



Bath Rd, Frome, Somerset BA11 2HQ
Unit Leader: Steve Marsh Telephone 01373 465353
Email: smarsh@fromecollege.org

Dear Parent/Carer/Student

Re: Gold DofE

Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a leading programme of self-development for young people which continues to increase in numbers participating in more than 100 countries around the world. The Award is offered in 3 levels, bronze, silver and gold.

The Bronze Award is offered in almost all secondary schools in Somerset. Silver and Gold have far fewer participants and far fewer centres offer them. However, the Gold Award is the one which really makes people sit up and look carefully at applications for courses and jobs. Having all three levels is very rare and really shows you as a person of note.

The great thing is that this is nothing to do with academic ability. It is just a way of demonstrating determination, independence, reliability, organisation etc. It shows that you get things done and stay with a job until you succeed. Lots of people say they would like to do parts of this but can't be bothered. That's the point really – successful DofE participants can be bothered!

The Gold Award at Frome College

We know you are here primarily to get your academic qualifications, but it is not healthy to think that you have no time for anything but studies. For good health, you should be involved in physical activities and recreation, and volunteering allows you to do something for your community and make you feel good about yourself. It also gains the respect of others.

We try not to put you under too much pressure, but you do need to engage with the required activities if you are going to get the Gold Award. You can, however, manage your time – do less at exam times and do more when the pressure is off. You do need to put some thought into what you plan to do to get your award finished. The Gold Application form asks you to explain how you intend to get your award (last 2 pages of this letter) You can fill this in as soon as you are 16 years old or at the beginning of year 12.

Once accepted (we will accept any seriously thought out applications), you can get started on some of your activities. We will advise you about what to do and give you any technical help you need to get you started.

Direct Entrants

You can do the award at gold level without doing the previous levels. People who do this are called direct entrants. As a direct entrant you have to do a little more than people who have completed the silver level. You will also be lacking in expedition knowledge and experience. We therefore require you to take part in some extra expedition training to gain the knowledge you need.

Continuing Entrants

If you have started any previous levels of the Award, these need to be completed before I will take you on as a Gold entrant. You will already have had plenty of time to complete previous levels, but, if you think you have a reason for not having completed, please contact me by email to explain your circumstances.

Principal
Emma Reynolds

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Expeditions

Covid Restrictions may affect your expeditions. My aim is that:

- Your practice expedition will take place in July 2021.
- Your qualifying expedition will be in year 13 after exams.

It is now looking hopeful that things will return to normal sometime in 2021, but we should be prepared to be flexible about what format the expeditions will take. A normal gold expedition requires 4 days in wild country (mountainous or moorland) with 8 hours of activity per day between leaving the start point and arriving at the finish of each day. Camping will be our accommodation and you would be devising and cooking your own food.

If it is not possible to carry out a full-strength expedition, we are allowed to do local expeditions at present, but this would not be adequate preparation for a wild country qualifier. I would, therefore, favour saving expeditions until Year 13 if restrictions do not allow us to venture into wild country.

Volunteering, Skill and Physical

Choose something you can get started on for physical, skill and volunteering. If you are new to the award, have a look at the following video – it explains about the award in detail. You will be expected to make progress in your award to be take part in the expedition.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuZMfKbMW6M&feature=youtu.be>

Residential

At Gold level, you need to complete a Gold Residential, which involves 4 nights and 5 days away from home, involved in a shared activity in shared accommodation with at least 8 people who do not previously know each other. These are usually found by searching the internet for approved residentials, but if you find something which may fit the bill, just contact me to check that it will count.

Gold Timescales

	Minimum age	Volunteering	Skill	Physical	Extra
Gold	16	12 months	One section for 12 months and one section for 6 months		Non-silver holders do an extra 6 months in one of the 12 month activities

Cost

Initially, you will need to pay £35 to pay for Gold registration with the Award and with the Somerset Operating Authority. We then charge for each expedition. Each Expedition will usually cost a minimum of £60 for 4 days, more if students want to travel greater distances. There will ideally be one expedition in each academic year in July and payment will be required shortly before each expedition. Prices may increase this year for campsites etc.

Other costs – **Residentials** will vary from free to thousands of pounds, depending on what you choose. Low cost options are always available. These cannot be run by the school.

Other activities may cost something depending on what you choose.

It may be possible to get funding to help pupil premium students to complete their gold level.

How to get started

The last 2 pages of this letter are a form which needs to be filled in and returned to me.

Either: 1) Save, fill in and save again. Attach the form on an email to smarsh@fromecollege.org

Or 2) print a form, fill it in and post it to school addressed to Steve Marsh.

Or 3) print a form, fill it in and return it via the letterbox at the DofE office (between the main college hall and the art quad, opposite the disabled toilet).

I would like to get things going for you as soon as possible. Please return forms by the start of the Christmas holiday, so that I can order places for the start of the Spring Term.

I look forward to any responses.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Marsh".

Mr Steve Marsh
DofE Co-ordinator

FROME COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARENTAL CONSENT FORM (please return to Steve Marsh)

- Either: 1) Save, fill in and save again. Attach the form on an email to smarsh@fromecollege.org
Or 2) print a form, fill it in and post it to school addressed to Steve Marsh.
Or 3) print a form, fill it in and return it via the letterbox at the DofE office (between the main college hall and the art quad, opposite the disabled toilet).

Re: Joining the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

I would like my son/daughter to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. I understand that students are responsible for arranging their own volunteering, skill and physical section activities. The school can only be responsible for activities run by the school – we cannot accept responsibility for activities provided by other organisations.

I Parent/Carer of Tutor Group:

I have read and fully understood and am satisfied with the details supplied about the above-mentioned activity and agree to my son/daughter taking part in it. I know of no medical reason why he/she should not participate. I am aware that photographs of activities may be taken and used for publicity and promotion of the group. Links to selected DofE photographs may be shared within the group.

I AM AWARE THAT:

- a) Except for visits abroad insurance arrangements are the same as for pupils in school, i.e. that the Authority only provides cover against proven or agreed negligence by the Authority and its employees.
- b) I should consider making my own insurance arrangements for personal accident cover for my son/daughter for school activities in the UK.

Signature **Date:**
Parent/Carer:

Contact Name: **Tel**
No:

Email address 1

Email address 2

These email addresses will be the main way that information is circulated. Please write them carefully.

Are you entitled to a free school meal? YES NO (please circle as appropriate)

Proposed Volunteering Activity

Proposed Physical Activity

Proposed Skill Activity

Any Residential Ideas?

What would you like to get out of Gold DofE?

ParentPay will be open for you on receipt of the complete application form.