

St. Bede's Catholic College

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Principal: Mr R. J. King, MEd

Dear Families,

This letter is for those year 12 students interested in participating in the **Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award** this year.

We use an Approved Activity Provider (AAP) to deliver the training and expedition for the students. This will provide the students with a greater opportunity to develop their skills for the DofE and also impinges less on other extra-curricular activities many students who undertake the DofE already participate in within school.

The total cost is £370. However, I think this provides exceptional value and this includes registration for the DofE Award (non-refundable £32.50) that some students may have paid at the end of year 11; a day walk; 3-day practice expedition; and a 4-day assessed expedition along with a DofE assessor. As a college, we will provide group kit for the students such as tents, stoves, compasses, maps and first aid kits. I will run weekly training sessions on Wednesday afternoons in school. We have tried to keep the cost to as little as possible whilst still providing a high-quality experience to the students.

In order for the students to participate in the award they need to be able to attend all of the training sessions, the practice expedition and the assessed expedition. Below are the **provisional** dates:

- Mid-March: Day walk, possibly in Bannau Brycheiniog (the Brecon Beacons)
- Monday 13th to Wednesday 15th May: Practice expedition in Bannau Brycheiniog
- Monday 24th to Friday 28th June: Assessed expedition in Bannau Brycheiniog

As ever, students need to be fully committed to the DofE Award and understand that there is much more than just the expedition aspect of the Award. They also need to undertake a Skill, Physical Activity, Volunteering and Residential as part of the Award. The timescales for these activities are outlined below. These do not need to be new to the student and can be something that they are already doing and plan to continue to do (e.g. music lessons or sport clubs). They can all be undertaken simultaneously and will need to fit around their College studies. Please note, it will take students more than 1 academic year to complete the award. Students will not be allowed to participate in the expeditions until these sections are underway.

- Volunteering section: 12 months
- Physical and Skills sections: One section for 12 months and the other section for 6 months
- Expedition section: 4 days/3 nights (+ practice expedition of 3 days/2 nights + day hike)
- Residential section: Undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from home for 5 days and 4 nights (not included in this cost).
- *If you have not completed the DofE Silver Award, you must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections.*

The Gold Award is a highly regarded award by employers and universities alike, but is also incredibly demanding. So that all students are aware of what they are undertaking, **I am asking all students who are interested to complete the short application form attached by Wednesday 4th October and returned to me.**

If you have any queries, please email silverm@stbcc.org. As I am aware that £370 is a large sum of money, there will be the option to pay in instalments. The first will be requested once their application has been accepted. There is financial support available that we can apply for. Please contact me directly if you believe this will apply.

Please note that **all payments** must be received to be able to participate in the expeditions.

Kind Regards,

Mr M J Silver
Duke of Edinburgh Award Manager

