Great Marlow School

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HEADTEACHER: Mr K Ford

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Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am pleased to let you know that Great Marlow School offers the Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) to students in Year 10. Students do not need to have completed their Bronze award in order to participate in the Silver award, they can enrol as a direct entrant, but will have to do one of their sections for longer (details on our school website).

The DofE is a great chance for your son/daughter to broaden their horizons, discover new interests and talents, have fun with friends, develop essential skills for their future and achieve an internationally renowned award.

As Great Marlow School's DofE Manager, I wanted to send you some information about what a DofE programme involves, the benefits for your son/daughter and how they can sign up.

About the DofE
The DofE is non-competitive and open to all young people – it's about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries. There are three levels of DofE programme which, when successfully completed, lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

Through their DofE, students will make friends and memories and build traits like confidence, resilience and self-esteem, which can benefit mental health. They'll gain skills and attributes for work and life, like problem-solving, team-working and self-motivation – and they'll achieve an award that's recognised by employers and can help them stand out when applying for college, university or jobs.

To achieve their Silver Award, participants must complete four sections: Skills, Volunteering, Physical and their Expedition.

Every young person's DofE programme is personal to them – they can choose what they'd like to do for their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections, and most activities can count. We will provide guidance and support, and students can either choose to continue an activity they already do, or discover something completely new.
During and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, participants who complete their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections will also receive a DofE Certificate of Achievement – a formal recognition, by the DofE, of their efforts at this extraordinary time.

Activities for each section take a minimum of one hour a week over a set period of time, so they can fit around studying, hobbies and social lives. For more details about programmes and timescales look at the school website, or visit DofE.org/do.

About the expedition
The Expedition section involves your child working as part of a small team to plan their expedition's aim and do some training to make sure they're fully prepared – before spending three days and two nights in the countryside. The mode of transport for the Silver expedition is paddling, although we can offer a walking alternative if there is enough interest.

Participants will take part in training and a practice expedition, covering basic expedition principles and introducing them to expedition equipment. Participants will only be able to do their assessed expedition if they attend all of the organised training.

Off Grid Adventures are the Approved Activity Provider Great Marlow School uses to run all DofE training and expeditions**.** Please make a note of these dates:

Training and Practice Expedition: 13th- 16th May 2021
Assessed Expedition: 2nd- 4th June 2021

Please consider other commitments your son/daughter may have on these dates (eg: rowing, sporting fixtures, family/social events) **before** registering.

Students are required by the Duke of Edinburgh's conditions to attend all of the training and to have demonstrated the required level of competence and behaviour in order to be able to participate in the final assessed expedition. The 20 conditions can be found at: www.dofe.org .Students **will not** be offered alternative dates for training or expeditions.

The DofE and COVID-19
Your son/daughter can still have the full DofE experience, safely and in line with Government guidance, during the COVID-19 outbreak. The motivation and focus the DofE gives, and its positive impact on mental and physical health, can play an important role in helping your child navigate our 'new normal', safely expanding their world and giving them skills and experiences to open doors in the future.

As participants can choose and change their activities, they can pick ones that they can do while social distancing or from home. The DofE has provided useful advice and information, including activity and volunteering ideas, at DofE.org/DofEWithADifference.

The DofE has also introduced a number of flexibilities to allow expeditions to take place safely, in line with social distancing restrictions and Government guidance. While your son/daughter's expedition may look slightly different to those in previous years, they will be able to do theirs safely and with all the benefits and memories they'd get at any other time.

eDofE and the DofE app
Participants can create their DofE programme and record their progress using eDofE, the DofE's digital system, available online at eDofE.org and through the DofE app – downloadable for free from Google Play and the App Store. If your son/daughter decides to enrol, we will set up their eDofE account and they will receive details of how to sign in and get started.

Signing up
Due to your son/daughter's Pupil Premium status, the cost of taking part in the Bronze DofE award has been reduced by 50% and will cost £212 per participant. This covers your son/daughter's participation place and Welcome Pack, which will be sent to their home address and includes their personalised DofE Discount Card. It also includes all of the training and expedition costs required by Off Grid Adventures.

If your son/daughter would like to take part, please complete the online enrolment form:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=uQGgjJVgKEGfA5qsyTZQCF1VNu8MSxpBkd3l28aXLVBUNkw5QTlHQ1RKTlpEMEo4TUhKSlZSOEs3Ui4u

and submit a **non-refundable** deposit of £100 via Parentpay before **Friday 5th March 2021**.

The balance (£112) is due before **Friday 16th April 2021**. Payments can be made in instalments before this date. **Off Grid Adventures** will be able to provide the kit and equipment needed for the expeditions. However, walking boots are not provided and will be required to take part in the training and expedition.

Please be aware that the cost of the Duke of Edinburgh award does not guarantee the award being completed and achieved. This merely covers the cost of the administration charges and the training/expedition. The time and effort must come from the students. However, we will endeavour to provide all students with the opportunity to complete the sections necessary to achieve their Bronze award.

During the registration process, your son/daughter will need to enter the activity details, assessor's name and contact details onto each section to set up their eDofE account. **Please ensure your son/daughter has these details ready in advance**, using the Bitesize form. In order to monitor and support your son/daughter's progress through the Bronze award, he/she will be required to attend an after school meeting once every half term (dates to follow).
If you would like any further information in the meantime, please feel free to contact me.

Please look at School Life on the GMS website for more information about the Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
Many thanks for your support and we look forward to helping your son/daughter to achieve through their DofE.

Yours faithfully

Helen Murray
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THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD