

**Thamesmead School**  
Manygate Lane, Shepperton, Middlesex, TW17 9EE  
Tel: 01932 219400  
E-mail: info@thamesmead.surrey.sch.uk  
Web: www.thamesmead.surrey.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr P Reeves



18<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 10 students

## What is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

Following the assembly this week for Y10, I am inviting you to consider signing your child up to do Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. They can join even if they haven't done the Bronze Award.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a challenging programme of activities which enables young people to learn new skills, help others, and experience adventure, and will give a great sense of achievement. Many organisations, such as employers and universities take a very positive view of young people who have achieved it. Some of you may already signed up to do Bronze, but you can also take part in Silver without having done the Bronze.

The programme is based on ten guiding principles, which are:

- Non-competitive – a personal challenge – not a competition
- Achievable by all – regardless of ability, gender, background or location
- Voluntary – young people choose to undertake a programme and commit some of their free time to it
- Personal Development – commitment and achievement inspire personal and social development
- Personalised – young people design their own programme, setting their own goals
- Balanced – challenges young people in different aspects
- Progressive – each level requires greater time, commitment and responsibility
- Achievement focused – young people set their own challenging goals to achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Demand commitment – persistence and commitment must be demonstrated with participants encouraged to continue beyond the Duke of Edinburgh's Award

### Why encourage your child to do Duke of Edinburgh?

It is a great opportunity to learn new skills, support their well-being and have some fun. The perfect chance to be independent, do something different and challenge themselves outside of their comfort zone. This is an opportunity that is not just for their CV but can also change your child's life. It will help them to be part of a community and give back to it. You can watch this short video here: [Welcome to DofE](#)

Students will choose activities in 3 categories:

- Skills
- Volunteering
- Physical.

For their participation they will receive a certificate of achievement and the actual award on completion of the expedition. Please see link below for more info on activity ideas: <https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/activities>

### Silver Award timescales

It will take you at least 6 months for Silver if you've already achieved your Bronze, or 12 months if you start from Silver.

- Volunteering section: 6 months
- Physical and Skills sections: One section for 6 months and the other section for 3 months
- Expedition section: 3 days/2 nights

If you didn't do Bronze, you must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.

### Dates:

*Practice Expedition: 23rd-25th April (Thursday + Friday not in school)*

*Qualifying Expedition: 4th-6th July (Friday not in school)*

### Next steps

We hope lots of our young people will take this opportunity to get involved with DofE.

The cost is approximately £300 per person and once you have confirmed interest, we will request payment after half term. We divide collective costs between students so this could come down depending on the numbers of students that enrol to do DofE. Once we have accurate numbers, we will be able to give you a final cost. It calculates as about £52 a day and we will be out walking for 5 days: 2 days on the practice walk and 3 days on the final.

This amount includes all the cost of training of which there is an in-person training from experienced instructors on the evening of the practice expedition and supervision and training from experienced instructors. It also includes use of all group kit – tents, stoves, fuel, group shelters, maps and compasses, an accredited assessor for the qualifying expedition and campsite fees.

We estimate these will be an additional £100 approximately for the investment in walking boots, and kit etc.

***If your child is interested in taking part but the cost is prohibitive, please do speak to me as we should be able to arrange financial support, including a bursary to help with equipment costs if you meet the criteria.***

### Sign up here

Please register your interest here by **Wednesday 23rd October**: <https://forms.office.com/e/4LQ3HU231b>

Thank you for your support. I hope you'll agree that the DofE is the perfect way for your young person to feel ready for anything.

Finally, a picture has a thousand words and I recommend this video: [Silver: Why do Duke of Edinburgh](#)

Yours faithfully,

Miss Dos Remedios and Mr Basson  
[DofE@thamesmead.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:DofE@thamesmead.surrey.sch.uk)

**Follow this link for further information on the DofE website:**

[www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org)

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

NURTURING INDIVIDUALS

RESPECTING OUR COMMUNITY

FULFILLING POTENTIAL

Thamesmead School, a charitable company, limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales, company number 7686145.

