

15 September 2010

To: Parents of Year 10 Pupils

Dear Parents

### **The Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

At PGS, pupils in Year 10 are eligible to take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Bronze Level. Those who are successful can then proceed to Silver in Year 11 and Gold in the Sixth Form. I am therefore writing to parents to inform them that I am now accepting applications from current Year 10 pupils who are interested in taking part in D of E this year.

There are four sections to complete: Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition. Each section requires perseverance on the part of the pupil and they will need to be able to commit to a minimum of one hour a week of their own time in each of the first three sections; two for a period of three months and one for six months. Activities should be chosen to provide a challenge and represent a broad a range as possible. Further information can be found at [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org).

One of the principle tenets of D of E is self-reliance. It is therefore important that pupils should expect to work to achieve their own goals. Any research or planning should be their responsibility. In addition, pupils should be prepared to track their own progress and record it on their personal pages on the D of E website.

For the expedition, there will be a training morning held in school on Sunday 6 March 2011 and a practice expedition on Saturday 2 to Sunday 3 April 2011. The assessed expedition will be Saturday 21 to Sunday 22 May 2011 (both the practice and assessed expeditions involve an overnight camp). Attendance at all training events is compulsory and I regret that alternative dates will not be available. Pupils should ensure they are able to meet these commitments before applying.

Any pupils interested should write me a letter of application, detailing why they think they have the right qualities to successfully undertake D of E. They should also indicate what they would like to do in each of the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections and also give details of any existing commitments. Pupils with extensive co-curricular commitments must be able to prioritise D of E events. If they are not able to do so then it is likely that D of E is not the right choice for them.

Pupils will be put into teams with seven members (the maximum number allowed). I would strongly advise those applying to organise their own teams before applying. I will decide on the make-up of teams for those who do not specify who they wish to work with and teams of less than seven will be 'topped up'. Each group is assigned a mentor with whom they will meet regularly. The mentor will be responsible for the group's training for the expedition and will discuss progress in the other three sections.

The popularity of D of E has grown rapidly at PGS and it is likely that we will be oversubscribed this year; the quality of applications will therefore be important in deciding who will be most suitable. Successfully completing the Bronze Award requires an ability to work independently but also as a member of a team, dedication and of course a commitment to attend all training events; I will be looking for evidence of this in applications.

I look forward to receiving applications from those with a serious interest. **The closing date for applications is Friday 1 October 2010.** I will write to the parents of successful applicants shortly after this date. Please note that at that stage there will be a fee payable to enrol on the scheme and to cover costs on the expedition weekends. I anticipate that we will require £50 to cover school costs and an £11.50 fee to register with Portsmouth D of E.

Yours sincerely

**Mr D P Ager**  
**Head of D of E (Bronze Level)**