



Oundle School Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

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Dear Parent,

Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award

Your son/daughter has expressed an interest in taking part in this year's Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award. This letter aims to answer some of the questions you may have and to set out what is required.

Owing to the ever growing popularity of the DoE award we have in recent years found the Silver Award over-subscribed. The large numbers that we have tried to accommodate have caused several problems in terms of the quality of training we can deliver, the availability of campsites, the availability of external assessors, the availability of School staff, the number of expedition trips needed and ultimately safety. It is with these considerations in mind that we have, unfortunately, had to limit the School expeditions to fifty pupils. These places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis: the first fifty pupils to return filled-in permission slips and medical consent forms to me in person at the start of the next academic year will be allocated the places.

Owing to the limited number of places it is very important that availability for the expedition dates is checked thoroughly against other School trips (especially ski trips, subject trips and CCF adventure training), family holidays and important family occasions, etc. **If the expeditions cannot be completed, please do *not* return the forms.**

Those unfortunate enough not to be able to make the expedition dates or not in the first fifty, may still carry out their Silver D of E at school, but they will have to organise their own expeditions through an "Open Award Centre", details of which can be accessed at <http://www.theaward.org/>.

The expedition component consists of a practice trip followed by an assessed trip. The assessed trip must be a self-contained walk of seven hours each day over three days. For the **practice** trip we shall be going to the Derbyshire Dark Peaks during the first weekend of the October mid-Quarter break (i.e. **Saturday 12th - Monday 13th October**). For the **assessed** trip we shall go to the Derbyshire White Peaks between Bakewell and Buxton during the first few days of the Easter holidays (i.e. **Saturday 21st March- Tuesday 24 March**). Estimated return times are 1800 for both the practice and the assessed trip.

Such activities carry some risk, which is part of their value. However, the Award and the School are obviously concerned to minimise the hazards on such expeditions. As a result, we have a fairly draconian safety policy in place. All the groups are trained in the DoE syllabus in navigation, first aid, etc., and they have a common emergency procedure, there is usually

one supervisor per group (often more). During the expeditions all groups are seen in camp in the morning and evening to check on their status. We aim to see each group up to three times a day. On the assessed expedition we also have the DoE assessors, who provide an extra layer of safety cover. We aim not to coddle the groups, but should anything untoward occur, we can be there.

Much is expected of the candidates. They need to plan their own routes and to plan and provide their meals. They **must** go on all the practice expeditions and **must** be available for the assessed expedition period. They must also train most Wednesday evenings from 5-6 p.m. during Quarter-time. As to equipment, much can be borrowed from the School.

It is very much the ethos of the Award that initiative, self-motivation and organisation are developed, so there is a great onus put on the pupils to predict and act upon any problems that might arise and not to rely on staff or parents to do everything for them.

Parental Consent

1. If you are happy with the safety policy set out above and are happy that your son/daughter should go ahead on both trips of the expedition, please return the medical consent form (which can be found on the School website at <http://www.oundleschool.org.uk/noticeboard/trips/medconsent.pdf>) and the permission slip (found below) **with your child** in September. This will allow us to put the expedition charges on the bill. I anticipate the total cost for the two expeditions to be around £150.
2. The medical consent forms need to be returned as a hard copy with your signature.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

William Gough



Silver DofE Expedition Consent Form

I/we give permission for our son/daughter
to take part in the Oundle School Silver DoE award expeditions to Derbyshire's White and Dark Peaks 2008/9. We acknowledge that the cost will be around £150 and that this will be added to the School bill.

Signed Parent/Guardian

Date