



Ripon Grammar School

21st September 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians and Potential Participants

Duke of Edinburgh's Award – letter of introduction

Background

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award began 70 years ago (in 1956) and since then has been dedicated to the personal development of young people from all backgrounds. With the widest reach of any UK youth charity, 589000 young people are currently undertaking inspiring DoFE programmes to achieve Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards. The award is based around four sections – volunteering, physical activity, developing a skill and expedition (plus an additional residential week for Gold). This letter contains information about the expedition, and some ideas for the volunteering, physical activity and skill sections.

Expression of interest

If you are interested in being considered for a place on DoFE at RGS, sign up for new Bronze (current year 10) and new Gold (current year 12). This is available from now **until Friday 6th November 2026**. You can use the form which is a separate attachment and email it to smithr@ripongrammar.com or alternatively wait until after the **presentation in school 7pm on 15th October** by Dr Smith and Ben Maxfield from BXM Expeditions.

Once registered with DoFE you will receive an eDoFE ID number/login via school email and a Welcome Pack that records attendance, training and development throughout the award. The cost for this (as overleaf) is passed to the DoFE charity and, amongst other things, insures each young person for expeditions. **Please ensure you can make the training and expedition dates before applying**, and please also note that **it will be your responsibility to get to the starting point of each expedition**.

Bronze

Training day: Saturday 28 November 2026 (at school)

Bronze Cluster 1 practice expedition: 10-11/04/27

Bronze Cluster 2 practice expedition: 24-25/04/27

Bronze Cluster 1 assessed expedition: 12-13/06/27

Bronze Cluster 2 assessed expedition: 26-27/06/27

Gold

Training day: Saturday 28 November 2026 (at school)

Gold practice expedition: Mon 22/03 - Thurs 25/03/27

Gold assessed expedition: Mon 26/07 - Fri 30/07/27

Founded in Saxon Times, re-founded in 1555

Headmaster: Mr Jonathan M Webb, MA

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Expeditions provided through school must be self-financing and these costs are detailed below. These costs will be collected via ParentPay and more information will be sent out in due course; financial assistance for those claiming certain benefits may be available - please enquire at the school Finance Office for confidential advice.

Training will be provided by BXM Expeditions (bxmexpeditions.co.uk) on **Saturday 28 November** here at school and includes:

*First Aid and Emergency Procedures
Navigation and Route-planning
Food and Cooking
Observation, Recording & Presentation
Proficiency in the mode of travel*

*Awareness of risk and Health & Safety
Campcraft, Equipment and Hygiene
County, Highway & Water sports Codes
Team-Building*

The training day is scheduled to make sure participants have the practical skills and competencies to allow them to undertake expeditions. A practice expedition and an assessed expedition will also be undertaken. Participants will be travelling unaccompanied in groups of up to seven young people with remote supervision (2 days/1 night at Bronze and 4 days/3 nights at Gold). The supervisors will be looking at competence in navigation, camp craft and teamwork. They will need to feel confident in participants' abilities to enable them to do the final expedition safely. Should they feel extra training or supervision is needed we will discuss this with the participants and arrange further opportunities to practice. The expeditions will usually include walking in open country and wild country areas, namely the Yorkshire Dales or Lake District (Gold). Camping is generally at campsites, but sometimes they may only have a tap and cooking is by camping stove. Gold usually undertake one wild camp night.

Expedition Costing

All prices are per person and based on seven people in a group (the maximum allowed by DofE).

	BRONZE	GOLD
Non-refundable DofE registration pack	£33	£40
Non-refundable admin costs	£100	£100
Training day	£45	£45
Practice expedition	£80	£180
Assessed expedition	£86	£249 (includes additional familiarization afternoon/overnight camp)
TOTAL	£344	£614

A note regarding risk from the British Mountaineering Council - Participants, parents and guardians should recognise that adventurous outdoor sports are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions.

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Ideas for Sections

Many participants use an activity they are already involved with, and that is absolutely fine - or use your imagination to choose something that will help you develop your capabilities and meet new people!

Skill	Volunteering	Physical
Aim: to discover or develop a personal interest Examples: Arts, Music, Crafts, Nature, Collections You could use guitar lessons, photography, patchworking, watercolour painting, orchestra, choir, theatre, woodworking	Aim: to give a commitment to the community Examples: Help young or old people. Help the environment. Train as a lifeguard, first aid. You could use volunteering at Cubs/Brownies or in a local charity shop. Litter picking.	Aim: to participate in an activity and improve in performance Examples: Hockey, rugby, tennis, badminton, wheelchair basketball, aerobics, riding, dance, swimming, football, climbing, judo, karate
Bronze: 3 months for each section plus choose one section to do for a further 3 months Gold: Volunteering section: 12-18 months; Physical and Skills sections: One section for 12-18 months and the other section for 6 months. In addition, a self-funded Residential week. You will need to ask a qualified person to write a short assessors report at the end of each section. This will be using either a special card from the Welcome Pack, or most easily using an electronic link https://www.dofe.org/assessor/. An example of a qualified person could be your swimming coach, the manager of a charity shop, your piano teacher, or the Cub Scout leader. To obtain your Welcome Pack by post, you will need to activate your eDofE login (sent to school email) and enter your home address into the contact details section.		

If you are unsure as to what is involved in any part of the training or expeditions please do not hesitate to ask Dr Smith or those who have undertaken the award. The website www.DofE.org gives a wealth of information about all the sections of the award - any questions please contact Dr Smith at smithr@ripongrammar.com

Yours sincerely

Dr R Smith
D of E Award Co-ordinator

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