Bradley Stoke Community School

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BSCS 24-003

9th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award

We are very pleased to be offering our Year 12 students the opportunity to take part in the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. This award is highly regarded by Universities and Colleges, and we'd like to offer your child the chance to complete this while in Post-16. We are, therefore, writing to inform you about this opportunity, to introduce the Award - the opportunities it presents and the commitments it requires - and to let you know how students can sign up.

The Gold Award is a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding experience for those who take part. Moreover, the school believes that the experiences and challenges that the Gold Award provides are extremely valuable in developing the skills, attitudes and attributes of the well-rounded individuals that we aspire to help shape during the students' time at school. Research has also shown that graduate recruiters and employers value the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award higher than any other extra-curricular activity.

The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award consists of five sections:

1. **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community.
2. **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities.
3. **Skill:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests.
4. **Expedition:** planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK.
5. **Residential:** staying away from home with a new group of people for 5 days working on a shared activity.

Participants need to do at least 12 months' Volunteering and a minimum of 12 months on either Physical or Skills and six months on the other. It is up to the participant as to which section they do for longer. This involves them spending roughly an hour a week per activity. If students have not completed Silver, then they need to undertake a further six months in either of their longer sections.

The Expedition stage will last 4 days and 3 nights and there will be a practice day walk and an assessed expedition. Our Expedition section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is run by Dynamic Adventures AAP. This activity provider has been accredited by the Duke of Edinburgh award and all assessors and trainers at Dynamic Adventure have full Mountain Leader qualifications and years of experience. These staff will work with students at all stages of the planning, training and supervision of the Expeditions.

In addition to this, Dynamic Adventures will run a Training Day before the practice expedition (2nd March 2025). Students will need to organise their own transport to and from the designated location in the Mendips. This training will culminate in their Practice Expedition in the Easter Holidays. Following on from this there will be a Route Planning Day in school. The final Assessed Expedition will run in the summer holidays. The transport and routes will be planned by the students, with assistance from Dynamic Adventures.

Dynamic Adventures have confirmed that they will be running the practice expedition and assessed expeditions on the following dates:

- **Practice Expedition Tuesday 8th April – Friday 11th April 2025** on Dartmoor, meeting at Ivybridge train station,

- **Assessed Expedition Thursday 24th July to Sunday 27th July 2025** in the Brecon Beacons, meeting at Abergavenny train station.

Students will receive help in school in completing the sections of the Award on eDofE (the online platform for the award) during weekly training sessions as part of their enrichment. While students will need to sign up and pay for the Award with their home school, the weekly training sessions will be run at Bradley Stoke Community School. Any students who are completing another enrichment alongside DofE, should email lily.clayton@olympustrust.co.uk to arrange how this will fit alongside their current timetable.

The total cost of the programme is £499.50 which includes the DofE sign-up fee, the training day, campsites for both the Practice and Assessed Expedition, expert supervision from Dynamic Adventures, DofE approved assessors, use of tents, stoves and other group kit. Not included is transport and food. This will be arranged by the students, though in previous years a lift-share has been organised by teammates and both the Practice and Assessed expedition are easily accessible by train. The personal equipment for the expedition will need to be purchased and a full kit list will be provided to all participants. It is possible to pay in instalments, beginning with a deposit of £166.50. £45 of this is **non-refundable** as it covers the sign-up fee for Gold DofE and the school's admin costs, then a further £166.50 is payable by 3rd February and £166.50 by 14th March.

To formally sign up for the Award, please complete this registration form, and pay the deposit amount of £166.50 via Arbor by Friday 18th October. If you are having any difficulties with paying, please contact the DofE lead for your child's home school:

Bradley Stoke Community School: Lily Clayton lily.clayton@olympustrust.co.uk
Abbeywood Community School: Natalie Ashford Natalie.ashford@olympustrust.co.uk
Winterbourne: Daisy Lee daisy.lee@olympustrust.co.uk

If you would like more information on the Duke of Edinburgh Award please visit: www.DofE.org or about how the Award will be run in school, then please contact Lily Clayton.

Kind regards,

Lily Clayton

Lily Clayton
Duke of Edinburgh, Gold Award Coordinator
Email: lily.clayton@olympustrust.co.uk