



4 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award 2026/2027

We are delighted to be launching the Bronze award again this year for students in Year 9.

An Information evening on the award will be held on Monday 21 September from 6.30pm online to speak to me and the School of Outdoors team who run the expedition part of the award for us. [Click here to join the meeting.](#)

Last year, over 200 students took part in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards at Borlase. The scheme is open to anyone over the age of 14, however you can start the Award with the school in Year 9 when you are 13.

The Award involves completing four sections: the physical; volunteering; skill and expedition sections.

Volunteering - undertaking service to individuals or the community

Physical - improving in an area of sport, dance or a fitness activity

Skill - developing personal interests, practical and social skills

Activities do not need to be completed at school: where students take part in activities outside school, and when the activity is appropriate, it can be counted towards the Award. All activities must be done on a voluntary basis and students are encouraged to organise their own activities. Before undertaking any external activity, please confirm with Ms Mitchell that it will qualify for the Award.

If there is any doubt, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us; you can also head to the DofE website for [ideas](#) on all the sections. All students taking part in the Award will need to attend meetings throughout the year where they will receive support in completing their Award.

Expeditions

The expedition section of the Award is facilitated by an external company called School of Outdoors. To complete the expedition section students need to take part in: a **training day**, a **practice expedition** and a **qualifying expedition**. As a school, we currently offer a walking expedition at the bronze level.

The assessed expedition will consist of 2 days and 1 night. The students are required to undertake 6 hours of 'planned activity' during each of the 2 days of the expedition. The assessed expedition is overseen by an external DofE Assessor. The expedition is not a guaranteed pass as students can be deferred if seen as underperforming.

As part of the cost for the expedition, the following kit is included: tents, stoves, fuel and navigation equipment. As part of the Award students will need to plan and provide their own food, clothing, footwear and personal kit.

Supervision

The Duke of Edinburgh Award requires participants to be unaccompanied and self-reliant on expeditions. Provided that students have demonstrated the required level of competence and have shown suitable behaviour during training, they will not be directly supervised during the expedition. Appropriately qualified expedition staff will meet the teams at checkpoints along their planned route and students will also be briefed on what to do in case of an emergency. Whilst on expedition, any communication between parents/guardians and students will need to go through expedition staff as it is a requirement of the Duke of Edinburgh Award that direct communication is not permitted.

The dates for this year's expeditions are:

1. Training Day - School - 6 February 2027

This will be a day's training run by School of Outdoors to go through Kit, Bag Packing, Food and Meal Planning and basic navigation.

2. Practice - Frieth, 19 March (Evening) - 20 March 2027

This will be a 1 day 1 night training practice. During this training we look at navigation, route planning, first aid, emergency procedures, camp craft, expedition cooking and nutrition, health and safety and kit requirements. This is made fun and enjoyable with practical learning techniques, mixed with games and activities.

3. Assessment Weekend - Wallingford, 23-24 April 2027

This is a two day, one night assessed expedition. The assessed expedition is the final part of the expedition section where the participants can prove to the assessor what they have learnt and how they have developed as young people.

These dates are fixed and cannot be changed and students are required to attend all training days and expeditions in their entirety. In the event that illness or injury prevents a student attending, we will do our best to arrange an alternative but we cannot guarantee this. Any changes may be subject to an administration fee of £25.

If other school events clash with the training and expedition dates, we ask students and their families to make a decision on which to pursue. We of course want students to make the most of the opportunities offered to them but we are unable to accommodate changes of date for this reason.

Cost for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

The cost of the Award will be between £340 and £360, depending on the number of students taking part. If we have more students taking part the cost will be the lower end of the scale. Please note that transport will not be provided to and from the campsites detailed above. The cost to register for the Award has been included in the cost of the expedition.

We are asking for a **non-refundable deposit of £180**, to be paid by 9am Monday 12 October. This will be followed by a balance payment no later than 9am Friday 8 January 2027.

In line with the school's charging policy, parents are reminded that financial support may be available to assist families whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent their child from participating. Applications must be made in writing to bursar@swbgs.com, outlining the reasons why support is required, as soon as possible and latest by the deadline.

Please note, cancellations within 6-10 weeks in advance of the start date will forfeit 75% of the total fee and if a cancellation is made within 6 weeks of the start date, all fees will be forfeited. For those families whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent their child from participating there are some funding opportunities but these are not guaranteed and will not necessarily cover the full amount if granted.

If you wish to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme please log onto [ParentPay](#) using your username and password to pay the deposit of £180. If you need a copy of your activation details please email parentpay@swbgs.com.

Yours faithfully

Ms S Mitchell
DofE Coordinator

DUKE OF EDINBURGH Bronze Award – Year 9

It is important that you are aware of the following when paying your deposit:

1. It is essential that your son/daughter attends all of the published dates for the training, practice and assessed expeditions according to the published information. We are unable to offer alternatives if your son/daughter is unable to attend.
2. Your son/daughter must complete the previous section of the expedition Award to proceed to the next section i.e. in order to complete the practice expedition you must complete the training and in order to complete the assessment you must complete the training and practice expeditions.
3. Once paid the initial deposit is non-refundable, along with any subsequent payments. A payment schedule will be published for each programme. Between paying the deposit and the deadline for the final payment you will be required to pay any cost incurred on your child's behalf if you cancel e.g. registration fees. If you cancel after the final payment is due you will be required to pay the full amount. If you decide to cancel you should send an email to dofe@swbgs.com for the attention of Ms Mitchell.
4. Your son/daughter signs up as an individual to the Award scheme. Groups for the expedition will be arranged by the DofE coordinator and the AAP in order to meet the DofE requirements.