



Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award Overview

Your child has shown an interest in starting their Bronze or Silver section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. However, before they commence we would hope that you discuss this with them to ascertain whether they are prepared to give the total commitment that is necessary to complete the Award.

The Award Scheme was started over 50 years ago by the Duke of Edinburgh to provide opportunities as well as a challenge to young people. It operates at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels, with four components: a Skill, a Physical Activity, an Expedition and Volunteering. At Gold level, a Residential project must also be undertaken.

Pupils may already participate in a number of co-curricular activities, some of which may be furthered for the Skill or Physical components of the award. Typically, those involved in music, drama, chess may develop these as a skill, while team games such as Rugby or Cricket constitute Physical Activities. It is important to note that activities must be pursued out of normal lesson time (i.e. after school, at weekends or at lunchtimes).

BRONZE

At Bronze level, each of the Skill, Physical Activity and Volunteering components must run for a minimum of three months, with a further 3 months undertaken in one of them (i.e. one for 6 months and the others for 3 months). Possible activities for the Skill, Physical and Volunteering sections are detailed on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme website at www.dofe.org. Most activities have certain conditions that need to be met in order for the activity to qualify towards a specific section, therefore the guidance provided on the website must be read carefully before an activity is considered. Mrs Bristow will be able to confirm whether an activity is suitable.

The Volunteering section can be undertaken at school during lunchtime or after school if pupils so wish. In small groups they may organize 2 – 3 project fundraising events at school, raising money for chosen charities or run a club for younger children in the school.

The final, and for many the most attractive section, is the Expedition. Here, pupils have to complete a fifteen mile expedition carrying all of their equipment (including food, camping equipment, cooking equipment and clothing) and camp overnight. At all times they must demonstrate navigation, campcraft and teamworking skills.

SILVER

Silver participants must still complete the same four components but for a different lengths of time. The Volunteering section must last for 6 months. For the Physical and Skills sections, they must spend a minimum of six months on one and three on the other. The expedition will be a 3 day, 2 night expedition. For those pupils who have completed their Bronze, the Silver award can take just 6 months to complete.

It is possible for a pupil to start their DofE programme at Silver level, even if they have not achieved their Bronze. These pupils (direct entrants) must undertake a further 6 months Volunteering OR the *longer* of the Physical or Skills sections. It will therefore take a minimum of 12 months to complete.

Expedition training for both awards will be conducted during the February half term as detailed in the joining letter; all participants are expected to attend. As expeditions are conducted in groups, under

staff supervision but without a member of staff accompanying them, you will appreciate that thorough training is essential for the safety of expedition groups.

In order to facilitate completion of the Bronze and Silver awards, all participants must have completed and had signed in their record books, at least two of the Volunteering, Skill and Physical Activity sections before undertaking the final expedition in June/ July.

When registered, participants will receive a registration pack that includes their record book. They will need to provide some of their own expedition kit, to include hiking boots, rainwear, a sleeping bag and rucksack.

Full guidance on kit requirements will be provided as part of the expedition training. In addition, your son or daughter is probably growing fast so it is advisable not to purchase kit too soon.

Any queries relating to the Bronze Award should be directed to Mrs Bristow by email – helenb@arnoldlodge.com - or through the School reception.