



Archbishop Blanch
SCHOOL

25 February 2021

Archbishop Blanch School Voluntary Aided

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ARCHBISHOP BLANCH DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD SCHEME: PARENT/CARER INFORMATION

Dear Parents and Carers

The pandemic has hit young people hard, affecting their lives today and the future world they'll inherit. The DofE – with all the mental, physical and employability benefits it brings – is a great way for them to recover, rebuild and learn to navigate their 'new normal'.

For this reason, we are pleased to offer our students in Year 9 the possibility to **start** their DofE Bronze Award this year so they can receive their **Certificate of Achievement**. The DofE is a great chance for your child 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 the DofE Coordinator at Archbishop Blanch School, I wanted to send you some information about what a DofE programme involves; the Certificate of Achievement and other changes that the DofE have introduced to support participants during the pandemic; the benefits for your child; 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.

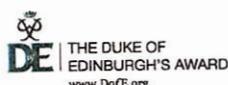
Through their DofE, students will make friends and memories and build traits like confidence, resilience and self-esteem, which can benefit mental health. They'll gain skills and attributes for work and life, like problem-solving, team-working and self-motivation – and they will have the opportunity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

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

As a school, our priority is to protect our students. For this reason, **Expeditions won't take place until it is safe to do so. At the moment, we are planning on supporting our participants with the completion of their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections, which will lead them to receive the DofE Certificate of Achievement** – a formal recognition, by the DofE, of their efforts at this extraordinary time. **We would love and are planning on running the expeditions in the future**, to allow them to achieve the full award.

Another positive change is that **having obtained the Certificate of Achievement can lead straight to Silver**. Participants can use their Silver practice expedition as their Bronze qualifying expedition. This would mean that potentially, the participants would get both Bronze and Silver qualifications.

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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.

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 visit DofE.org/do.

The DofE and COVID-19

Your child can still have the 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.

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 child 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 and payment

The cost of taking part in the DofE is £23 per participant. This covers your child's participation place and Welcome Pack, which will be sent to their home address and includes their personalised DofE Discount Card.

This will allow them to receive the Certificate of Achievement, but **doesn't cover** the expedition costs, as we don't know when these can be held. We will contact you with more information when it is safe to run them.

Payment of £23 should be made via School Gateway, details of how to make online payments can be found on the school website. This will be open from **26 February until 5 March**.

Information evening

An information event for parents, carers and students will be held on Wednesday 3rd March at 6pm and a Zoom link for the meeting will be shared via Schoolcomms.

If you'd like any further information in the meantime, please contact me via the school's email address and put for the attention of Miss M Querol: admin@blanch.org.uk

Many thanks for your support and we look forward to helping your child to achieve through their DofE.

Yours faithfully

M Querol

**Miss M Querol
Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator**