



## Pensby High School

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Headteacher: Mr K Flanagan

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Dear Parents & Carers,

I would like to invite you to take part in this academic year's Duke of Edinburgh **SILVER** Award. This fantastic opportunity is open to all current Year 10 pupils and is open for enrollment from 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025 to 3<sup>rd</sup> October on a first come first served basis. It is very important that you read all of the letter before you make any decision about signing up for the award.

**If you did not enrol on the Bronze section in year 9 you can still enrol and become a direct entrant onto the Silver level of the award, it will just take you slightly longer to complete (see attached timescale)**

As a school we place significant value in our student's participation in the programme as it supports students to develop a range of skills including leadership skills, self-confidence and belief in themselves alongside enabling students to access a range of opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them. Students find this an immense help when they apply for university, college or employment. This year we had a fantastic response and currently have over one hundred students participating in the award. Due to the fantastic response previously from students wishing to enrol, we had to limit enrolment to 60 students for the SILVER Award. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis including completed enrolment form/payment to secure your place. We hope to see many within the current year taking up this offer.

### **What is it?**

The Duke of Edinburgh, or DofE, is the world's leading youth achievement award, giving millions of 14 to 25 year-olds the opportunity to be the very best they can be. It is a voluntary, non-competitive programme of practical, cultural and adventurous activities, designed to support the personal and social development of young people aged 14-25. It offers an individual challenge and encourages young people to undertake exciting, constructive and enjoyable activities in their free time, with a well-recognised award at the end to show a possible employer their determination to commit and undertake challenges.

### **What does the programme consist of?**

It is a four Section Programme with three progressive levels:

- Bronze
- **Silver**
- Gold

### **What do the Sections involve?**

- Volunteering - Helping other people in the local community
- Skills - Covering almost any hobby, skill or interest
- Physical Recreation - Sports, dance and fitness
- Expeditions - The Expedition section requires participants to undertake a 3-day, 2-night backpacking practice/training expedition and an assessed 3-day, 2-night backpacking expedition
- Participants will need to attend all expedition training sessions and complete both 3-day, 2-night events.

### **How long will it take?**

It takes at least six months for Silver if you have already achieved your Bronze or **12 months if you've jumped straight into Silver**. This means you will need approximately four hours after school dedicated to this Award. Included in that is 1 hour per week after school for the Expedition training (days to be arranged) and 3

hours for your chosen activities over the week. The activity sections - volunteering, skills and physical sections can often be completed in School using the extra-curricular activities available.

### **How much will it cost?**

The total cost is £383 which is made up of a £33 registration fee and £350 expedition cost as outlined below:

(a) The registration fee of £33.00 is for the registration welcome pack & the eDofE account; we ask that this payment is received **by 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025** as an indication of your child's commitment to enrol. You will receive a certificate and badge on completion (The £33.00 enrolment fee is non-refundable as it is paid to DofE)

(b) The expedition cost – £175.00 for the 3-day training/practice expedition and then £175.00 for the 3-day assessment expedition. This is £350 total for the expedition section (food not included).

Following the initial £33 registration fee which can be paid on Scopay by 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025, two equal installments of £175 will be payable on the 27th February 2026 although the full payment can be made on or before 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025. These payments are scheduled to coincide with payment for advance bookings (e.g. vehicles/campsite fees/equipment), therefore the monies are non-refundable at this point. **Please note full payment of the Expedition fee's is required by 27th February 2026**

- Financial support may be available in certain cases. Please contact me at school if you would like to discuss this although it is important to note that all group equipment including rucksacks and tents are provided.

- In relation to other components of the DofE there can be some minimal costs

(c) Volunteering - usually little or no cost

(c) Skills - cost depends on the skill chosen and can be negligible

(c) Physical Recreation - costs depend on the sport chosen and on local availability.

### **Direct Entrants**

You can register for the Silver award if you have not previously enrolled on the Bronze Award, but please be aware that "Direct Entrants" must do a further 6 months in the volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skill sections. Pupils attended assemblies last term informing them all about this fantastic opportunity available to them here at Pensby High School. The Silver Award is being offered to Year 10's. There is no longer an age restriction so they can start at the beginning of the academic year. Please note that this award is a remote supervision activity and when the students are on their expedition the teachers will only meet them at checkpoints on their route and will be supervised at the campsite.

