

Our ref: TRA/DofE

September 2022



Oldbury Wells

Dear Students and Parent/Guardians,

Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award

Thank you for expressing an interest in completing the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award with us at Oldbury Wells. Students receiving this letter should have completed their Bronze Award with us already and have just attended a meeting in school explaining how the Silver Award will be run this year. This year the Silver Award is being run differently this year, due to changes in staffing and the use of an external provider to support the running and assessment of the expedition section.

Please read carefully the information outlined below. The Silver Award is a progression of the Bronze Award, and thus will be more challenging and rewarding to complete. Students and parents should be aware of the differences between the Bronze and Silver Award and be willing to commit fully to the increased demands of this Award before applying.

1. Timescales and P/V/S sections

The Silver Award consists of the same four sections as the Bronze Award: Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition. Students should complete the Volunteering, Physical and Skills activities for at least an hour each week. Timescales are longer than at Bronze level; each are outlined below.

- **Volunteering for 6 months.** This should be at a non-profit organisation.
- One of **either Physical or Skills for 6 months.**
- The final section not selected above for **3 months.**

At Silver level, there should be a stricter focus on each section being completed on a regular basis (For example, some students at Bronze completed 2/3 hours every fortnight. At Silver level, activities should be completed each week regularly to show commitment to each section). Students can continue with activities used for the Bronze Award or start new activities. Each student should be able to show progress in each section, so this should be considered if students wish to carry on with a previous activity. Guidance on suitable section activities can be provided by myself or Ms Waldron if needed.

We will be asking students to keep a more detailed log of their activities each week than at Bronze level, starting from the initial enrolment online. This can either be kept on eDofE, or in a paper booklet that will be provided. Once completed, each section will need to be assessed by an assessor. This should be a non-family member. Please note: These sections will start from our enrolment on eDofE later this term, and cannot be backdated to activities previously completed by students.

2. The expedition section

At Silver level, the expedition section becomes more challenging, encouraging further independence and confidence in navigation and campcraft. To complete the expedition section, students must complete the following:

- **After school training sessions** in campcraft, navigation, route planning, first aid, the countryside code and emergency scenarios. These will run during the spring term. Some of these sessions will be run alongside the new Bronze cohort, with Silver students providing support and guidance.

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- A **navigation day**, where students walk with guidance in navigation from trained expedition leaders.
- A **2day/2night practice expedition**, which will mirror the layout of the qualifying expedition. This will be monitored remotely by expedition leaders.
- A **3day/2night qualifying expedition**. This will be assessed in a similar way to the Bronze expeditions. Students will complete at least 7 hours of walking and planned activity each day.

The navigation day, practice expedition and qualifying expedition will all be completed around the Long Mynd, across Hill/moorland areas. Students will complete these expeditions in mixed groups of 4-7. This will mean students may not be in friendship groups as they were at Bronze, but we will aim to keep students with 1-2 friends and will allow students to camp with people of their choice. Groups will be discussed with students closer to the expedition. The expedition days will be more demanding than the Silver expedition, with students carrying larger packs and travelling over more challenging terrain for longer periods each day.

Due to the increased complexity of the Silver level, and our desire to ensure students gain the highest quality Award, we are currently running the Silver expedition section using an external Accredited Activity Provider (AAP). The expedition section will be organised and run by Chase Training Solutions, who provide mountain leader expertise throughout and trained DofE assessors to assess the section. We have worked with them previously and they have run excellent expeditions safely and professionally. School staff will provide the initial training and will also provide pastoral support during the expeditions, but the assessment of the sections will be completed by Chase Training Solutions. **Dates of these expeditions are yet to be confirmed, but are likely to run in June/July 2023.**

As offered previously, we will provide students with large items of kit for expedition, however, personal items e.g. clothes/food, will need to be provided. Further information will be provided closer to the date.

3. Payments

Due to the use of an external AAP and the increased demand of the expedition section, the cost of the Silver DofE Award is higher than the Bronze Award. **The total cost of the Silver Award is £320.** This includes enrolment onto the Award, supporting resources for completion of the V/P/S sections and the full completion of expedition section, including the cost of kit and travel etc. Payments should be made via ParentPay. Dates for each payment are stated below. The initial payment is a deposit payment and will pay for the enrolment onto the Award.

Payment 1 - £40 made by Friday 30th September 2022.

Payment 2 - £100 made by Friday 18th November 2022

Payment 3 – £100 made by Friday 13th January 2022

Payment 4 - £80 made by Friday 3rd March 2022

Please note: If the cost of the Award is a concern, please email me to discuss. Some funding is available to support completion of the Award and help mitigate any financial burdens.

4. Enrolment onto the Award

Please fully consider the increased challenge of the Silver Award before applying and have an idea of which activities you will be easily be able to complete to a high standard for the required time. If you have any questions, please speak to Miss Ransom before submitting your application.

If students are interested in enrolling onto the Silver Award with us, please can they complete the attached application form and **return it directly to Miss Ransom by Friday 30th September 2022**. The initial deposit payment should then be completed by Friday 30th September 2022.

Thank you very much for your continued support with the DofE and I look forward to working with the new Silver applicants. Any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me by email at tegan.ransom@oldburywells.com. Details of our AAP can also be found on their website: <https://chasetrainingsolutions.co.uk/duke-of-edinburgh-expeditions/>

Kind regards,



Miss Tegan Ransom
Duke of Edinburgh Manager at Oldbury Wells School