



20/09/22

Dear parent / carer,

I'm pleased to let you know that Ridgeway Academy runs the Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. Bronze is offered to students in Year 9, Silver to students in Year 10 and Gold to students in Year 12. We are holding a face-to-face Information Evening for Parents / Carers and Students on Wednesday 5th October at 6pm in Osborn Hall at Ridgeway Academy. Please, return the attached slip to confirm attendance or email richard.sutton@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk.

The DofE is a great chance for your child to broaden their horizons, discover new interests and talents, have fun with friends, develop essential skills for their future and achieve an internationally renowned Award. It is also not compulsory that a student completed each level in turn. If your child is interested in Silver or Gold but has not completed the previous levels, they may still sign up.

As Ridgeway's DofE Coordinator, I wanted to send you some information about what a DofE programme involves, the benefits for your child and how they can sign up.

About the DofE

The DofE is non-competitive and open to all young people – it's about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries. There are three levels of DofE programme which, when successfully completed, lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

Through their DofE, students will make friends and memories and build traits like confidence, resilience and self-esteem, which can benefit mental health. They'll gain skills and attributes for work and life, like problem-solving, team-working and self-motivation – and they'll achieve an Award that's recognised by top employers and can help them stand out when applying for uni or jobs.

To achieve their Bronze Award, participants must complete four sections: Skills, Volunteering, Physical and their Expedition.

Every young person's DofE programme is personal to them – they can choose what they'd like to do for their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections, and most activities can count. We will provide guidance and support, and students can either choose to continue an activity they already do or discover something completely new.

During and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, participants who complete their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections will also receive a DofE Certificate of Achievement – a formal recognition, by the DofE, of their efforts at this extraordinary time.

Activities for each section take a minimum of one hour a week over a set period of time, so they can fit around studying, hobbies and social lives. For more details about programmes and timescales visit DofE.org/do.

About the expedition

The Expedition section involves your child working as part of a small team to plan their expedition's aim, choose a location and do some training to make sure they're fully prepared – before spending two days and one night in the countryside.

Ahead of this, they will take part in a training programme over a weekend and during period 6 over the course of several weeks, covering basic expedition principles and introducing them to expedition

equipment. Students will also work with their group to plan their route and prepare. Participants will only be able to do their expedition if they attend the organised training.

Furthermore, a practice expedition day will take place during May half-term. The qualifying expedition will take place in the Summer Term, and details about pre-expedition training will follow.

The DofE and COVID-19

Your child can still have the full DofE experience, safely and in line with Government guidance, during the COVID-19 outbreak. The motivation and focus the DofE gives, and its positive impact on mental and physical health, can play an important role in helping your child navigate our 'new normal', safely expanding their world and giving them skills and experiences to open doors in the future. The DofE has provided useful advice and information, including activity and volunteering ideas, at [DofE.org/DofEWithADifference](https://www.dofe.org/DofEWithADifference).

eDofE and the DofE app

Participants can create their DofE programme and record their progress using eDofE, the DofE's digital system, available online at [eDofE.org](https://www.edofe.org) and through the DofE app – downloadable for free from Google Play and the App Store.

If your child decides to enrol, we will set up their eDofE account and they will receive details of how to sign in and get started. We will also hold an eDofE launch session in November/December.

Signing up

The cost of taking part in the DofE is expected to be £100 per participant, with the cost finalised once we have an understanding of the numbers of students enrolled onto the DofE this year. This covers your child's participation place and Welcome Pack, which will be sent to their home address and includes their personalised DofE Discount Card. It also covers some of the expedition costs and goes towards our centre licence fee to run the DofE.

If your child would like to take part, please attend the Information Evening for Parents / Carers and students, which is taking place on Wednesday 5th October at 6pm in Osborn Hall, at school. You will be given more information on enrollment during the presentation. If you would like any further information in the meantime, please feel free to contact me.

Many thanks for your support and we look forward to helping your child to achieve through their DofE.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Sutton

DofE Coordinator

RWA-DofE-Staff@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk

I would like to attend the Information Evening on Wednesday 5th October at 6pm in Osborn Hall.

Parent/Carer's Name:

Child's Name:

Award Level:

Please, return this form to School Reception by Friday 30th September at 3pm, or email to confirm your attendance to richard.sutton@ridgeway.herts.sch.uk