

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

Ref: Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award

We are writing to inform you of the opportunity for your child to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The school currently offers students the opportunity to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze level in Year 10 and Silver in Year 12.

Background

The aim of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is to provide young people with an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding programme of personal development, which is of the highest quality and widest reach. Young people doing their DofE programme complete four different types of activity, the **first three must be carried out in their spare time** and not during school hours and the **fourth has to be completed at a time determined by the school**.

The four are:

- **Volunteering:** undertake service to the community. This develops compassion, commitment and the confidence to make a difference.
- **Physical:** improve in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities. This develops fitness, enjoyment and, depending on the activity, teamwork.
- **Skills:** develop practical and social skills and personal interests. This helps young people to realise their unique potential and gain greater self-esteem.
- **Expedition:** plan, train for, and complete an adventurous journey in the UK. This develops teamwork and leadership, and challenges young people to push themselves beyond their expectations.

The Award Scheme is a fantastic opportunity for youngsters to further their skills of independence and leadership and is highly regarded by higher education institutions and employers. **The Award Scheme requires persistence and commitment**, and it is therefore the responsibility of the participant to find and arrange the activities that they will undertake for their volunteering, physical and skills sections. **The school can offer advice but cannot find or organise the activities.** Participants should also ideally choose something new to them; there is an extensive list of activities that are acceptable on the DofE website www.dofe.org

The Silver Award at Northgate – Training and Expeditions

The participants will be trained for their expeditions on **Thursday afternoons from 3.20 - 4.00pm**. The training sessions will start in **April** and will cover:

- First aid and emergency procedures
- Awareness of risk and health/safety issues
- Navigation and route planning
- Food and cooking
- Country, Highway & Water Sports Code

Participants must attend all of these sessions as they are a compulsory part of the award and without this essential training they will not be able to take part in the expeditions. If you think your

child will be unable to attend the sessions, then please do not apply for a place as **there are no alternative times for the training to take place.**

Participants will undertake **two** expeditions, a Practice Expedition and a Qualifying Expedition, the latter of which will be assessed by a Duke of Edinburgh Accredited Expedition Assessor. Participants will be in groups of approximately 7 for each expedition. They will walk for 3 days and camp for 2 nights. They will carry all their equipment whilst walking and will be assessed on their ability to plan a route, navigate, work as a team and cook and look after themselves at camp. Participants will be remotely supervised through the use of pre-arranged checkpoints. Participants will be accompanied at the campsite in the evening.

The **Practice Expedition** will take place on the North Suffolk Coast on **Monday 6th to Wednesday 8th July 2026**. The **Qualifying Expedition** will take place on the North Norfolk Coast on **Monday 13th to Wednesday 15th July 2026**.

The cost of **each expedition is £120.00** and includes:

- The hiring of transport for the expedition trip
- 2 nights camping
- Hire of equipment (e.g. tents, cooking stoves and pans, maps, compasses and first aid kits)
- Use of satellite tracking devices
- Insurance

Participants will need to bring the following equipment: a rucksack (minimum 60 litres), sleeping mat, sleeping bag, waterproofs, suitable walking shoes/boots as well as warm clothes. They will also be responsible for providing their own meals.

We will reinforce equipment needed during the training sessions prior to the expeditions.

Enrolling On The Award

In order to officially enrol on the Award Scheme there is a participation fee of £30.50 which goes to the DofE Charity and there will also be a small charge of £4.00 towards training material. The **total enrolment fee** is therefore **£34.50**.

Unfortunately places on the Award Scheme are **limited to 40** as we do not have the ability to facilitate larger numbers. If numbers exceed 40, the names of students that have returned all the relevant paperwork will be entered into a ballot and places on the Award Scheme will be allocated by a random lottery draw. To see the reasons why the Local Authority, Senior Management and Governors have all agreed to this process, please see the Frequently Asked Questions in the Learning/Extracurricular/Educational Visits section of the Northgate website. If you have any questions or queries regarding the random lottery process, please contact our Educational Visits Coordinator, Miss Armstrong, via email (sea@northgate.suffolk.sch.uk).

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is about commitment and persistence and therefore if the successful participants do not show that they are in the process of completing their three activities or do not turn up to the training sessions then they will not be allowed to continue with the award through the school.

Applications

Students wishing to apply to take part in the Award Scheme will need to make sure that the following actions are completed by **3.10pm on Friday 7th November 2025**. This includes:

- The **enrolment payment of £34.50**. Please make payment online via the MyChildAtSchool (Bromcom) app or web page, where you will have the option to pay by debit card or credit card. If you have not yet signed up to Bromcom, please see the Northgate website for further information.
- The **completed enrolment form** (from the section on the school website under Learning - Extracurricular – Duke of Edinburgh Award - Silver) to be returned to school.

The completed enrolment form should be put into an envelope and placed into the box marked 'Office Post' situated next to the school reception. The envelope should have the following information marked clearly on the outside:

- Your child's name
- Your child's tutor group
- DofE Silver Award

It is essential that the completed enrolment form is brought into school by the deadline as students cannot be enrolled without them. Students not successful in securing a place will have their money returned in full.

As a school, we are committed to promoting equal access to enrichment opportunities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Financial support towards the enrolment fee and expedition costs is available for students in receipt of Free School Meals and/or the 16-19 Bursary. In addition, the school can provide loan equipment to support students' participation.

To request the above financial assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Team to discuss by emailing info@northgate.suffolk.sch.uk using the subject 'DofE Silver' and including your child's name and form group. **It is essential that requests for financial support are received before Friday 7th November 2025.**

Please note that in paying the enrolment fee you are committing your child to participate in Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award and to covering the cost of the two expeditions associated. Any withdrawal (including your child being removed due to poor behaviour) will result in the loss of any sums paid or owed to external companies, unless the withdrawal is for reasons covered by the cancellation section of the school's insurance policy. For further information regarding our charges and remissions policy, including what help might be available please see the Northgate website - About Us/Statutory Information/Charging and Remissions.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss this further, then please feel free to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Ms A Turner & Mr S Songhurst
Joint DofE Coordinators