transport costs associated with getting to the South Downs National Park, but thanks to the willingness of staff to give up their time, this should remain around the £47 cost of last year's trip.

The school has and maintains a stock of good quality rucksacks, roll mats, tents and approved stoves which we loan to the boys, in order to minimise the cost of participation and ensure the boys are properly equipped. The only things you are likely to need to purchase is sturdy walking boots and waterproofs. More advice will be given to the boys during the training sessions that will take place regularly after school before the trips, so **I would suggest you hold off on buying new items** until then (the boys can also claim a discount in many shops once registered!).



The DofE charge £21 to register a participant on the Bronze Award and Hertfordshire make a charge of £8 per student for admin, so the cost at this stage is £29. In past years, we have also asked for a contribution toward the costs of administration, replacement of equipment, copying of resources and so on at school at this stage, but from now on this will be split into a smaller contribution added to the cost of each trip. Payment for trips will be requested shortly before each trip. Should the cost of enrolment, equipment or the trips be a barrier to your son's participation, please do get in touch with me to see what can be arranged, as funds are available to ensure this opportunity is available to all.

Please note that, while we aim to enable all those who wish to take part in the Award to do so, if demand for places exceeds the capacity we have for the existing trips, **we may need to limit the number of places we offer on the Scheme through some fair process.** (Note that this will not be based on who was quickest to fill in the form or pay. Payments made for unsuccessful applications would of course be refunded in this event.) Furthermore, **places on the trips will be allocated first to those boys who have made a good start on completing their Volunteering, Skill and Physical Sections**, so your son should be sure he is committed to the whole Award.

Before enrolling your son, please note that while the expedition should be a fantastically enjoyable experience, we take our responsibility for the boys' safety incredibly seriously. While every effort is made to control risk on these trips – including training the boys in road safety, first aid, camp craft, and fire safety – outdoor activities do present risks and dangers. As such, the boys will be expected to conduct themselves with the utmost respect for the hazards involved, and to follow staff instructions and safety training at all times. Should any boy's behaviour fall below the standard expected in a way which presents a danger to himself or others, he will immediately be withdrawn from that expedition and any future trips, with the expectation that his parents or guardians will arrange his travel home at their expense.

If you would like to enrol your son on the Bronze DofE, please complete the enrolment form online at <http://tinyurl.com/tbshsdofe> and pay the £29 enrolment fee via ParentPay by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October. [N.B. the form is hosted by Google on an account managed by the school so your data is entirely safe and will only be used for DofE admin purposes.]

There will be a series of after-school or lunchtime information and training sessions before Christmas that boys will need to attend (they will be asked to commit to one of several different time slots, so should be able to fit these sessions around other commitments) and then there will be regular training sessions once a week on the same days for much of the Spring Term until the April trips, followed by planning sessions in preparation for the June trip. The boys will receive a Welcome Pack after registration, containing information and also some paperwork with instructions and report forms for Assessors (the boys need to ask a non-relative to act as Assessor for each of the three other Sections) – spares of these are also available on the school website DofE page.

Details of the individual trips, along with consent forms, and requests for contact details and any updated medical information, will be sent out nearer to each trip. Should you have any queries, please check out the FAQ and other info on the Duke of Edinburgh page of the School website (under Extra-Curricular) and then do not hesitate to contact me at school via email at [robert.rawlinson@tbshs.org](mailto:robert.rawlinson@tbshs.org) if your questions have not been answered. While we are happy to answer your queries, please keep in mind that the Award is meant to encourage responsibility, and the boys will get more out of the process if they take the initiative and communicate with us and their Supervisors/Assessors themselves as far as possible once enrolled.

Yours sincerely,



Bob Rawlinson-Mills  
DofE Coordinator