

DOC Bronze expedition FEE



What is the DofE?

A life-changing experience. An opportunity to have fun with friends. A chance to discover new interests and talents. A tool to develop essential skills for life and work. A recognised mark of achievement, respected by employers. The DofE is many things to many people, supporting generations to successfully navigate life.

14-24 year olds can do a DofE programme at one of three progressive levels which, when successfully completed, leads to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. There are **four sections** to complete at Bronze and Silver level and five at Gold. They involve helping the community/environment, becoming fitter and healthier, developing new skills, planning, training for and completing an expedition and, for Gold only, working with a team on a residential activity.

Any young person can do their DofE. Achieving an Award isn't a competition or about being first. It's all about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries. Through a DofE programme young people have fun, make friends, improve their self-esteem and build confidence. They gain essential skills and attributes for work and life such as resilience, problem-solving, team-working, communication and drive, enhancing CVs and university and job applications. **[Find out more on our "Beyond the CV" careers hub.](#)**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a registered charity, funded by donations, participation places and licences. The charity works with Licensed Organisations (LOs) across the UK to increase opportunities for young people to gain the benefits of doing their DofE. The DofE is run in schools, youth clubs, hospitals, fostering agencies, prisons, sports clubs and more, all over the UK and internationally

Why do the DofE?

Hundreds of thousands of young people take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) each year – and you could be one of them. We help young people build lifelong belief in themselves, supporting them to take on their own challenges, follow their passions and discover talents they never knew they had.

The DofE is about you and your friends sharing amazing experiences together, having fun, and just maybe changing your futures along the way. Doing your Award helps to turn the things you love, and the things you've always wanted to try, into powerful lifelong skills that can help you get a job, change your community, and take on anything life throws your way. And yes, there's going to be a bit of camping involved.

Taking part in a DofE journey will give you skills, confidence, and something to talk about when you apply for college, university or a job. Beyond your academic achievements, universities want to see evidence of “soft skills” that you have developed through extra-curricular activities, such as communication, commitment, leadership and teamwork. Your DofE Award is a fantastic way to demonstrate and evidence these skills in practice.

You'll also make a difference to other people's lives and your community, become fitter and healthier, make new friends and have memories to last you a lifetime. Our participants also tell us that doing their DofE supports their self-belief and resilience, can boost their mental health and wellbeing, and can help them face and overcome personal challenges. [Read more about Chloe's journey with the DofE and mental health.](#)

[Hear about other young people's DofE experiences](#) and [find out why top employers look out for Award holders when recruiting.](#)

In the words of our students

DofE is a challenging and rewarding experience that pushes young people to their limits while teaching valuable skills and also gives a sense of accomplishment. One of the key components of the DofE programme is the intriguing expedition, where kids must find their way through the outdoors, where they've never been before without phones, and figure their way to reach the campsite.

While the thought of walking through muddy fields and sleeping in a cold tent may not seem like fun, memories made during can make the pain worth it. One of the highlights of DofE expeditions is the unique talents that were seen at the campsite. The talent show got everyone laughing and helped feel more comfortable on the expedition.

Despite the challenges, the shared experiences and sense of accomplishment that come from completing a DofE expedition are what make it such a great experience. And in the end, it's the laughter, and funny campsite talents that we will always remember.

