



Bridgewater School



Information Handbook For Parents & Students Bronze Award

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INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

What is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

A DofE programme is the series of activities covering different categories that participants select and undertake to achieve a Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The programme is all about self-development. It focuses on helping young people to improve existing skills or gain new talents, abilities or perspectives and being the best they can.

Through participation pupils make new friends, develop social and inter-personal skills, and increase their initiative, organisational skills; independence and self-confidence.

Completion of the Assessed Expedition and of the final Award gives a great sense of achievement. What's more, the Award is highly prestigious, and valued by colleges, universities and employers.

Below is a brief summary of what will be expected of each participant.

Commitment

Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award requires a serious long- term commitment. **Pupils and parents must check the dates carefully in order to ensure that there are no clashes with other activities. Pupils must not expect to be excused from a training weekend or training session because other commitments arise. All of the training is essential to ensure individual and group safety. We cannot be responsible for sending pupils out by themselves on expedition if training is incomplete. The enrolment and training costs are not refundable as all costs are paid in advance by the school.**

Effort & Initiative

A great deal of effort and initiative is required from the pupils themselves. They must be motivated and fit enough to complete the course of training for the Expedition and to carry it out. They must also be prepared to meet, on their own initiative, the requirements of the Volunteering, Skills, Physical, Expedition. Pupils must also be responsible for returning forms on time, meeting deadlines, attending meetings and all training days and keeping their eDuke of Edinburgh's account (eDofE) up to date.

Time

It will usually take you at least **6 months** to complete your **Bronze** programme.

Participants will need to show regular activity and commitment during this time of at least an hour a week for each activity. You can't achieve an Award in a short burst of enthusiasm over one weekend!

THE FOUR SECTIONS OF THE AWARD

There is a massive choice of activities that count towards DofE programmes. However, this much choice can be overwhelming, so a certain level of initial support from parents is encouraged. Achieving the Bronze Award, is all about personal development and that requires taking responsibility and initiative. From the start, participants must take ownership of their programmes by choosing the activities they wish to pursue in each section. **Pupils should not do activities that are entirely curriculum subjects with no extra personal effort.** Choices and ideas will be discussed with a member of staff to ensure section aims and requirements are met at the very start and progress will be reviewed throughout participation in the award.

Volunteering

This is all about making a difference to other people's lives. From conservation to youth work to fundraising for a favourite charity or caring for animals, there's an endless list of the types of projects pupils can get involved in. The school can direct students to many options for volunteering with charities often in desperate need of support.

Skills

Develop new talents or perfect existing ones. The key is to show progression and sustained interest over time. Ultimately, participants must be able to prove that they have broadened their understanding and increased their expertise of their chosen skill. Activities can be undertaken on either an individual or group basis.

Physical

Participate and show improvement in performance and fitness within your capabilities in a chosen sport.

Expedition

This involves planning, training for and completing an unaccompanied, self – reliant expedition with an agreed aim, on foot. All pupils will take part in an intensive training programme and participate in an accompanied practice journey before taking part in the final expedition assessment. For Bronze the Expedition is over 2 days with 1 overnight camp.

CHOOSING ACTIVITIES

A list of all the activities can be found on the D of E website: www.dofe.org

SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE

Training groups of young people to the point where such a degree of independence is reasonable and justifiable is very much the philosophy of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme. However, the school must be confident that each participant is competent to take part in their final assessed expedition, therefore all training sessions and the practice expedition must be completed in full. No exceptions will be made. There must also be a bond of trust between staff and pupils. This trust must be created through the safe and sensible conduct of candidates throughout the training period. If at any stage it is felt that pupils cannot be trusted to carry out the expeditions safely, they will be removed from the DofE Programme at Bridgewater School. Participation in the scheme is an addition to the School's curriculum and must not be considered an automatic right.

Pupils must accept that whilst they are involved with Duke of Edinburgh's Award activities normal School Rules apply. However, given the nature of the activities there are additional rules outlined below which pupils must read and agree to follow before enrolling with the Scheme.

