

Welcome to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Surrey!

Surrey County Council (SCC) is one of the largest Operating Authorities for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) within the country and has produced this '*Guide for Parents & Carers*'. The aim of the Guide is to help parents, carers, and young people with information regarding DofE and how it should operate under the Surrey County Council licence.

In most cases young people will undertake their DofE through their school, youth centre or other Surrey registered 'DofE Centre'. In essence young people participate through a personalised internet-based account called eDofE activated when they enrol with their nominated DofE centre, (usually this will be their school, children's home or youth centre) and will for the most part be expected to participate on a self managed basis with most of the information and guidance available from their nominated centre/school or from the National DofE website www.dofe.org. Programme approval and final Award verification though will be through the Surrey County Council DofE Support Team.

Please understand that DofE is for the most part an individually tailored programme. As such there is no obligation on the DofE National Charity or Surrey County Council to organise or provide any part of the programme for your son or daughter. This overall responsibility resides with the school/centre for all sections of the Award and at all levels that they operate. However, Surrey County Council will endeavour to provide advice and guidance, and facilitate completion and success wherever possible – especially concerning the 'Expedition Section' (see below).

What is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award?

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a personalised voluntary, non competitive programme of activities for everyone aged 14-24. Participation in DofE gives young people the opportunity to experience new activities or develop existing skills. There are three progressive levels of programme, which when successfully completed lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award. Young people create their own DofE programme by choosing a volunteering, physical and skills activity, undertaking an expedition and additionally for their Gold, taking part in a residential activity. On successful completion of each level of DofE, each participant will be presented with a badge and certificate. Section Certificates are also available upon having completed each individual section, usually only where additional support and motivation is required.

Part 1: Registration of participants

All participants at Bronze level must have reached age 14; 15 at Silver and 16 for Gold before they are eligible to register for DofE.

How participants register

- Firstly, read through this Guide and then if you have any questions, contact your son/daughter's centre/school in the first instance, or the Surrey DofE Team at dofe@surreycc.gov.uk ;
- Next, when you're ready to proceed send the *SCC DofE Application for Registration Form* that you will have received with this Guide back to your son or daughter's school/centre as soon as possible with the appropriate registration fee (stated on the form);
- The charge for registration levied by SCC is recorded on the *Application for Registration Form* and includes a surcharge to cover operational costs.
- Whilst every DofE participant has to pay the same for DofE registration, additional costs of involvement will depend on the participant's choice of activity in each section of their DofE. There will inevitably be a further additional charge for the Expedition Section to cover costs of this outdoor activity levied by the centre/school or through an appropriate Approved Activity Provider (AAP – please see below) if involved and usually paid directly to the centre/school (details of and information about AAPs can be found at <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/approved-providers/>);
- **PLEASE NOTE** - Cheques for registration with DofE are to be made payable to your son/daughter's nominated DofE centre/school.
- Participants must provide their personal email address in the appropriate box on the Registration Form so that they can receive their eDofE log-in and activation details. They will then receive a welcome email with information on how to get started. Further information regarding the online process can be found on the website <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/doing-your-dofe/edofe/>
- Once participants have paid the fee and are registered they will also receive a DofE Participant Handbook usually directly from their centre/school giving further information on the DofE online recording system referred to above (eDofE), advice on participation, DofE programme choices and what the assessor of their chosen activity for each section needs to do.
- All participants will have to record information online through their eDofE account. This means that records can be accessed and updated easily as young people progress to the next level.

What does DofE involve?

There are three separate, progressive levels of the programme, which lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold DofE Award. The main difference between them are the minimum length of time required to complete each level, the degree of challenge and the minimum age at which young people can start to do them.

Participants choose an activity they enjoy and want to do for each section. It is important that when young people are making choices parents or carers, assisted by the Centre Leader, are on hand to work with them as DofE place activities in specific sections. This can be an entirely new activity or an activity in which they are already involved.

