



Trinity Academy Duke of Edinburgh Award Group 2016.17

General information on the Award can be found on www.dofe.org

Introduction to the Award.

The Award is open to all pupils in S3 to S6. It has encouraged and rewarded the efforts of young people for many years and is now increasingly being used to “recognize the wider achievements” of participants by the Curriculum for Excellence. It is a well established scheme, nationally and internationally, which recognizes the efforts of young people in up to 5 areas or “sections” depending on the level of award undertaken.

Completing any of the sections or awards at Bronze, Silver or Gold level is an excellent way for young people to gain recognition for activities undertaken voluntarily. **Activities are completed in a young person’s free time before, after or sometimes within the school day (eg: a lunchtime club).** (The exception to this is for the expedition section which, when organized by the school, sometimes takes place over a combination of school days and a weekend depending on the length of expedition attempted.)

Following registration young people have until the age of 25 to finish an Award although most finish much sooner than that and it is possible to finish Bronze, Silver and Gold before the end of S6.

Registering, organization and costs of the Award.

Cost for participants to register for the Award are **£19.50 for Bronze or Silver and £26 for Gold.** This registration fee covers the cost of a Participant’s Handbook which contains information on how to organize your Award using an online eDofE account for Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards as appropriate, discount cards and insurance.

The Volunteering, Skills, Physical and Residential (Gold only) Sections:

Participants are expected to familiarize themselves with the Award conditions and to arrange their own activities for each section. They should refer to www.dofe.org for guidance. After doing their own research they can then seek advice from school staff who assist with the Award. Drop in sessions in school are held weekly to help pupils if they are having difficulty inputting data into eDofE but it is a participant’s responsibility to come to these sessions and ask for help if they feel they need it. Participants are responsible for choosing activities that interest them to qualify for each section using guidance from the website and staff. **They should not start an**

activity that they want to use for a section until it has been approved by the Trinity D of E co-ordinator as the rules for what is acceptable for an Award section are not always straight forward. This can all be done online through eDofE using the messaging system. Without research participants run the risk of devoting time to an activity that will not count towards an Award.

Costs to take part in any of Volunteering, Skills, or Physical (and Residential at Gold) sections depends on the choices made by participants and their families.

There are clubs and activities provided free of charge within school. Others carry a small annual charge ranging from between £20 - £40 a year. Many participants take part in a wide range of activities in the community and these may or may not have their own charges depending on activity, venue, organization etc.

The Expedition Section:

This section requires participants to plan, train for and complete an unaccompanied, self-reliant expedition of either 2, 3 or 4 days and associated nights with an agreed aim. They have to complete the expedition by travelling for a specific number of hours during each day (depending on the level of Award) and it must be completed using the participant's own physical efforts.

The expedition programme on offer through Trinity for 2015.16 was a result of a collaboration between the school and Bangholm Outdoor Centre which is conveniently located at our school playing fields. This partnership allows Trinity participants to complete their expedition section for their chosen level of the Award by using a wealth of experience found amongst the staff employed by both the school and Bangholm Centre. As a result we can offer expeditions at all levels on foot, by bike or by canoe. (We are hoping this arrangement will continue for 2016.17 but this is yet to be confirmed as are prices. The information in italics below is from 2015.16 and is to give parents of new participants an indication of costs. Costs will likely increase for 2016.17 but hopefully not by a significant amount. Prices will be confirmed in the Expedition Programme letter published around mid December 2016.)

The cost for participants for 2015/6 to take part in any of these expedition was £30 per participant per day. The number of days (or equivalent hours) of training and expeditioning required for each level of the Award is usually 7 days for Bronze walk or bike expeditions (£210), 8 days for Bronze canoe (£240), 8 days for Silver (£240) and 10 days for Gold (£300*). These costs are significantly cheaper than commercial providers. The school and the Bangholm Centre receive no funding to deliver D of E expeditions so all costs must be paid for by parents. All expeditions are run on a "not for profit basis". Please bear in mind that they include loan of all equipment (with the exception of bikes and bike trailers which can be hired for £5 per day for the required time from Bangholm), minibuss costs (including fuel), trailers and campsite costs as appropriate. NB: Food is **not** included.*

**For any expedition that is held in a remote area there may be an additional cost of £15 per person per night for bunkhouse/hostel accommodation required for the night before both the practice and qualifying expeditions begin.*

Please note that these estimates are based on experience of training previous groups and assumes those in Silver and Gold groups have completed an expedition at the previous level using the same method of travel successfully with Trinity or that participants have sufficient previous experience in the opinion of expedition staff. If not, additional training days may be required at the same daily rate.

With around 140 participants registered for the Award through Trinity at the moment we are, unfortunately, not able to offer expedition places to every participant that wants one although last year we were able to offer 64 places which was our highest to date. From past experience we have found that the fairest and most transparent way to offer places in an expedition group is to base this on a participant's commitment to completing the whole Award. This can be easily demonstrated and judged by how much evidence participants have uploaded to their eDofE account for each of the Volunteering, Skills and Physical Sections by a specified date. This date is normally near the end of January of each year and will be in the Expedition Programme letter which will be distributed around mid December. **Participants should not sign up for the Award if they expect or just want to do only the expedition section as this is just one part of the Award!**

The Expedition Programme letter will include the date when an initial £100 deposit is due in by (usually mid January) along with the expedition choice sheet. Places are then offered in expedition groups before the end of January with final balances to secure a place being due by the last week February. Anyone who pays an initial deposit but does not get a place in an expedition group will have their initial deposit refunded. After a place on an expedition is accepted by the paying of the final deposit there can be no refunds unfortunately. More detailed information about the reasons behind this will be in the Expedition Programme letter.

Please note that financial assistance may be available in certain situations. Please contact me in confidence for further information.

Other opportunities to complete the expedition section.

If a participant does not get offered a place in an expedition group, is ill and has to withdraw from training once started or if the dates we have organised are not convenient then there are some other options.

1. The City of Edinburgh's D of E Unit along with a charitable organization "Friends of the Award" (FOTA) supports a number of "Open Award" groups across the city and these groups organize their own training and expeditions for their members. Please contact Fraser Robertson, D of E Manager for CEC, on 551 4370.

2. Participants can also use a commercially operated Approved Activity Provider to do the expedition section. (Any company used for this must be approved to do so by the Duke of Edinburgh Award who will give it AAP status). Costs for using AAP's start from about £45 per person per day and details of providers can be found on the D of E website.

Which Award?

Participants may start the Bronze Award in S3 (ie approximately 14 years and over.) For Silver, pupils will normally be in S4 and be approximately 15 years and over. For the Gold Award pupils MUST BE OVER 16 years old before any activities can be counted towards the Award. Any Award must be completed by 25 years of age. The next level of the Award can only be started when a participant has completed at least ONE section of the previous level. However, participants who have completed the

whole of a previous level will be given priority for expedition places at the next level. (ie If you have completed the whole of your Bronze Award you are more likely to be offered a place on a Silver expedition)

What next?

Over the summer holidays potential participants should spend time researching the Award and all it has to offer online at www.dofe.org. By the time participants return from the holidays they should have a good idea of what they would like to do for each section. Advice and guidance on choice will be available from Mr Blevins at the start of next term. Please note: no activity in any section can count towards an Award unless it has been approved by me first through a participant's online eDofE account which is set up during the enrolment process.

If you wish your son/daughter to participate in the Award Scheme through Trinity Academy please return the attached **Participant Enrolment Form with payment by Wednesday 24th August** to the OE Base in the school basement (post under the door if I'm not in!). **Cheques payable to City of Edinburgh Council please.** If paying by cash please include the correct amount. No change will be given for overpayment which will be considered a donation to replace worn out expedition equipment :-)

If you have any questions please contact Mr. Blevins on 478 5050 Wednesday - Friday or by email at dave.blevins@trinity.edin.sch.uk