

Education Department

Director: Mhairi Shaw, DCE

Council Offices, 211 Main Street, Barrhead, East Renfrewshire G78 1SY

Mearns Castle High School

Head Teacher: Dean T Smith MA

Waterfoot Road, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 5GU

Phone: 0141 577 2300 Fax: 0141 577 2314

e-mail: schoolmail@mearnscastle.e-renfrew.sch.uk

Our Ref: KW/LS

Date: 12 January 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a programme intended for young people to develop their skills, character and sense of adventure. Pupils must be 14 years old to undertake the Bronze Award and the minimum length of time it can be completed in is 6 months. Young people can progress from Bronze to Silver then Gold level. The Award requires the participants to complete activities in 3 sections: Skill, Volunteering and Physical. They must undertake at least 1 hour a week for each of these sections. Participants also complete a Practice and Qualifying Expedition and Presentation.

Skill Section

An existing hobby/club that your son/daughter already participates in may be suitable to meet the requirements for this section. Alternatively they may choose a new activity (playing an instrument, learning a language, cooking, collecting, poetry, book reviews, photography, learning to knit, sew). The www.theaward.org website has many examples. Parents will need to be supportive and responsible for pupils as the bulk of activities will take place outside of school hours. Pupils require an adult to be an Assessor to do a write-up when they complete the section (this cannot be a family member). This section must be undertaken for 3 months.

Physical Section

An existing hobby/club that your son/daughter already participates in may be suitable to meet the requirements for this section. Alternatively, they may choose a new activity (swim, run, cycle, golf, dancing). The www.theaward.org website has many examples. This section must be undertaken for 3 months.

Volunteering Section

Pupils will be offered a variety of ideas to assist their choice of an activity to fulfil the volunteering element of the Award. For example helping in a nursery, helping in a charity shop, home for the elderly/elderly neighbour or an environmental group. It is the responsibility of parents to support your son/daughter's choice of activity. This section must be undertaken for 3 months.

Pupils must then undertake one of either volunteering, physical or skills sections for a further 3 months.

Expedition Section

Pupils will be expected to attend lunch time/after school meetings which will cover first aid training, outdoor safety, emergency procedures, meal planning, camp craft, the country code, navigation and route planning. The Expeditions are run by a company

called Adventure Expeditions. This ensures pupils are given training and they are fully supervised by qualified instructors (www.adventure-expeditions.net/). In groups of 4-7 pupils they will complete a Practice Expedition (11-12 May) and a Qualifying (Assessed Expedition)(28-29 May). They will walk between 15-20 miles and camp overnight. As part of the Expedition section, groups must have an aim for their Expedition Presentation eg land uses, vegetation, history, weather on expedition or tourism impacts. They present their findings in the form of a video diary, poster or powerpoint after their Expedition.

eDofE Account

Pupils will be registered and receive a record pack and an online account. It is important they keep their login and password safe. This eDofE account is used to record their skill, physical and volunteering activities. It is important that pupils update their online accounts regularly with evidence to show what they are doing (word evidence, pictures, log sheets, certificates). In order to achieve the Award they must have at least 5 pieces of evidence for each section. When pupils complete a section they must then add an Assessor's Report which can be scanned in or completed directly online using their ID number. It is important that the assessor is not a family member. It is essential pupils understand the time, responsibility and commitment that the Award will take. It is very important they meet deadlines and attend all meetings.

Cost

The total cost to complete the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award is £245. This cost includes:

- Administration fees for the eDofE account which is an online record that pupils must keep up to date with details of their physical, skill, volunteering and expedition sections of the Award
- Training sessions, maps and training booklet
- Two fully supervised Expeditions by the Adventure Expedition Leaders
- Assessor fees
- Campsite costs
- Transport costs – coach to and from the Expedition routes
- Provision of group equipment, tents, maps, compass, cooking pans, stoves and gas, group shelters, first aid kits.

There are **65 places** available for the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. Due to the demand to allocate places fairly, pupils will be asked to complete an application form. Pupils will then be informed if they have been successful. Pupils should not be too disappointed if they do not get a place. There will be opportunities in subsequent years for them to do the Silver Award as a Direct Entrant.

If you have any concerns or questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Kathryn Ward

