

Information for parents and participants about the Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Dear Parent/Guardian and participant,

firstly this document contains a lot of information. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an incredible experience and qualification but it involves a range of activities and requirements in order to be gained. **Please therefore take the time to read this whole document carefully to prevent any confusion or disappointment in the future.** Since the Award began in 1956, its aim has been to help young people plan and undertake their own programme of activities to develop themselves. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is widely recognised by employers and education providers as the definitive qualification for demonstrating self-reliance, commitment and dedication. All this, and a lot of fun along the way! Some of the benefits to young people include:

- Developing self-confidence and self-reliance.
- Gaining a sense of achievement and a sense of responsibility.
- Discovering new skills, interests and talents.
- Developing teamwork and leadership experience and skills.

This is achieved through young people undertaking a range of activities for the four different D of E sections.



Pages two and three of this information sheet give information regarding the structure of the D of E and what participants need to do to gain their full Award. **Please take the time to read this information carefully, it is essential you get this bit right!**

This information pack also contains the following information for your attention:

1 – What the D of E will cost.

2 - Information titled 'Ensuring your Child has a Safe and Enjoyable Experience'. This discusses the different organisations that your child may use to complete activities for their Duke of Edinburgh's Award and explains where responsibility lies for ensuring that these organisations are safe and appropriate.



3 - 'Expedition Information'. This explains what is involved with the expedition section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

4 - A parental consent form. This asks for medical and contact details for your child. You must sign this form to declare that you are happy for your child to take part in all aspects of the D of E and that you understand what is involved.

5 - An enrolment form, this must be returned with the consent form once you have decided what activities you are going to do, where you are going to do them and who will assess you for the different DofE sections.



What is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

The job market for young people is very competitive and employers are looking for candidates with skills, qualities and experience beyond academic qualifications. Each year the D of E is regularly stated by employers as being a definitive qualification for demonstrating that an individual has the rounded set of skills and the qualities they are looking for. The percentage of young people that actually complete and gain the D of E is very low which ensures it continues to be a very prestigious achievement and means that those that complete it will stand out from the crowd!

One of the main reasons why the D of E maintains such a fantastic reputation is because it requires motivation, commitment and maturity from the participants. **They have to take total responsibility for all aspects of their D of E experience, their school or youth group will offer advice but the participant must do the work! The participants must independently undertake the following tasks:**

- 1. Find activities to undertake for the volunteering, skill and physical rec sections.**
- 2. Ensure they attend the activities.**
- 3. Submit the required evidence to demonstrate they have done the activity once they have been doing it for the minimum period of time**

Please spend some time reading and digesting this important information so that you understand what is required:

What makes up the Award?

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award consists of four sections, your school or youth group will provide the expedition but you have to find an activity to do for the other 3 sections (we have some great resources to help you find activities on the next page). This is an overview of the different sections:

1 - Skill Section - Young people must spend approximately one hour per week learning a new life skill (outside of school lessons). There are hundreds of different activities that young people can choose from. Popular choices include music, art, drama, cooking, 1st aid, sign language. **Unfortunately sports cannot count for this section** (even though you need to learn skills to do them), this is because sports come under the 'physical recreation' section.

2 - Volunteering Section - This section requires young people to spend approximately one hour per week doing voluntary work. This gives young people the opportunity to get out into their communities and give something back (Note: **This cannot be working for free for a commercial organisation like hairdressers, shop, stables, café etc.**)

3 - Physical Recreation Section - This section requires young people to spend one hour per week of their own time engaging in physical recreation. It can be any form of activity and does not need to be in a team or competitive environment.

4 - Expedition Section - This is explained in detail on page five.

The next page will give advice as to how young people can find activities for these sections if they aren't doing something already. However please be aware that the responsibility lies entirely with the young people for finding and undertaking activities for the sections 1 - 3 listed above. The school or youth group your child attends will provide the necessary training for the expedition section **providing your child has completed sections 1 - 3 listed above.**

I don't know what to do for an activity, how can I find something to do?

Firstly you may be undertaking an activity already that can count for one of the sections such as playing a sport or attending a fitness class, learning a musical instrument, being involved with a drama group, etc etc. If you already do an activity and you aren't sure if it can count towards your D of E then speak to the D of E leader in your school or youth group. Also activities undertaken within school or college lesson time, or during paid employment, **cannot count** but activities during lunch time or after school (such as playing for a school team or being involved in a school committee) can count towards the D of E. You must complete and return the enrolment form at the back on this document so we can ensure your activities are appropriate and can count for your D of E.