General Conduct and Discipline

DO

1. have the appropriate kit for training and assessment;
2. show manners, enthusiasm, initiative and a willingness to help;
3. be punctual at all times including lights out on camp sites;
4. always wear seatbelts in coach or minibus;
5. pay careful attention to staff and ensure that you are very familiar with all theoretical and practical elements of the course;
6. work together in expedition groups as a TEAM, and take responsibility for yourselves, each other, and your equipment; and
7. throughout the year work to ensure the physical fitness of your expedition group to complete the final assessed expedition.

DO NOT

1. make noise or leave tents after 10.00pm (brief visits to toilets excepted);
2. leave any trace of litter outdoors, on the expedition route, campsite or on the bus;
3. cause any damage to property or the environment;
4. light fires without staff permission;
5. go swimming;
6. go anywhere, at any time, by yourself without permission from a staff member;
7. damage or lose school equipment through carelessness (such loss or damage will be paid for at replacement cost);
8. behave in a noisy or loutish manner at any time including bus journeys;
9. have mobile phones or Ipads switched on during activity time;
10. use participation in the award scheme as an excuse for not doing homework; and
11. miss school the next day, following expedition.

Removal from the Scheme

Alcohol, smoking, drug taking, and being in the tents of the opposite sex are immediate sending home offences, as are other serious breaches of discipline. Parents will be expected to pick pupils up from the school, or from whichever base is being used, should such a situation arise. Enrolment cost are not refundable. Basic common sense and courtesy is what is required.

By enrolling, pupils are stating that they have read, understood and agreed to follow these rules.

EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT LIST

What to take on training & assessment expeditions:

Pupils are expected to have the following as a minimum and should be dressed for the outdoors at the start of each course unless instructed otherwise.

All Pupils (Essential Equipment)

- ☐ Waterproof jacket and trousers
- ☐ 2 thick woollen or fleece jumpers
- ☐ 2 thin long sleeved tops (thermal, not cotton)
- ☐ 2 pair trousers (tracksuit bottoms or hiking trousers) – No jeans and non-loose fitting if Cycle Touring
- ☐ 3 pairs warm thick walking socks
- ☐ 2 changes of underclothes
- ☐ 1 warm woollen or fleece hat
- ☐ 1 pair of mitts or gloves
- ☐ 1 pair of sun glasses, sun cream and a sun hat (summer)
- ☐ Toiletries (including rationed amount of toilet paper)
- ☐ The appropriate map for the area (Pupils will be informed of what map is required, a map shared between 2 pupils is sufficient)
- ☐ Waterproof map case. (MAPS ARE PROVIDED) – A Poly Pocket is not a suitable map case!
- ☐ Warm but not too bulky sleeping bag that will fit into a rucksack but not take up all the room.
- ☐ Sleeping Mat (these can be provided by the school)
- ☐ A first aid kit (these will be provided by the school)
- ☐ A bowl, cup, spoon, a spork is versatile (no knife).
- ☐ Sufficient meals and energy snacks for expeditions. (See Food & Hydration on Page 7)
- ☐ Water Bottle (1 litre minimum)
- ☐ Small Torch (Preferably a head torch)

Walking Groups (ONLY)

- ☐ Walking boots **(with good ankle support) No trainers**
- ☐ **Minimum 65 litre rucksack any smaller will not be acceptable** – (The school can provide students with a rucksack)

School Provides

Tents, cooking stoves (which includes 2 pans), fuel, map, compass, first aid kit, rucksack and sleeping mat

Note:

- Please check before any planned trip that their child is sufficiently prepared for a training or assessment day or expedition, this must include all essential equipment, sufficient sustenance and medication **(please remember to bring your personal medication with you i.e. your inhaler, Epi-pen etc. if you have noted this on your consent form). Your child will be required to carry their personal medication on them at all times. This should be carried in a secure pocket.**
Medication that maybe required instantly such as an inhaler, epi-pen or hypo remedies (including hypo testing kit) must be kept on their person and not in their rucksack.• Pupils wishing to use their own equipment must have it checked by a member of staff.
- New boots should be worn prior to a training day to ensure correct fit and comfort.
- Pupils without the appropriate equipment outlined as a minimum above, will not be able to participate due to safety reasons.
- Parents will be expected to pick pupils up from the school, or from whichever base is being used, should such a situation arise.