Details and duration of participation for each section at all 3 levels is set out in the table below:

Bronze Award				
Volunteering	Skills	Physical	Expeditions	
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, prepare for and undertake a 2 day venture, 1 night venture	
An additional 3 months must be undertaken in any one of these Sections. Involvement is to be measured in full months with as expectation of an average of at least one hour per week				
Silver Award				
Volunteering	Skills	Physical	Expeditions	
6 months	One Section for 6 months and the other Section for 3 months		Plan, prepare for and undertake a 3 day venture, 2 night venture	
Direct entrants must undertake an additional 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer (Skills or Physical Recreation) Section.				
Gold Award				
Volunteering	Skills	Physical	Expeditions	Residential
12 months	One Section for 12 months and the other Section for 6 months		Plan, prepare for and undertake a 4 day venture, 3 night venture	Undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from

<i>Direct entrants must undertake an additional 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer (Skills or Physical Recreation) Section.</i>		home for 5 days and 4 nights
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The Process for DofE - Programme and Assessment

Participants choose an activity of their choice for the completion of each section and record this on their eDofE Programme Planner, which then needs to be approved by the Centre Leader at their nominated centre/school. An assessor, who can be anyone other than a parent or relation with knowledge in the chosen activity and who is asked to undertake this function by young people directly, will check the young persons' progress and sign off upon completion of each section. Parents/carers for participants under 18 years of age must agree their son/daughter's involvement in the activities chosen for each section of their DofE and if necessary contact the Centre Leader at their centre/school for clarification or to raise any questions or concerns. The parent/carer must also agree the choice of assessor.

To complete the programme, every activity undertaken must be successfully undertaken over the required time frame and then assessed. Your son/daughter should meet the assessor to discuss and record their experiences, how they have developed and have reached their goals as agreed at the start of the activity.

Assessor's reports: An assessor's report is completed by the assessor identified for each particular section of a participant's programme. It constitutes a short review of the activities that the young person has been carrying out and documents their progress towards their goals. Assessors' reports can be submitted either online via the DofE website (go to www.DofE.org/assessor and then follow the instructions), or on paper using the Participant's Handbook, which then must be scanned/photographed and uploaded onto the participant's eDofE account.

Completing DofE at Bronze & Silver levels

- A participant qualifies for their DofE Bronze or Silver Award when all the requirements of the Bronze or Silver level have been successfully completed, and approved by the Centre Leader at the centre/school in the first instance,
- Next, SCC-appointed DofE verifiers will confirm that all the relevant conditions and requirements have been met based on the information recorded in the Participant's Handbook and uploaded to the online eDofE system.

- On successful completion of all four sections (5 at Gold level), participants will be invited to attend a local Award Ceremony or school/centre-based event to receive their certificate.

The ‘Achievement Pack’ for young people

Once your Programme or DofE Level has been approved by the Surrey DofE Office you will be given the option to create your *Achievement Pack*. By accessing your eDofE account you will see a banner sign-posted ‘*Achievement Pack*’. When clicked, this opens a new window where you will be able to drag and drop your evidence and capture all your best memories and achievements, to create a personal record and memory book to keep. Once you’ve assembled your Achievement Pack online, you’ll then be able to print off a free PDF of your book or purchase a hardback or faux leather version.

Part 2: the Role of SCC DofE Office

- Surrey County Council is an Operational Licence holder of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.
- The County Council operates DofE in Surrey in partnership with the National DofE Charity.
- Surrey DofE is managed centrally and is supported by a team of DofE Advisers who manage the DofE operation locally in each Borough/District in Surrey and are the point of contact for DofE centres/schools via the nominated Centre Leader.
- This team also provides a point of contact for Centre Leaders and processes verifies and monitors the quality of delivery to participants completing their Award.
- Every DofE participant will have access to the Surrey DofE Team via the message facility in their own eDofE account if needed, but it is primarily the role of the Centre Leader, to help them through their DofE and to who all enquiries should be channelled in the first instance.

Risk Assessment: Parent/Carer Awareness

Potential risks in completing the DofE

Every effort is made by all involved in a young person’s DofE to reduce risk of harm to participants to a level that is acceptable for the age, experience and abilities of those involved. It must be fully understood and accepted by participants, parents and carers, however that the nature of the Award is such that it is neither possible nor desirable to totally eliminate risk from all elements of DofE.

Parents, carers and participants should satisfy themselves that proper procedures are followed, under the guidance of appropriately trained staff,

and ensure that participants are also properly trained to assess and manage the remaining risks.

