



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 **BRONZE** Award. This fantastic opportunity is open to all current Year 9 pupils and is open for enrollment from 5th September 2025 to 3rd October 2025 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.

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 90 students for the Bronze 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 2-day 1 night backpacking Assessment expedition
- Participants will need to attend all expedition training sessions and complete the 2 day one-night event.

How long will it take?

It takes at least six months to achieve the Bronze Award, twelve months for Silver and eighteen months for Gold. This means you will need approximately four hours per week 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 sessions – 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 £188 which is made up of a £33 registration fee and £155 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 3rd 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 – £155.00 is for the 2-day Assessment expedition taking place on the Wirral/Cheshire (food not included).

Following the initial £33 registration fee which can be paid on Scopay, two equal installments of £77.50 will be payable on the 28th November 2025 and 27th February 2026 although the full payment can be made on or before 3rd 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 expedition group equipment including rucksacks and tents are provided.
- In relation to other components of the DofE there can be some minimal costs
 - (a) Volunteering - usually little or no cost
 - (b) Skills - cost depends on the skill chosen and can be negligible
 - (c) Physical Recreation - costs depend on the sport chosen and on local availability.

Pupils attended assemblies last term informing them all about this fantastic opportunity available to them here at Pensby High School. The Bronze Award is being offered to Year 9's. There is no longer an age restriction so they can start at the beginning of the academic year (Sep – Dec). 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 answers

What happens on expeditions?

For the Bronze award students are now only required to complete a 2-day assessment expedition. The number of days each expedition section takes depends on the level. E.g. Bronze is two days (one night) and Silver is practice/training expedition three days (two nights) and one three days (two nights) assessment expedition. 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 or 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 enrol in the DofE Bronze 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 3rd 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 and please refer to these links for information: 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.