

July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award – Moving forward

Firstly, I hope this letter finds you and your families well.

I appreciate the past 3 months have been a really uncertain time for everyone and so many questions will have been hot topic in the household regarding examinations, grades and then the other commitments that pupils had. I wanted to write a letter regarding the next steps for Bronze DofE for your son/daughter as I have spent much time discussing with regional DofE, the City of York Council and school leaders on the next steps for the award.

Certificates of recognition

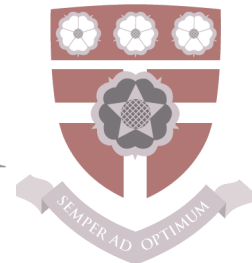
It's become increasingly clear that COVID-19's impact will be long-lasting, and will halt our progress planned to complete the silver programme this year. So, to recognise the dedication, resilience, and accomplishments of students in these extraordinary circumstances, DofE have launched a new accolade – the '2020 DofE Certificate of Achievement'. This will be awarded to any student who started their programme from Summer 2019 onwards and who has completed the Skills, Physical and Volunteering sections of their Award. These will need to be approved by me on EDOFE by the end December 2020 for the certificate to be issued to pupils.

This is not the 'full' Bronze Award, but recognition from DofE for what has been completed up to this stage. Once students get the opportunity to complete their expedition section following the restrictions of the pandemic being lifted, this will then activate the full award status and normal procedure will follow.

Please can I ask all pupils to now spend time adding their evidence and submit their sections for their volunteering, skills and physical on EDOFE. Once this is added, we will be able to ask for the Certificate of Achievement to be sent to you. Please can I remind you that these sections must not be signed off by parents (trigger is same second names on the electronic system) but by someone who was the assessor, manager or teacher for example. I am happy to sign off any of the 3 sections and if you need me to do this please drop me an email letting me know what needs doing and the information I will need to help me complete the report.

Students will need to log in to their DofE account and complete the activity information of what they did, followed by adding pictures/evidence of them doing so. The final stage, and most importantly is a picture of their DofE assessor page for each section. Attached is a picture of what this will look like once complete. If you have any problems or you don't know how to do this, please get in touch with me by email and I'll be able to guide you through it.

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Volunteering 6 Months Status: *Section completed. Approved on 06/06/2019 by Mark Rampling, id 666379*

* Start Date: *08/10/2018* End date: *08/04/2019*

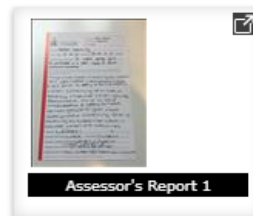
* Type: *Coaching teaching and leadership*

* Detail: *Netball Coaching*

* Location: *I will coach netball at the younger sessions at my netball club.*

* Goals: *I want to inspire young girls young girls to participate in a sport i enjoy so much.*

Assessor's report



Expeditions

After long deliberation and review of the safety and enjoyment that comes with running the expeditions we have decided that both Bronze and Silver expeditions will not run at Vale of York this season and will be rolled over to next season (2021).

Most of the other school providers in the city and regionally are doing the same and are not planning to run their expeditions until next year. However, there are some external companies and schools over the country that will run these, but very differently. There are many reasons for us taking this very difficult decision with two of the most important being the safety of the pupils and staff and the experience of DofE. The potential of camping in a tent alone, walking 1m/2m apart, hygiene control and not being able to help each other as normal, is something of great concern at this stage. We also know as we return in September we will be busy getting school running again and students will be concentrating on their studies and catching up.

On making this decision to cancel and not run expeditions this season, we are going to push these back a year. DofE have agreed that students can use their Silver practice expedition as their Bronze assessment which means they can still enrol this year on to their Silver award if they have completed their volunteering, skills and physical on the Bronze award.

What this means for us as school is that we can enrol students in Year 11 (currently Year 10) to move on to Silver Award if they want to, and they can complete both the awards. Instead of doing 2 expeditions for Bronze and 2 for Silver this will just merge to be 2 overall of 3 days each, thus completing both award expedition sections. This would be the most preferred route we would like students to take and at the end of September 2020 we will launch the full plan in assembly with letters to parents to follow.

However for those pupils who do not wish to do the Silver Award and would like to just complete their Bronze Award, we will run one weekend which most likely will be in April 2021 for students to complete their Bronze final assessment.

Dates of these weekends are being pencilled in the calendar, however with lots to still be reviewed around school start in September and the plans during the year, I will share these dates once we have a more settled base.

Payments and finances

The overall cost of the Bronze DofE was £100, with £40 being a non-returnable deposit which was paid to the City of York for your subscription and online portal for Bronze. The further £60 was for 2 weekends which if paid to school already, will be returned to parents during the coming weeks. Refunds of £30 per weekend will be paid via the parent pay system.

The costs going forward with the new schedule for 2021 are as follows:

DOFE Silver Award - £120

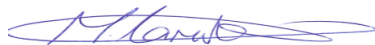
- £40 sign up
- £40 practice expedition weekend
- £40 assessed expedition weekend

For those just wanting to complete the Bronze Award and sign off, the cost will be £30. Further information regarding the new schedule will be sent out in September

I appreciate this letter will come as a disappointment for the students and we are sorry we couldn't complete the awards this year. The staff at the Vale of York Academy and I work really hard to deliver this award and are also saddened not to be taking these expeditions out. We are looking forward to getting the pupils out as soon as we can and will continue to keep you informed as plans start to come together.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on m.rampling@voy.hlt.academy

Yours sincerely,



Mr Mark Rampling
Head of PE and Enrichment