Completing Sections of the DofE outside a DofE Centre

- DofE will require young people to complete most parts of their DofE within their respective communities, in their own time and not directly at or with their school/centre.
- If a young person needs to complete a section of their DofE with an individual adult, then it must not take place in a setting that leaves participants vulnerable, and should be agreed by the parent/carer, or via the approval system on eDofE.
- It is important that these sections are completed with *bone fide* individuals or organisations (i.e. those which have proper safeguarding, insurance, and health & safety policies etc in place).

Nominating your DofE Assessor

Young people participating in any section of DofE at any level must have their involvement monitored by an assessor who has an experience and expertise in the activity chosen by the participant. Assessment criteria should be agreed with the assessor before the activity starts.

In all activities parents/carers and participants should satisfy themselves that proper procedures are followed under the guidance of appropriately trained staff and ensure that participants are also properly trained to assess and manage the remaining risks.

Insurance

All participants with a current Duke of Edinburgh's Award eDofE Participation Place and/or Participant Handbook will have limited Personal Accident cover from the National DofE Charity. Details of this insurance are outlined on the DofE website : www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/insurance/

Parents and carers assisting their son/daughter to undertake their DofE activities will also have entitlement to this insurance through the National DofE.

All SCC registered DofE participants undertaking their DofE through Surrey County Council will also have the benefit of the Council's public liability insurance with a limit of indemnity of £50 million.

DofE Approved Activity Providers (AAPs) and the Expedition

An AAP is an outdoor education or expedition company or individual trained and approved by the National DofE Charity to deliver agreed sections of DofE (usually the Expedition Section). Please see the earlier link to AAP details and information.

DofE centres/schools in Surrey are increasingly contracting with an AAP to organised and run the Expedition Section as this enables teachers and leaders to concentrate more on other areas. Centre Leaders should provide you with details and contact information for this if this option is taken. There will also usually be an additional cost over and above what a centre/school might levy as AAPs are normally commercial providers.

Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure their compliance with all statutory and voluntary codes of practice through the offsite and adventurous trips & visits approvals system in place at each centre/school, SCC cannot formally endorse them or any other external training or expedition provider.

If the AAP option is chosen it will then be your sole responsibility to liaise with the DofE centre/school to satisfy yourself that the appointed AAP is a suitable outdoor provider for your son/daughter. Any agreement reached with that provider will be a private arrangement between the DofE centre/school, the AAP and yourself and will not involve Surrey County Council.

Surrey County Council as a Licence Holder of DofE cannot accept any responsibility for any such training programme, including all aspects of safety, the adequacy of training and emergency procedures. Nor can we endorse, take any responsibility or comment on the suitability of the adult personnel involved. These responsibilities rest with the organisation or provider planning and delivering the training course and you must satisfy yourself that these are in place and appropriate.

However, if your DofE centre/school does decide to engage with any AAP, we can give advice as to the appropriateness of any accreditations or badges AAPs hold and display on their marketing material and give guidance as to what questions to ask. For expedition providers operating in remote terrain (usually only at DofE Gold level), you should also check via your DofE centre/school that the AAP holds an Adventure Activity License, or check via the link below.

http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php

About the Surrey County Council DofE Team

Surrey County Council supports the personal and social development of young people through the Youth Support Service and provides opportunities for them to fulfil their potential.

It is vital that every participant opens their personal eDofE account immediately upon receipt of their log-in instruction. Communication with the Centre Leader and if necessary the Surrey DofE Team can then be made via the eDofE messaging facility.

Surrey County Council DofE Team Contacts (September 2014)

Name	Position	Contact
Paul Bowen	County DofE Manager	Communication via dofe@surreycc.gov.uk

Maureen Bowden	Senior Administrative Officer	Communication via dofe@surreycc.gov.uk
Emma Herbert	Administrative Officer	Communication via dofe@surreycc.gov.uk

SCC DofE Office: Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking GU22 7QQ.

GOOD LUCK!

Summary of websites:

National DofE: www.dofe.org

AAPs: <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/approved-providers/>

eDofE: <http://www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/doing-your-dofe/edofe/>

DofE Insurance: www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/insurance/

AALS: http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php

DofE Assessor info: www.DofE.org/assessor

eDofE Technical Support Helpline: **01753 727 426**