



wildernschool

C. Oakley BA Hons PGCE NPQH Headteacher

Wildern Lane
Hedge End
Southampton SO30 4EJ
T: (01489) 783473
E: wildern@wildern.org

S. Mann CEO

RPR/tp

13 December 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme – Bronze

Your child has shown an interest in taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme at Bronze level. This is a scheme for young people which aims to promote leadership skills. The award is made up of 4 sections: **Physical, Skill, Volunteering and Expedition**. The majority of work which we do during school based sessions will focus on the expedition section of the award. The level of commitment required for the award will be 1-2 hours a week. An extra hour once a fortnight will be required in an after-school session (Monday evenings) for various training. It is likely that some students already take part in extracurricular activities that can contribute towards the award, in areas of volunteering, skills or physical. The Duke of Edinburgh award is an extra-curricular activity. Therefore, unlike school based lessons, the responsibility for success is up to the individual. Students will be given help and guidance by staff, but it is up to them to work with their team to ensure all aims and goals are met. A key objective of the award is to encourage the students to develop their independence.

Our aim is that in Year 9, students are completing their Skills, Physical and Volunteering sections with the support of a group leader. Then, in Year 10, students will dedicate their focus to completing their Expedition sections to ensure they have successfully completed their award by the end of Year 10.

If your child chooses to complete the Duke of Edinburgh award, they will be expected to participate fully in the expedition section. In order to do this, students will be required to be properly equipped. They will need to purchase appropriate footwear (walking boots) which will need to be broken in before an expedition to reduce the likelihood of blisters occurring. They will also need a 65+ litre rucksack, water proofs, a roll mat and sleeping bag. Advice on other smaller items will be discussed during school based sessions. *We have applied for some support with this for Pupil Premium students for this (outlined later in this letter).*

The day and weekend walks and expedition training sessions play an important role in the Duke of Edinburgh award. It is designed to teach students the navigation skills they will require to achieve the award. On these expeditions the weather can be unpredictable so it is extremely important that your child wears suitable clothing and footwear. Any student who attends an expedition wearing jeans will not be able to participate due to safety. Students will also be required to bring a packed lunch and drinks. Specific details of this will be communicated closer to the time during after school sessions.

This award will have a registration fee for the Duke of Edinburgh award (**£25.20**). This will be all that is paid in the first instalment for DofE this year. Going into Year 10, there will also be a cost for the 4 trips to cover for camping (2 weekends) and travel to the destinations for the weekend camps. This will be **approximately £90**, depending on the costs of campsites and transport at the time of booking. This will need to be paid in **September 2024**.



Due to increased interest within school for DofE and an increase in costs of coaches for transport, we will be asking parents to support the transport of students for some of the trips (*outlined in the summary of dates below*). We would encourage car sharing for these as much as possible. If you are having difficulty with finding transport for your child, please let us know so that we can support you in arranging this or use a school minibus if appropriate.

Below are the dates for the initial practice Walks in year 9:

- **Saturday 24 February 2024** - a half-day walk around Manor farm and the local area (*start and finish at school*)
 - **Saturday 27 April 2024** - a day walk in the New Forest (parents drop off and pick up).
- *If there is a high level of interest in signing up to DofE, additional dates will be added to ensure appropriate staffing ratios are adhered to.*

We also are hoping to host an Overnight Camp at Wildern on the school field in the Summer 2024 to help teach students campcraft skills and experience camping with their groups. The exact dates of this are still to be confirmed with School.

Please complete the parental agreement form online through your Parentpay account to give consent for your child to attend this trip. You will be asked to provide your emergency contact details and any relevant medical information. Full payment will be required to be paid at the same time. If you have not already activated your Parentpay account and require your login details please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Office at finance@wildern.org.

Pupil Premium: If you have been notified that we as a school receive Pupil Premium funding for your son or daughter, we may be able to offer assistance regarding the cost of this trip. If this is the case, your Parentpay account will automatically reflect this but please complete the consent, emergency contact information and medical details through Parentpay as usual. *We have applied for funding from the DofE Resilience Fund for Pupil Premium students to receive extra support with Participation places and up to £100 of personal equipment to support students completing the award. This will be arranged through school in the purchase of this equipment. Students will have been made aware of this in a meeting on the 5 December 2023. **If your child would like to participate in DofE please can they complete the Google form on their Tutor Group google classroom or come and see me before Friday 12 January 2024.***

If you would like your child to attend please complete the online Parentpay medical and consent forms accompanied by a payment of £25.20 by Friday 12 January 2024.

Teachers accompanying trips carry enormous responsibility for the students in their care. The Senior Leadership Team reserve the right to withdraw students from the trip at any time should a student's attitude or behaviour not meet our expectations as a school. The Senior Leadership team will also consider whether allowing a student on a trip will cause concern with regards to safeguarding for them, other students or staff, and will make a decision based on this should it be necessary.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Ryan-Heaney
Duke of Edinburgh Manager & Leader