FOOD & HYDRATION

Lightweight, minimum of fuss, high energy foods, that's the key to expedition meals. There are several meal choices for expeditions; recommended are 2 brands of camping food which offer a variety of tasty and nutritious meals Reiter Meals (Freeze Dried) and Wayfayrer Foods (Pre – Cooked). Both brands are, no nonsense meals, which can be cooked in minutes, without preparation or having to clean dirty pans afterwards, as both meals can be cooked and eaten from within the foil pouches. Freeze dried meals are lighter and take up less room but do require sufficient water to be added.

For **breakfast** have a good variety of breakfast bars with a cup or two of coffee. For **lunch** I usually take cheese and salami with oatcakes or something simple like that, as quite often lunches are short and there won't be time to get the stove out! Also carry several chocolate bars, cakes, sweets, and dried fruit so that you can eat often **throughout the day** to keep energy levels topped up.

For **drinks** take just enough tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and sugar, dried milk for evenings and breakfasts at camp. During the day **drink water**. It is important to keep hydrated throughout the day. It is difficult to quantify how much liquid is needed during the travelling part of the day as it depends on the weather conditions, the individual and the amount of energy expended. Several litres may need to be consumed during the journeying. I will only carry a 1.5 litre bottle of water with me, as I will ensure that there are places along the way in which I can fill up.

Groups should discuss and pre-plan their 2 day menus with each other so camping stoves can be used efficiently.

Another simple meal idea, which is great as a group meal, includes pasta with a tomato or pesto sauce, a chopped sausage and finally topped off with grated cheese. Although pans and pots will need to be washed afterwards for such meals, but they do make a cheap and simple group meal alternative.

Make sure you have sufficient food for each day allowing for additional emergency food which must remain in your rucksack unless needed or after your expedition when you're back on the bus or back at base. Emergency food consists of high energy foods such as chocolate bars and dried fruit. A thermos flask is a good idea; brews can be made whilst having breakfast, so when you do stop for a break you will have a hot drink to hand all day.

Remember not to take excess packaging as you'll only have to carry it and this can take up a lot of space in your rucksack. Instead use reseal-able plastic bags to keep all your brew kit, chocolate bars and cereals etc.

Measuring out sufficient food prior to going on expedition will save you having to carry excess food or cooked food that you do not eat. On average each person will require around 1kg of food per day. To summarise, the proportion of our daily energy intake which should come from carbohydrate, fat and protein is 60 – 65%, 25 – 30% and 10 – 15% respectively. On average - per person will burn around 2500kcal – 3500kcal per day. Each individual will be different, so it is worth tuning into how your body responds to the amount and type of food you bring over the 2 Day practise expedition, so you can bring more of what works and less of what doesn't on your final assessment.

It is also definitely worth cooking and eating various meals before heading out on expedition so you know how to cook it, that the portion you intend taking are sufficient and so you can be sure that you enjoy at the end of a long day what you will be inevitably carrying!

NB: Pot noodles should not be used as main meals nor as a snack before or after meals. There are other more substantial snacks that take up less room in your rucksack, for example, rice cakes, fruit cake etc. Raw meat is a NO, this includes raw sausages, bacon and eggs – as well as difficult to clean (without hot running water) – such produce can increase the risk of food poisoning.

Mobile Phones

In the interest of safety it is accepted that pupils may wish to carry a mobile with them. The following points however should be noted:

- **pupils are expected to only use phones in case of an emergency. However, pupil mobile contact numbers are requested for expedition emergency contact ONLY;**
- pupils and mobiles may get wet;
- mobiles do not guarantee contact. For most of the area in which pupils are working there is no network coverage;
- staff reserve the right to remove mobiles from pupils where irresponsible use is suspected;
- pupils must not take pictures/videos of others without knowing consent given by those persons;
- pupils must not access social networking site whilst on expedition; and
- parents of pupils who do not carry mobiles must accept that other pupils will be carrying mobile equipment, which may give unrestricted access to the Internet.