There are three main sources of information for help with finding activities for each section:

1. The development officer for the D of E in Neath Port Talbot has put together a list of local organisations that may be willing to take on D of E participants for the various different sections. These can be found on the Neath Port Talbot Duke of Edinburgh's Award website. Go to www.nptdofe.co.uk, then the 'My D of E' page, and download the document that matches the area you live in. It's then up to yourselves to contact any organisations you are interested in and to make the necessary arrangements. However these lists are just a guide, participants don't have to use these organisations, you may know of other organisations or activities available.
2. There are literally thousands of activities that can be used for the different D of E sections. For a full list of all these activities then download the document called 'List of Activities' again from the 'your D of E' page of the website (www.nptdofe.co.uk). If you see an activity that you like the sound of on that list then it's then up to yourselves to find someone who will be your assessor.
3. If you have further questions, then you can contact the development officer who is employed by Neath Port Talbot Council to oversee the D of E, contact details are at the bottom of page 4.

How long does it take to complete the Bronze, Silver and Gold Award?

For all levels of the D of E Award (Bronze, Silver and Gold), there should be a regular commitment averaging at least an hour a week for each of the volunteering, skill and physical recreation sections for the following time period:

Bronze – you have to do one section for 6 months and the other 2 for 3 months, you choose. The final expedition will be for 1 night and 2 days.

Silver, if you have done bronze – you do the volunteering for 6 months then of the skill and physical rec sections you do one for 3 months and the other for 6 months. The final expedition is 2 nights and 3 days.

Silver, if you haven't done bronze – you have to do one section for 12 months, one for 6 and one for 3 months. The volunteering has to be the 6 or 12 months section. The final expedition is 2 nights and 3 days.

Gold, - if you have done silver – you do the volunteering for 12 months then of the skill and physical rec sections you do one for 6 months and the other for 12 months, you choose which. The final expedition is 3 nights and 4 days in a wild country area.

Gold, - if you haven't done silver - you have to do one section for 18 months, one for 12 and one for 6 months. The volunteering has to be the 18 or 12 months section. The final expedition is 3 nights and 4 days.

How much will it cost?

When participants initially sign up for the Bronze or Silver D of E they will need to pay a registration fee of £34, this covers:

- 1 – Each participant needs to purchase a license from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award charity. This license gives them a username to create an online D of E account which is required in order to gain a D of E. The cost of this license is £17.
- 2 – Due to cuts in funding the local education authority now requires a payment of £17 as a contribution towards the costs they incur to oversee the D of E across Neath and Port Talbot. This covers costs such as employing a D of E officer, training for staff, public liability insurance, an annual presentation evening and expedition equipment.

This initial registration fee does not cover expedition costs such as transport or camping. Speak to the unit leader for your D of E group to see what these costs will be and when they will be charged.

We do have a large store of expedition equipment in Neath Port Talbot that can be lent out to keep the costs down for participants. Speak to your D of E leader if you want to borrow a rucksack, tent or stove for the expedition.

It is worth noting that we are very fortunate in Neath Port Talbot to have so many talented volunteers to deliver the expedition section. In other parts of the UK that do not have this resource the cost of completing their D of E can be over £200 per head.

How is the scheme monitored and assessed?

As identified previously, the D of E counts for so much because the participant must take full responsibility for all aspects of their programme. To ensure that the high quality and value of the D of E scheme is maintained, the participants must submit evidence to demonstrate that they have done a section for the minimum number of months.

The main means of doing this is by getting your assessor report cards signed off by your assessor for each section, these report cards will be in the welcome pack you receive once you have paid and handed the forms in. After you have been doing the activity for the required number of months you ask the 'adult that oversees that activity (the assessor) to fill in the report card. **You only need to get one written report** after you have completed the minimum number of months, you don't need to get written evidence every time you go (in most circumstances, see paragraph below for exceptions). This needs to be done by the assessor for each of the skill, volunteering and physical rec sections. Your assessor can also submit the report electronically instead of handwriting it if they prefer, information on how to do this is in the 'how to add evidence' document on the 'your D of E' page of www.nptdofe.co.uk

There are some exceptions when you won't see the same adult each time you do the activity, for example you may attend a gym or go swimming for the physical recreation section so although you use an organisation you don't see the same adult each time. In this instance visit the website, www.nptdofe.co.uk and go to the 'your DofE' page and download the document called 'how to evidence', having read this you will then need to download the 'activity log'.