### **Duke of Edinburgh meetings**

During the year, your child will attend a DofE Lunchtime and after school meetings when required. Attendance is compulsory and crucial to ensure that participants are keeping up to date with their sections and that your child is fully trained for unaccompanied expeditions. Each participant will have to have a completed training log in order to take part in the expeditions. They also need to have 50% of their other sections completed before undertaking the expedition.

Below are some frequently asked questions and answer

### **What happens on expeditions?**

There are two separate expedition trips. A practice expedition and an assessment expedition. The number of days each expedition takes depends on the level. Silver is two expeditions of three days (two nights). Not all students in

the year who take part in DofE will attend the expedition on the same days as the large number of students who take part mean we have to split up the year to safely manage the expedition with appropriate numbers of staff given the health and safety risks involved.

### **Who chooses who goes on which expedition day?**

This is chosen by the DofE co-ordinator and is not according to friendship groups or, on student or parental requests. Equally we cannot amend the dates of allocated expeditions to facilitate family events/holidays as there are too many students involved. All expeditions take place during the school week.

### **What happens on expeditions?**

Students walk in groups of 7 maximum. These groups are chosen by the DofE co-ordinator. Whilst friendship groups might be considered this is not an overarching factor. Walking groups may be mixed sex groups.

Students will sleep in single sex tents. The tents may have 2,3 people in them. These groups are chosen by the DofE co-ordinator and whilst they might include the students they are walking with, they might be different as tent allocation is completed according to a range of factors including numbers of boys and girls on the expedition, as well as availability of tent sizes on the day. Please note, students are normally only informed of their tent groups on the day of the expedition.

### **Who is responsible for the final sign from the award?**

Students are responsible for uploading any evidence they need in order to complete their award. Whilst reminders will be given, it is the students responsibility to complete all aspects of the course and the online tracker.

### **What level of fitness does the student need to have to complete the expedition?**

Please be aware the expedition requires a basic level of physical fitness. If instructors are unsure of the fitness of your child/ward they will contact you to avoid unnecessary health and safety risks for both your child and the group as a whole.

We do ask parents and students to be mindful that almost 150 students across Years 9 and 10 take part in the DofE each year. At Pensby we are proud of all students who take part as it is a huge achievement and testament to their resilience and growth as young adults. We made a decision to invest in DofE as a school, this means we run it ourselves with our school staff because it is about fostering those relationships in school but, as such, our staff give up time away from their families with the students. They do it because they enjoy seeing your children thrive but this does mean we cannot respond to every child or parents need in relation to groups/tents. We try our best to ensure everyone is happy but we won't always get it right but we do ask you to remember that it is voluntary for everyone involved.

If your child would like to enrol in the DofE Silver award, please return the enrolment form online via the link: <https://forms.office.com/e/1YFVLUAirx> along with the registration fee of £33.00 by **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025**. Payment should be made online using ScoPay; if you don't already have an account, please contact the school office who will send you details. Alternatively, payments can be made by cash or cheque, cheques should be made payable to Pensby High School. I am looking forward to guiding the students through this exciting challenge. Please encourage your child to have a look at the DofE website.

The Duke of Edinburgh website has more details on the scheme [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org) and please refer to these links for information: [www.dofe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Expedition-Guide-2024.pdf](http://www.dofe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Expedition-Guide-2024.pdf)  
<https://www.dofe.org/do/parents/>

The school website also has useful information regarding the whole process and a full glossary of terms: [DofE - Pensby High School](#)

Yours sincerely

*A. Davies*

Mr Davies

Duke of Edinburgh Award Manager

***Important please note:***

***The school budget is such that there is not the ability for the school to fund school trips, without having a detrimental impact on the funds available for teaching and learning across the school, therefore voluntary contributions are required to allow trips to happen. The money given by parents/carers is used to pay for transport, entrance fees, tickets etc. that allow the trip to take place. Money is not held by the school, it is passed to a third party.***

***For the avoidance of any doubt the school does not provide refunds if your child is unable to go on the trip for any reason.***

***If your child is ill, then you may claim on your own travel insurance if it covers such eventualities - the school does not have such insurance for your child.***

***If your or your child's actions cause them not to be able to go on the trip (for example not returning signed permission by the required deadline, being excluded from school, being told their behaviour in school is such that they can no longer go on the trip) then the school will not provide a refund of any monies paid.***