IPODS

It is advisable not to bring such devices as there is a possibility they could get damaged or broken. However, if a pupil does bring such equipment they must only use personal stereos without speakers. They must also not be used during activity time as it can detract from his or hers obligations and responsibilities. Staff reserves the right to remove personal stereos from pupils if rules are not met.

Minibus/coach

- Pupils are always responsible for loading and unloading their own bags and equipment. Please do not leave luggage behind as it causes great inconvenience to everyone.
- Pupils must keep the minibus or coach litter free and will be expected to brush the inside of the school minibus after each expedition.

CONSENT FORMS

Pupils may be involved in outdoor activities including hill walking, orienteering and camping.

During the practise and assessment expeditions, groups may be mixed sex. Groups will have a member of staff in a supervisory role. Overnight camps are supervised from the same site. On the assessed expedition, groups are expected to work independently of the member of staff who will supervise from a distance. All groups will be met at pre-arranged check points in order to maintain contact.

By signing the consent form you are agreeing that your child may participate in any of these activities and under these conditions, unless specifically excluded by you. The consent form covers all activities for the duration of your child's participation on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme which is spread over at least one year.

Updating of Medical Details and Emergency Contact Numbers

As participation in the scheme is spread over at least one year, medical details and emergency contact numbers may change. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep the School informed of any relevant changes.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Your child will be required to carry their personal medication on them at all times. This should be in a secure pocket. Medication that maybe required instantly such as an inhaler, epi-pen or hypo remedies (including hypo testing kit) must be kept on their person and not in their rucksack so that it is easily accessible.

Epi – Pens and Inhalers

Parents of pupils with allergies or asthma must give the relevant information on the school's consent form. **Parents and pupils are expected to bring inhalers and Epi-pens if required.**

Policy on Allergies

This must be marked clearly on the **consent form** and if appropriate, **at the beginning of each trip**, you should inform your member of staff and group, about your condition and, or requirements. When out on expedition, always check the contents of your food on the label. You must take a large measure of responsibility for yourself here, as we all must.

Policy on Epilepsy

Parents of pupils with epilepsy must give the relevant information on consent form. Pupils who suffer from epilepsy are usually allowed to participate in walking expeditions.

Policy on Diabetes

Parents of pupils with diabetes must give the relevant information on consent form. Pupils with diabetes are usually allowed to participate in walking expeditions. Increased and sustained high level of activity should be taken into consideration when packing food and insulin for all training and expeditions.

Policy on Hay fever

Hay fever sufferers should be aware that pollen counts are likely to be much higher in the countryside than in the city and therefore additional precautions should be taken if appropriate.

ENROLMENT

Students wishing to enrol in the Duke of Edinburgh Award should understand that the expedition will be a walking activity :

1. Enrolment forms will be handed out to interested students in January.
2. Completed and signed consent forms should be returned to the main office with a cheque made payable to Bridgewater School (to cover enrolment on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme). The pupil's name and Form should be clearly marked on the back of each cheque. Deadline for enrolment will be 31st January.

It is vitally important that the decision to enrol is given careful consideration by both pupils and parents as a full commitment is required from your son/daughter.

THE AWARD – SCHOOL PROCESS IN BRIEF

Parents and Pupils read through the Essential Information Handbook and timetable.

Enrolment. Payment and the Consent Form handed into the Main Office by 31st January.

Introduction from staff – Pupils meet with the staff leaders and consider options for choosing activities. (See DofE website for a comprehensive list)

Staff Meeting II – Pupils meet with staff to discuss final choices - firm decisions must have been made by this point. Staff check to confirm that choices meet the requirements and aspirations of the award. Time management and deadlines are set.

Pupils start their volunteering, skill and physical recreation commitments.

Expedition Training takes place on Monday evenings. Look on the PE noticeboard or outside your locker room for session details and room location.

eDofE sections signed off by the appropriate authority once commitments met.

Expedition Teams arranged.

Expedition Practice Journey - usually last week of summer term in July.

D of E Assessment Expedition - usually over a weekend in September.

Completed eDofE account.

Duke of Edinburgh Award presented.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is a DofE requirement that pupils unable to take part in training due to whatever circumstances will not be able to take part in that year's assessment due to safety reasons. Such pupils will have the opportunity to complete the required training the following year and therefore be put forward for assessment. This may also apply to pupils that have not been put forward for assessment due to other reasons.

WHAT IS eDofE?

EDofE is an on-line electronic version of the Record Book. It provides participants with the ability to use a host of different formats including text, pictures and movies. EDofE is an interactive online that helps pupils manage their DofE programme and Leaders monitor their progress.

Volunteering, Skill & Physical Sections of the Award:

The requirements of the Physical, Skills and Volunteering sections, inevitably involve pupils with a very broad range of activities and individuals outside of the school community. Pupils can use the extra-curricular clubs in school to complete sections, but **it is the responsibility of pupils themselves to make their own arrangements for the completion of these sections.** Help and guidance is of course given initially, and at regular intervals, and is always available on request.

EDofE Sections – Personal Goals

Pupils should discuss their options carefully with parents and a D of E member of staff before deciding on an activity. Once an activity has been chosen, pupils must check with the member of staff responsible for each activity before starting a D of E section. An aim and personal goals for each section of the award should be agreed at the beginning. If an activity has been chosen outside of school, whoever may be in charge for that activity should be approached and aims and goals discussed.

Completing EDofE

Pupils must not expect their eDofE sections once completed to be signed on demand. Pupils are expected to be polite and courteous at all times when asking for an assessors' report.

EDofE completion must not be left to the last minute as there is no guarantee assessor reports will be completed in time.

Problems with eDofE

Once you have your eDofE account you need to keep updating what you have done. If you do not visit your page, your account will become inactive and you will need to see Mr Smith to make it active again. Mr Smith will be able to give you your username for your account if you forget it but it would be helpful to make a note of your username and password when you get it.

Successful Candidates

Completed eDofE accounts once approved, will be electronically confirmed by the DofE Manager and Certification and the Award Badge will be sent in due course. Please note that if pupils miss the final deadline for completing in time for the presentation they will still be able to achieve their award.

TIMETABLE INFORMATION

D of E expedition training sessions take place on Monday evenings after school, usually finishing at 5pm. Pupils and parents must check the dates carefully in order to ensure that there are no clashes with other activities. Pupils must not expect to be excused from a training session because other commitments arise. All of the training is essential to ensure individual and group safety.

We cannot be responsible for sending pupils out by themselves on expedition if training is incomplete. The enrolment costs are not refundable.

- **Changes/cancellation to training dates or times** – It is intended that all time tabled sessions and expeditions go ahead as planned, but occasionally due to severe weather conditions etc. session dates may need to be rearranged. Timings may differ slightly from time to time due to progress made by pupils during the training programme.
Parents will be kept up to date of any changes to the timetable and for any last minute cancellations due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances parents will be able to check the schools twitter feed. Follow us @BWS_SPORT

Note:

- **Pupils must arrive punctually. Food and drink must NOT be taken into sessions unless pre – arranged.**
- **Pupils must make their own travel arrangements home on Monday evenings and after expeditions.**
- **Due to the nature of such trips and differences in physical abilities, weather, conditions under foot - return times may vary, but parents will be notified by pupils if the time changes greatly as soon as possible. Apologies in advance for such circumstances.**

POSSIBLE EQUIPMENT COSTS

It is hoped that pupils will be inspired to pursue outdoor activities such as walking and hopefully get a lot of use out of the equipment they may need to buy for

DofE through the years. Below is a rough idea of how much you may need to spend on the essentials. **Pupils can borrow clothing and equipment from friends and family and some equipment (limited amount) may be borrowed from school (see equipment list)**

Rough Costing

- Walking Boots - £40 to £100 (Walking Only)
- Waterproof Jacket - £50 to £100
- Waterproof Trousers - £30 to £50
- Thermals - £20 each
- Fleece top - £30 each
- Rucksack - £50 to £120
- Sleeping Bag - £20 to £80
- Sleeping Mat - £10
- Map Case - £10
- Meals & Snacks - £50 (For both training & assessment)

Useful Website Addresses

www.dofe.org The Award Website

www.cotswoldoutdoor.com Cotswold (A S Adventure)