

17 January 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Successful application to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Your child has applied to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and I am pleased to say that they have been successful. Indeed, the Sixth form team and I were so impressed by the quality of applications that we have removed the cap of 28 students and have re-planned our program to ensure that all applicants will be able to fully participate in their award. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award was established 60 years ago to give young people an opportunity to develop new skills and to encourage them to take a more active interest in outdoor activities and their community, it is extremely well recognized and valued by employers and universities alike. The award consists of four sections: Volunteering, Skills, Physical and Expedition. The Award requires participants to maintain their commitment to various activities over an extended period and will take around 6-12 months to complete.

Students will be given support and guidance throughout their award by staff and also by Sixth Form DofE Gold participants who will be delivering some of their training. They will be given guidance, but will be expected to find their own activities to complete for the Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections. The Expedition section will be organized by the school and I will let you know the proposed dates of these expeditions a.s.a.p. Further details about the award can be found at www.dofe.org.

Enrolment in the award costs £70 and payment needs to be made to the finance office, ideally via ParentPay with the slip below returned to the finance office by Friday 1 February 2019. If your child is currently in receipt of Free School Meals, the cost of enrolment and the trips will be met in full by the school, but it is still essential that you return the reply slip in a finance envelope to the Finance Office. If you believe your child may qualify for Free School Meals, please visit our website and click on the [Financial Advice to Parents/Carers \(including Pupil Premium\)](#) button. This includes student's registration fees, DofE Award packs, a T Shirt and consumable training materials (e.g. fuel etc.). There will be additional costs for Expeditions though these will be kept to a minimum and it is not expected that any expedition will cost more than £30. Please be aware that although the majority of equipment such as tents, stoves and rucksacks can all be hired from the school as part of the expedition costs, your child will need to procure some of their own kit for the expeditions such as walking boots and a sleeping bag. Additionally, many students, especially those who are shorter, feel more comfortable walking with their own rucksack. There may be additional support with kit available to those in receipt of Free School Meals. (Obviously if kit loaned from the school is lost or damaged they will be required to pay for a replacement to be purchased.)

In order to take up this opportunity there are some requirements I need to ensure that you are aware of and should your child fail to meet these requirements they may be unable to go on expeditions with the school.

- 1) They must commit to attending all Friday afternoon training sessions (3.30-4.45 in C25 or elsewhere as advised) and should not miss a session without an exceptionally good reason. This is to ensure the quality of training and therefore the safety of all those on the expeditions. NB: Some sessions for example those on tents or stove safety may overrun slightly.

Principal - Dr Chris Ingate

Registered office - Parsonage Lane • Bishop's Stortford • Hertfordshire • CM23 5BD

Telephone: 01279 655936

Email: admin@birchwood.herts.sch.uk

Website: www.birchwoodonline.co.uk

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- 2) They must behave appropriately and participate fully in training sessions. If participants do not behave and focus appropriately during training sessions it could compromise theirs and others safety during expeditions hence inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.
- 3) Students must have found a skill, a physical and a volunteering activity, have registered these on e-DofE and be working towards completing all of these section by Easter. We will give them guidance but it is their responsibility to find an activity to complete for each category (this will be covered in the first few sessions).
- 4) They must attend the two expedition weekends. If they cannot make these dates, they may complete the missing exped a year later, or go on an 'open expedition' with an external provider. Dates for expeditions will be confirmed a.s.a.p. as we are still waiting on campsite bookings.
- 5) Students must regularly update their eDofE accounts with photographic evidence for each of the sections they are completing and a final assessors report explaining what they have achieved. Guidance will be given on this element in the training sessions.
- 6) Students must remember that they are ambassadors to the Award both within and outside of school so they should ensure that they are responsible young people at all times and support the good reputation of the school and the DofE Award.

I do hope that your child finds the Duke of Edinburgh Award an engaging and challenging activity and that they thoroughly enjoy the experience. I look forward to seeing them at the first session.

If you have any queries about the Award and what it involves, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr W Morton
 Head of History
 DofE Coordinator

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 Reply Slip - Please return to the Finance Office in a finance envelope provided by the 1st February 2019

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Name of Student:..... Form:.....

- I have paid £70 by ParentPay ondate
- Enclosed is £70 (cash or cheque) payable to 'Birchwood High School' in order for my child to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- My child is eligible for Free School Meals

Signed.....Date.....