

Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition in the Surrey Hills Puts Southborough Students through Their Paces



Southborough's intrepid explorers enjoy the view from the top of Box Hill in Surrey

Southborough High School has been closely associated with the delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh Award for around 14 years now, and its core values of promoting resilience, commitment and teamwork within individuals are very much entrenched in our culture. Indeed, the DofE Award is a highly recognised qualification that is one of the most sought after stand-alone awards that top universities and employers look out for in prospective students. Our school currently delivers both the Bronze and Silver Award.

Last Thursday morning, forty Year 9 and Year 10 Southborough students set out for two days of hiking across the Surrey Hills as part of their first Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition. The sheer excitement of simply being able to take part in a school trip together with their classmates was palpable as they all gathered in the school dining hall to undertake last minute checks in preparation for their departure in the school minibuses. The pandemic had impacted hard on not just their learning over the past eighteen months: it had been a long time since they had been given the freedom to explore the great outdoors together in such groups. They felt truly liberated to be taking part!

(continued...)



Students understand that prior preparation is the key to success (and not just with expeditions ...)

With mobile phones strictly forbidden, opportunities for 'top up' food shopping most definitely ruled out and an absence of any home comfort what-so-ever, students found themselves ready to take on the Duke of Edinburgh challenge - albeit weighed down by rucksacks stuffed with sleeping bags, cooking equipment, provisions and other necessities! Most important of all, though, was the need to wear good quality walking boots, as every student was going to be put through their paces by walking up to TWENTY kilometres each day over a two day period. A quest certainly not for the faint hearted!

Led by DofE Coordinator and P.E Teacher Mr Jordan, together with Mr Carter, Mr Burns, Mr Taylor and Mr Eacott, the group was divided into smaller teams of six or seven students and route cards were handed out for them to follow and complete as they forged along their daily hikes. Students had to employ their compass, map-reading and navigational skills throughout the venture.

Luck was most definitely on their side as the weather really couldn't have been better - sunshine throughout the day and mild temperatures during the night. Meals consisted of a numerous array of cereal bars, pasta and other 'only add boiling water' foods.

(continued...)





It is a challenging but fun day-and-a-half in the great outdoors

The majority of students successfully completed the day-and-a-half task without any hitches and arrived safely home via the school minibus by late afternoon on Friday. Only one team – ‘Laughi’s Group’ - managed to complete a double route on the first day (not intentionally!) and returned to base camp a significant number of hours later than the rest of the groups!

Regardless of this, all students managed to pass their Assessed Expedition part of the Bronze Award.

Students returned home exhausted but happy. It had been great to be out in the open, with friends, doing something productive and beneficial.

Well done to all our Year 9 students who took part and many thanks to DofE Co-ordinator Mr Jordan for organising such a successful and worthwhile event.

Special Notice:

Year 8 students will be able to sign up for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme from July 2021 onwards. Information packs will be distributed shortly and students will be given the chance to read up about the worthwhile scheme over the summer holidays, if they wish. For more details about the Award, see the pages after this one.





THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Are you looking for a challenge? Looking to develop life-long skills?

The *Duke of Edinburgh's Award* is a non-competitive, flexible and progressive, personal development programme.

The award scheme is internationally recognised and favoured by a large number of organisations, educational institutions, and employers.

The benefits are numerous:

- **skill development:** (leadership, team building, commitment, perseverance and

- organisational skills)

- **personal development:** improved self belief, self-confidence, sense of responsibility, awareness of your strengths

- **develop new skills,** talents and abilities, time management, problem solving

- **build new friendships**

Just to name a few!



RATIONALE/PURPOSE/BENEFITS

There are 4 sections to undertake and document for Bronze & Silver Awards:

- Skill** (developing practical and social skills and personal interests)

- Physical** (improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities)

- Volunteering** (undertaking service to individuals or the community)

- Expedition** (planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK)

WHAT IS THE DofE?

Each participant upon registration is provided a login for edofe.org (the award scheme's online portal for tracking, planning and submitting evidence to complete all 4 sections.

For three of the sections (Physical, Skill & Volunteering), the participant chooses the duration from either 3,6 or 12 months depending on the award level.

Bronze - 2 x 3 months sections and one 6 month section

Silver - 2 x 6 month sections and one 12 month section

Participants track their progress through their sections using an activity log sheet and edofe.org, overseen by the Master in Charge of Duke of Edinburgh Award at Southborough.



(continued...)



DofE

HOW IS IT RUN?

Part 1

The expedition section is made up of centralised training (in school) and two

Expeditions: a practice and then an assessed expedition.

For the Bronze Award the expeditions are of 2 days duration with 1 overnight stay.

For the Silver Award the expeditions are of 3 days duration with 2 overnight stays.

The expedition is remotely supervised by school staff in remote areas of the Countryside, and all dates are communicated in writing and electronically in advance.



DofE



Part 2: Links

Award scheme:

www.dofe.org

www.edofe.org

Kit/equipment suppliers:

www.cotswoldoutdoor.com

www.blacks.co.uk

www.millets.co.uk

.. amongst others

NB - I would recommend not rushing out and purchasing kit or equipment until you are sure that it is necessary and have received your eDofE login, as it comes with a discount code for some of these retailers.

DofE

