

November 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Duke of Edinburgh's Award Gold Level**

Once your son/daughter has completed their Silver Award they are eligible and may wish to join the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at Gold level. If you would like them to participate various details are enclosed with this letter which need your attention and approval before we can proceed to register him/her with the Award Scheme.

### **Consent Forms**

If you do wish your son/daughter to participate in the award please complete the application and consent/indemnity forms attached which also details any medical conditions that may affect their participation in the Award. Please return the form to Mr I Roach either via reception or by post. The Operating Authority will send a welcome pack containing further information which will be issued directly to the pupils once enrolled.

The Scheme is administered through Operating Authorities which validate the work of individual schools. The Operating Authority for Culford is Suffolk County Council. There is an initial registration fee of £30.00 payable to Suffolk County Council to register with the Award Scheme for Silver level. There is no need to enclose a cheque for the County; the school will administer this payment on your behalf. The charge will appear on the School bill, unless you request otherwise.

### **Training**

Weekly sessions for participants continue through the academic year in the school's activities programme. These sessions include all the training necessary for the Expeditions section of the Award, as well administrative matters, which will arise from time to time.

We will also ask all participants to make a start on their Skill, Service and Physical Recreation sections.

Your support in helping your son/daughter to make well judged decisions will be appreciated. Particular care needs to be taken by some young people to avoid over-commitment. Activities under these sections may be undertaken either through the school's activities programme, or, in the case of day pupils, outside school.

We suggest that you look at the D of E website at [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org) which will give you details of the choices that participants can make for their award.

### **Residential course**

At Gold level participants are required to attend a five day residential course. Details and restrictions can be found on the D of E website.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for checking the suitability of any activity for their son/daughter and the competence for the person(s) supervising the activity for all the work towards the Award taken outside the aegis of the School. As a unit we would like to liaise with the person(s) responsible, and ask you to send the requisite information.

The key aims of the award are to encourage independence, determination, teamwork and commitment. To that end we expect pupils to make progress in line with the Progress Matrix attached; if they do not do so we will issue a warning and, if necessary, offer support. If they do not respond or begin to make satisfactory progress we will remove them from the award.

We are also able to give you some basic information about the Expedition Section of the Award. The practice and qualifying foot expeditions will be held in the Peak District and Wales. We will require groups of between five and seven participants to walk a minimum of eight hours per day over four days, with all their equipment.

The expedition will include three nights camping the ethos is always to promote self-sufficiency among groups. This means that an adult will *not* be accompanying a group of young people continuously and they will be camping without any adult supervision. Personal mobile phones should not be carried. A school mobile is issued to each group for emergency use only.

Adults from Culford School will be in the expedition area to monitor progress through the use of checkpoints. Our normal adult pupil ratio is 1:7. The school is able to provide non-personal equipment such as tents, gas stoves, pans, rucksacks, maps and compasses. Your son/daughter will need to be adequately equipped in terms of personal items such as footwear, waterproofs, a first aid kit, a whistle, a sleeping bag, toiletries, water bottle and food. Each group will need to be able to purchase the contents of their menu during the days preceding an expedition.

### **Expedition Dates**

This year's practice expedition will take place over **22-25 April 2017**. The qualifying expedition dates are **02-06 July 2017**. If your child is unable to attend all these dates, they will not be able to pass their award with us this year.

Any L6 participants who are unable to attend these expeditions will be able to attend the following year.

Please check that these dates do not clash with any other commitments which your child may have, as these are the only dates we are able to offer.

Participants will also have to prove that they are making significant progress in all areas of the award in order to attend the qualifying expedition. **At least one section must be completed before attending a qualifying expedition.**

**Fees**

The general group expenses such as campsite fees and minibus use will be divided equally amongst the participants in a venture. The cost of the training programme, use of the school equipment and the two expeditions will be approximately £190 per participant. Please note that participants may not attend the practice expedition until they have completed their Silver Award unless they are direct entrant to Gold.

**Code of Conduct**

We are sure that you will understand that staff may decline to allow a young person to go out on an expedition, even at the last minute, if they feel that it is ill advised for some reason. In a similar vein, the staff must feel free to modify the expedition arrangements in the light of any unforeseen circumstances. All the young people are aware of the significant level of trust we have in them, and that we expect the highest standards of thoughtfulness and co-operation. Normal school rules apply throughout all the activities of the Award. However, should this trust be broken, the pupils involved will be returned to school immediately and at your expense, whatever the time. You will be telephoned and asked to collect them. We do not anticipate this happening given the good attitude of our pupils.

**Forms**

If you do wish your son/daughter to participate in the award please complete the enrolment and consent/indemnity forms enclosed which also detail any medical conditions that may affect their participation in the Award. Please return the forms to Mr Roach, D of E Coordinator [iroach@culford.co.uk](mailto:iroach@culford.co.uk) via e-mail or post.

**Contact**

If you have any queries, please contact me via e-mail or telephone on 01284 385518. We look forward to seeing your son/daughter successfully rising to the challenge of the award.

Yours sincerely

I Roach  
D of E Coordinator

**Enclosures:**

Parent/Guardian Consent Form – To be completed and returned  
D of E Enrolment form - To be completed and returned  
A suggested kit list.

This letter and forms can also be found of the school website.