

18<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to invite applications from September's Year 10 and Year 11 pupils to join our Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for the 2025-26 season. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is the world's leading youth achievement award, which is highly valued by employers and further education establishments. The Silver Award is a tough challenge involving four sections:

**Volunteering, Physical and Skills Sections**

For these three sections participants will be expected to organise their own activity, making sure they can get there and have all the equipment they need. We are here to help and will do all we can to make each of the sections an enjoyable and rewarding part of the Silver Award. Participants must commit to the Volunteering section for six months, and one of the skills or physical sections for at least six months. Each should involve, on average, an hour's activity every week.

**Expedition Section**

We will complete this section together by undertaking a walking expedition. Participants must:

**Complete the Practise expedition: Friday 13<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

The Silver Practise expedition is a three day and two-night expedition that takes place in the Chiltern Hills. The expedition will require participants to navigate a pre-planned route across the Peaks to our camping field near Tring.

**Complete the Qualifying expedition: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

The Silver Qualifying expedition is a three day and two-night expedition that takes place in the Peak District. The expedition will require participants to navigate a pre-planned route across the Peaks to our camping field near Buxton.

**Transport**

Transport arrangement will be confirmed once final numbers are known and an additional letter will be sent out.

A letter with details specific to the expedition will be sent to those who enrol. If you have any further enquiries about the expedition element, then please do not hesitate to contact Azarias Training Ltd at [dofe@azarias.co.uk](mailto:dofe@azarias.co.uk)

**Commitment**

Completion of the Silver Award requires a high level of commitment. Participants will need to set up and take part in three activities each week to achieve the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections. Plans for each of these should be submitted before the end of the summer term, and participants should have started all of their activities before the expeditions in the autumn term. Please note that participants should be able to commit to the **training** and **qualifying weekend expeditions** listed above if they are to enrol. The terms and conditions of the Ely College Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme are detailed below.

## Participation Cost

The total cost of participation on Ely College's Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award is **£400**. This fee covers the official Duke of Edinburgh's Award materials, administrative fees and all the training/expedition costs incurred by the College, which comprises payment of qualified outdoor instructors and expedition assessors; campsite fees and loan of group equipment but excludes the food participants take for consumption whilst on the expeditions. If your child joins the scheme, payment will be due via MCAS as follows:

1. **Enrolment fee of £100 by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025**: This will confirm a place for your child on Ely College's Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
2. **First expedition payment of £75 by Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025**: This will confirm a place for your child on the Practise Expedition.
3. **Next expedition payment of £75 by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026**: This will confirm a place for your child on the Practise expedition.
4. **Next expedition payment of £75 by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**: This will confirm a place for your child on the Qualifying expedition.
5. **Final expedition payment of £75 by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026**: This will confirm a place for your child on the Qualifying expedition.

Some financial support is available for applicants who qualify now, or have qualified in the past six years, for free school meals. Please contact Dr KJ Norton-Berry, Assistant Principal and Pupil Premium Coordinator ([knorton-berry@elycollege.co.uk](mailto:knorton-berry@elycollege.co.uk)) for further details.

*Fundraising through the community will be undertaken to help support those wishing to complete the award who are in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding*

## Application Process

To confirm a place for your child on Ely College's Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award, please pay the £100 enrolment fee via MCAS and complete the DofE enrolment form (see attached: if you require a paper copy, please request from College Reception) for return to College Reception by the application deadline of **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025**. Please note, participants must have their parent/carer's permission to enrol on the Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award and their commitment to pay the full cost of participation. MCAS will be open from September Term start.

**Clothing and Equipment** Participants must provide their own clothes, including hiking boots, their own rucksack for the expeditions. All other expedition specific equipment (tents, stoves, fuel and maps) will be issued to groups prior to expedition and returned on completion.

Thank you for considering applying for a place for your child on our Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme. A copy of the DofE leaflet: A useful guide for parents, guardians and carers is attached, but if you have any specific questions, please do get in touch via email at [jwaters@elycollege.co.uk](mailto:jwaters@elycollege.co.uk); [hhennessy@elycollege.co.uk](mailto:hhennessy@elycollege.co.uk) or visit [www.dofe.org/do](http://www.dofe.org/do), which contains further information about the Award, together with ideas for completing each section.

Yours faithfully

J Waters  
Mr J Waters and Ms H Hennessy  
Duke of Edinburgh Award Leaders

## **Terms and conditions of the Ely College Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme**

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all information provided, but some details may be subject to change. Where this is the case, parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Payments must be paid in full, no later than the deadlines as outlined in the application letter or in any subsequent confirmation letter. The preferred method of payment is via MCAS.

The College reserves the right to withdraw any participant from training for the expedition section of the Award at any time.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that all contact and medical details provided on forms are correct and that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Manager is alerted immediately to any changes in circumstance or any issues that may have a bearing on the participant's behaviour and/or well-being over the course of the expeditions.

The College's expectations around standards of behaviour always apply during training and whilst away on the expeditions. Expedition leaders reserve the right to sanction participants in line with college policy both during the expeditions and on return to College.

If the behaviour of a participant is such that the expedition leader deems it necessary to remove them from the expedition, parents/carers will be expected to help facilitate their removal and will be liable for any additional costs incurred in the process.