Finally if you are going to do 'cooking at home' for the skills section then there is a specific document for evidencing this called 'cooking sheet' which again is on the 'your D of E' page **but you must have had permission from your DofE leader to do cooking at home.**

Ensuring your Child has a Safe and Enjoyable Experience

Taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a rewarding and enjoyable experience which will involve your child in a variety of activities. The ethos of the Award is that these activities take place within the participants own time and where possible in their local community. Neath Port Talbot County Council ensures that any activity directly provided by staff or volunteers from D of E groups operating under its license are run safely and in accordance with Council policies and procedures. This means that our staff and volunteers will have the appropriate skills, qualifications and background to work with young people. **For example, if your child is completing the D of E through their school and the school has an after school environmental project that participants can use for the volunteering section, then the school should ensure this activity meets all required safety standards.**

However, in the course of working towards their D of E your child will probably take part in activities which are not directly under the control of our staff, and you should be aware that the responsibility for ensuring such activities are safe rests with yourself rather than the D of E group leader. While most of these organisations will have their own policies in place to protect your child, we would advise that you satisfy yourself that they are suitable in the same way that you would treat any activity your child takes part in. **For example if your child chooses to coach younger children at a local sports club for the volunteering section of their award, then it is your responsibility to satisfy yourself that this is a safe and appropriate organisation.**

We would therefore recommend that you discuss with your child which activities they will be completing for the volunteering, skill and physical recreation sections of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and which organisations they will be using to complete these activities.

Insurance

Once a young person has enrolled onto the D of E then they automatically join the D of E insurance scheme. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award provides limited personal accident insurance cover (details available from Award Head Office: 01753 727400).

As an operating authority Neath Port Talbot Council also has their own public liability insurance in place to cover any claims against them for injury or damage caused to, or by, young people and adults engaged in activities provided by the local authority.

You may want to check that your personal and household insurance policies cover the participant's chosen activities and equipment.

Contact details for Neil Hapgood, the Neath Port Talbot D of E officer:

Tel : 07818443884

Web: www.nptdofe.co.uk

Email : n.hapgood@npt.gov.uk

Post : Llangatwg Comprehensive School, Cadoxton, Neath, SA10 8DB

Information Regarding the Expedition Section

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition is a unique opportunity for your child to experience self-reliance and team work in an outdoor environment. The length of the expedition varies depending on the level of the Award:

Bronze Level - expedition takes two days (1 night), the participants will be walking in a lowland area.

Silver Level - expedition will take three days (two nights), and takes place in either a lowland or open country area.

Gold Level - the expedition will take four days (three nights), and be in a wild country area.

Participants will have to undertake training to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge for the expedition. For the final expedition of all awards, the participants must complete a **self-sufficient journey**. This means that the participants will walk without adult supervision, on an agreed route, and must carry all the equipment and food they will need for the duration of their expedition. Adult leaders will monitor the progress of the groups by meeting them at check points.

The participants will be in expedition groups of between 4 and 7 young people. They must work together as a team, take responsibility for their actions, and deal with any situations that arise along the way.

At bronze and silver level the leaders will be camping in the same area as the young people, however to maintain the spirit of the expedition they will leave the young people to take responsibility for all aspects of their camp, including cooking. There will not be overnight supervision, the leaders are in the area in the case of an emergency only so will not monitor behaviour through the night. At Gold level there will not be any adult supervisors in the area, and participants may 'wild camp' on the hill, not in a campsite.

IMPORTANT NOTE! Most of the adults providing support and ensuring that your child can take part in the D of E Award scheme are volunteers. It is a huge amount of work for them and they can only support your child on the basis that your child:

- **Attends all of the training sessions for the expedition.** The leaders will not take your child on expedition if they do not feel they have the necessary training. It is 100% the responsibility of the child and yourselves to know the correct training dates and to attend these.
- **Brings the correct equipment to all of the training sessions.** Please refer to the expedition page of our website, www.nptdofe.co.uk for equipment lists and advice on food, bag packing etc. There are kit lists for a day walk and an expedition. You may be able to borrow certain equipment from your school/unit but you must check this well before the expedition date.

Finally please do not throw this booklet away as it is likely you will have to refer to it again at some point during your involvement with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.



SV8 (SW) **Please now complete this consent form and return it to the adult in charge of the D of E in your child's school or youth organisation ASAP:**

Parental consent for a visit or project

Group: Neath Port Talbot Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Young Person: **D.O.B:**

1. Details of visit/project: Taking part in all aspects of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Venue - Assorted organisations and outdoor locations.

From: Starting award. **To:** Completion of award

I agree to my son/daughter, taking part in this visit/project **and have read the information sheet.** I agree to his/her participation in any or all of the activities described. I acknowledge the need for responsible behaviour on his/her part.

