

15 September 2026



Dear Parents/Carers

Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme 2026-27

We are now launching the Silver DofE Award for all Year 10 students, whether or not they have taken part in the Bronze Award. For the Silver expeditions we will use [School of Outdoors](#) as Approved Activity Provider, and they will train and supervise the students throughout the expeditions. The total cost for participation on the Silver award is £515, which covers a place on the scheme, DofE Welcome Pack, eDofE account, a contribution to our DofE licence, an in-school training session with School of Outdoors, two expeditions, and use of group equipment (maps, compasses, tents, stoves and fuel).

If your child is interested in signing up for Silver DofE please note the following timelines:

By 6 November	£250 paid via Scopay and completed Microsoft Form
By 4 December	All 3 section planners approved by Howard staff
By 12 February 2027	£265 balance due. Expedition groups finalised.
By 12 March	First section completed, and Assessor Report uploaded
By 23 April	Second section completed, and Assessor Report uploaded
By 21 May	All 3 sections completed and Assessor Reports uploaded (for those who did Bronze, i.e. most students)
By 10 September	3 rd section completed and Assessor Report uploaded for those who did not do Bronze

The dates of the training and expeditions are as follows:

Date	Activity	Start Point	End Point	Transport
Saturday 27 February 2027 9am-4pm	Compulsory Silver Training	Howard of Effingham School	Howard of Effingham School	
Friday 9 July 6pm – Sunday 11 July 4pm	Silver Practice Expedition: Ashdown Forest	Blackland Farm RH19 4HP	Gills Lap Car Park, Uckfield, TN22 3JD	Parent Drop and Collect
Friday 17 Sept 9am – Sunday 19 Sept 4pm	Silver Qualifying Expedition: South Downs	Glynde Car Park, Lewes, BN8 6SS	Glynde Car Park, Lewes, BN8 6SS	Parent Drop and Collect

Enrolment

Enrolling on the Award allows us to allocate an eDofE place to your child so that they can make a start on their Volunteering, Physical and Skill elements. As with the Bronze Award, they will need to get approval for their section planners from DofE staff. Enrolment onto the Award will be backdated to 1 September allowing students to include activities they are already doing such as sport or music.

Inclusivity

DofE is intended to be fully inclusive so if your child has a difficulty that might discourage them from applying or might require additional support, please get in touch to discuss.

Finance

We recognise that for some, the cost of DofE is prohibitive. Financial constraints should never be a barrier to young people taking part, and funding is available to those who experience financial hardship. Alternatively, we can arrange a plan for paying in smaller, monthly installments. In either case, please contact me in confidence to discuss options.

Jumping straight into Silver without having taken part in Bronze

Students may sign up for Silver if they haven't taken part in Bronze. However, they will need to meet Miss Riddell and / or Mrs Collins to demonstrate their commitment to all sections of the award, and discuss their previous experience of hiking and camping eg with Scouts or on family holidays.

Sections

Silver will take at least 6 months (26 weeks) for students who have already achieved their Bronze award or 12 months (52 weeks) if they've jumped straight into Silver.

- Volunteering section: 6 months (26 weeks)
- Physical and Skills sections: One section for 6 months and the other section for 3 months
- Those who didn't do Bronze must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.

Finding suitable activities for the Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections is the responsibility of the student, although the school can help with ideas or they can visit <https://www.dofe.org/do/ideas/> for inspiration. Students can continue with some, or all, of the activities they used for their Bronze Award.

It is **not** possible to cover the time requirement by undertaking a more intensive activity for a shorter length of time, such as a week-long course. There may be some flexibility in this for certain activities such as doing two hours every fortnight, but this must be discussed and approved with DofE staff in advance.

Students need an assessor for each section. This should be an adult (**not a relative**) who is knowledgeable about the activity the young person has chosen. It could be a coach, teacher or family friend. The student should discuss with the assessor **at the outset** what their goals will be, so that the assessor can reference these in their report when the section is completed.

It is unfortunate when a student starts an activity which turns out not to be allowed under DofE rules. Therefore, **it is very important that students get approval for their plans** before committing to anything new. This will be electronically via eDofE. Activities should take place in the participant's own time and be outside the school curriculum e.g. lunchtimes or after school

Miss Riddell operates a DofE drop-in session every lunchtime from 1.30 to 1.50pm in IT2. She has a wealth of DofE experience and can answer queries and help students with ideas for sections, issues with eDofE and so on.

Volunteering

This section involves giving service to others without getting paid. It can be helping people, the community, the environment, or animals. Please see the separate document with suggestions of suitable volunteering ideas.

Ideally students should volunteer with a registered organisation with a safeguarding policy such as a church, charity shop or other volunteer scheme, but if this is not possible, parents/carers should be satisfied that the activity is safe.

Physical

Participants must show dedication and improvement in a chosen physical activity eg rugby, football, netball, hockey, swimming, running, cycling walking, going to the gym

Skill

This section encourages participants to find a new hobby - or develop an existing one. Examples include GCSE Latin, playing an instrument, cookery and photography. Online learning is acceptable eg Duolingo or a touch typing course. Although learning a sport does involve developing skills, students may not choose something in this section which could also be classified as a physical activity.

Recording Evidence

For any activities carried out independently, eg Duolingo, cooking at home, running, going to the gym, litter picking, students must upload evidence to eDofE demonstrating their hour of effort each week. This could be in the form of labelled and dated photos, screenshots, a diary or log. They will then present this evidence to their assessor who will use it to inform their assessor report.

Expeditions

School of Outdoors run the Expedition section of the Award. This will start with one day of **in-school training on Saturday 27 February, which is compulsory**. Please ensure your child is available, as School of Outdoors are very strict about this and will not allow students to take part in either the Practice or Assessed Expeditions unless they have attended a School of Outdoors training session. (If you know in advance that your student can't make this training it may be possible to arrange to attend a session at a different school).

The expeditions are over 3 days with 7 hours of activity each day and 2 nights camping. Participants will work in teams (generally 7 students) to plan and walk a route carrying all the equipment needed to camp and cook their own food.

It is important that parents/carers are aware that during the expeditions students will work in their teams without direct adult supervision. Training will be given to students to enable them to navigate the route, cross roads safely, and deal with any emergencies. They will be supported by a team of School of Outdoors instructors, and Howard staff will be available in the area in a pastoral capacity. The overnight camping will take place with all the other teams and be supervised by School of Outdoors and Howard staff. Parents/carers will be expected to drop off and collect their children from the departure and finish points of the expeditions.

Students will need a sleeping bag, sleeping mat, rucksack, waterproofs and walking boots. Detailed equipment lists will be issued. Help can be given with expensive items for those experiencing financial hardship.

Expeditions take place whatever the weather – in recent years this has included both 30-degree heat and torrential rain, so students need to be prepared for extreme conditions.

Expectations of Participants

The expectations of behaviour and engagement of students enrolled on the award are very high. Staff give up considerable amounts of personal time to allow the award to take place and are only prepared to work with polite and enthusiastic students who are eager to learn. Rudeness or disruption to training sessions will not be tolerated; any such students will not be allowed to continue with the award.

We are looking forward to working with the Year 10 students on Silver DofE over the next academic year. In the meantime, please do get in touch if you require any further information or advice regarding the award.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Diana Collins

Duke of Edinburgh Manager, Howard of Effingham

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