

Bronze DoE at St Bernard's?

The DoE is a nationally recognised Award in 3 progressive levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold. The programme is designed to encourage – Leadership; Teamwork; Self-motivation; Communication and Confidence.

The Award is made up of 4 sections:

- 3 months Volunteering – normally completed in school at this level
- 3 months Physical – completed with the Team during the Autumn Term
- 2 Expeditions, Practice and Assessment, each covering 15 miles over 2 days with 2 nights under canvas – completed with the Team in the Summer Term. In order to complete the Expedition Section participants must complete both Expeditions. Proposed expeditions dates are on the website.
- 6 months Skill – this is a non-physical hobby which students need to complete themselves.

Bronze DoE is open to Year 9 students at St Bernard's High School. We meet every **Tuesday** from **3.45-5.45pm** in **BH1**. Regular attendance is a requirement of the Award for the full 2 hours. This is particularly important in the Spring Term as we will be completing safety training for the Expedition.

The staff Team comprises of staff, ex-staff and parent volunteers who work with students during the year on 3 of the 4 sections. We are fortunate at St Bernard's to have a very dedicated and skilled Team who are able to help students complete Expeditions at Bronze, Silver and Gold level.

DoE is self-financing. The costs involved are as follows:-

- Registration with DoE - £39.00 (paid via ParentPay by the end of October)
- Two Expeditions, total cost – expected to be around £80.00 dependent on numbers (paid around Easter)

All Expedition kit is provided with the exception of:-

- Sleeping bag*
- Roll mat*
- Walking Boots* (not compulsory at Bronze level)
- Plate/cup/cutlery
- Expedition food.

*We do have a few donated spares for those who are unable to source these themselves. Please email Mrs Clancy if you wish to borrow extra equipment.

The Expedition section is tough. Only 1% of young people nationally actually complete a Bronze Award. At St Bernard's, the DoE is very popular, but some students, particularly those who are less fit, will find it more of a challenge. Over the years some schools have reduced the distance at Bronze level. However, St Bernard's have made a conscious decision to keep the Bronze Expedition at a challenging level. This ensures that those students who go on to Silver and Gold know what to expect and have the skills to achieve these Awards. Along the way we aim to have fun, even if we all come back totally exhausted (staff as well!).

It is therefore up to every student and their parents to decide whether DoE at St Bernard's is for them. Please note that when students participate in Expeditions, they are required to attend school the following day. Tiredness is not an excuse and anyone who is not in school may not be allowed to participate in further expeditions.

As one of the aims of DofE is to promote independence and self-reliance most of our communication is given to students with the expectation that this will be passed on to parents as appropriate.

We do hold a parent information evening at the end of the Spring Term to update parents on what is required on the Expeditions and to answer questions. I am always available via email sjc@stbernards.southend.sch.uk.

I look forward to welcoming your daughter to DofE.

Mrs Sue Clancy
DoE Manager