2. Publicity:

Photographs of your son/daughter may be taken during the visit/activity/project for publicity purposes, the photographs may appear in the youth club portfolio, Neath Port Talbot Youth Service exhibitions and website. **Personal details of your child will remain confidential.**

I agree / disagree (delete as appropriate) for my son/daughter,..... to be included in relevant publicity material

3. Medical information:

a) Does your son/daughter suffer from any conditions requiring medical treatment, including medication or any phobias? **YES / NO**

If YES, please give brief details

b) Please outline the type of pain/flu relief medication your child may be given if necessary (e.g. paracetamol / ibuprofen):

c) Is your son/daughter allergic to any medication? **YES / NO**

If YES please specify

d) To the best of your knowledge, has your son/daughter been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases or suffered from anything in the last four weeks that may be or become contagious or infectious? **YES / NO**

If YES, please give brief details

e) Please outline any special dietary requirements your child may have.

f) Has your son/daughter received a tetanus injection in the last five years? **YES / NO**

PTO...



I undertake to inform the Youth Worker/Project Leader as soon as possible of any changes in the medical circumstances between the date on which this form is signed and the completion of the Award.

4. Declaration:

I agree to my son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and any emergency dental treatment, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic, as considered necessary by the authorities present. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided.

Named Home Contact:.....

Relationship to Young Person:

Work Tel No: Home Tel No:

Home Address:

Alternative emergency contact:

Name:.....

Relationship to Young Person:

Telephone Number:

Address:.....

Family Doctor contact:

Doctor Name:.....

Telephone Number:

Address:.....

Date: Signed:.....

Full Name (capitals):

THIS FORM OR A COPY MUST BE TAKEN BY THE GROUP LEADER ON THE VISIT AND ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION GIVEN TO THE TEACHERS / YOUTH WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS.

A COPY SHOULD BE RETAINED AT THE PROJECT BASE.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award Enrolment Form

This form must be completed and returned with the parental consent form

Before you start your Duke of Edinburgh's Award we need to be sure that you have arranged the activities you will be doing for your different D of E sections and that the activities are appropriate to each section. If you need help finding things to do for the sections then read page 3 of the booklet. If you have any questions then speak to your DofE leader or call Neil Hapgood whose contact info is in the booklet.

Also for each activity you have to have an assessor, this is the person that will support you through the activity and write a report when you have completed the section to confirm you have done it. For example this might be a sports teacher or coach, your music teacher, the manger of the charity shop you are attending etc etc. Basically any adult at the organisation that will be able to confirm you have done the activity once a week for the required number of months and offer you any support you need, it can't be a family member or friend.

Remember you don't have to start a new activity, for example if you are already doing some kind of physical activity each week and there is an adult that could be your assessor then just keep doing it and count it for your physical recreation section, same applies to the skill section and volunteering too. You can use activities you do during school lunchtime or after school but not in lesson time.

Please complete the information below and overleaf for the volunteering, skill and physical recreation section:

Volunteering section

Firstly you cannot volunteer with a commercial organisation, for example you can't volunteer in a local shop, hairdressers, stables etc (unless they are a not for profit organisation). Also you can't volunteer with a family member, for example helping an elderly relative.

The organisation I will be volunteering with is.....

Please give a basic description of your role with the organisation, what will you be doing for them?

.....
.....

What is the name of the person that will be your assessor for this activity?

.....

P.T.O.

Skill section

The activity for the skill section cannot be a sport, although there is a lot of skill involved in sport, sporting activities count for the physical recreation part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

The skill I will be learning is.....

Where are you going to be learning this skill.....

What is the name of the person that will be your assessor?.....

Physical Recreation Section

You have to attend an organisation or be part of a club for this section, for example you can't go jogging or cycling on your own or with friends as there is no-one to be your assessor.

The activity I will be doing for my physical recreation section is.....

Where will you be going to do this activity?.....

What is the name of the person that will be your assessor for this activity?.....

If you are doing an activity such as swimming or attending the gym but there isn't the same adult there each time you go to be your assessor then speak to your D of E leader as you will need to use an 'activity log' to demonstrate you have been going.

Your Name.....Date of birth.....

Your school or youth group

What level D of E are you doing (bronze, silver or gold).....

Final D of E Checklist!

I have found activities to do for the volunteering, physical rec and skill sections and have arranged to do them one hour a week for the required number of months. I know either who my assessor is or I have discussed with my DofE leader and agreed how I am going to demonstrate to them that I have been doing an activity.

The parental consent form has been completed and is ready to return with this form and payment (£34 for bronze or silver)