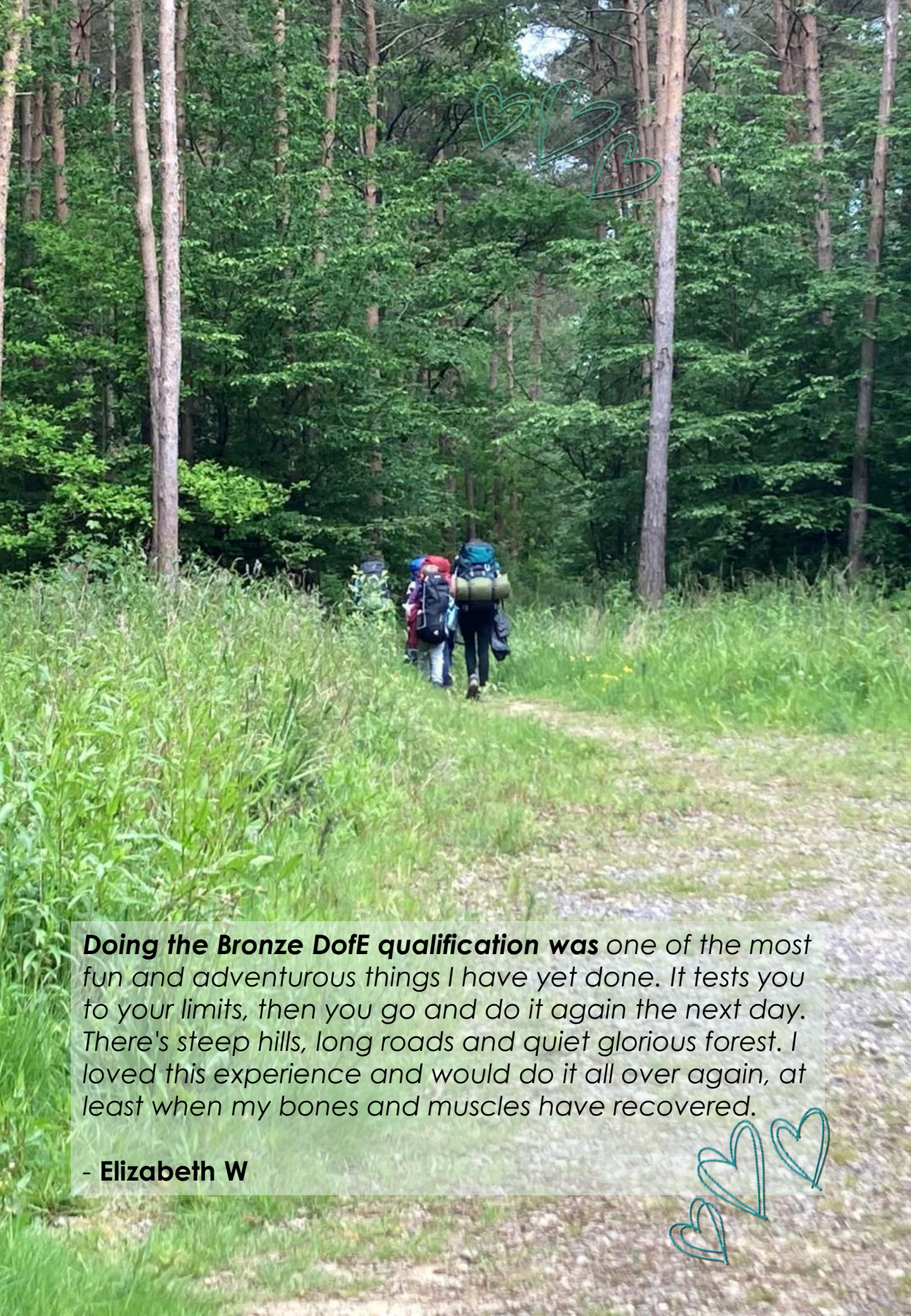
If you're looking for an adventure that might give you some great stories to tell, consider coming on a DofE expedition.

- Aleesha R



<https://bit.ly/Bronze-Dorking-2024-720p>





Doing the Bronze DofE qualification was one of the most fun and adventurous things I have yet done. It tests you to your limits, then you go and do it again the next day. There's steep hills, long roads and quiet glorious forest. I loved this experience and would do it all over again, at least when my bones and muscles have recovered.

- Elizabeth W





What surprised you the most?

How easy reading a map was and finding shortcuts to get back on route at times when we were lost surprised me the most by far

- Amelie C

The amount of wheat fields we came across was the most surprising thing.

- Charlotte D





Despite the challenges encountered along the way – whether it's battling through inclement weather, navigating unfamiliar terrain, or facing personal limitations – our team perseveres. We all contribute their strengths, offering support and encouragement when the going gets tough. As blisters form and muscles ache, the collective determination to reach the campsite grows stronger. And when finally arriving at the journey's end, there's a shared sense of accomplishment that transcends individual hardships between us all. Through collaboration and unity, our team not only conquers the physical journey but also forges lasting bonds that extend far beyond the expedition itself. **Farhan A**



The Groups



The Cheese Balls



Pineapples



Maddicts



Cappuccino



The Chosen Ones



The Sixth Pack



Mof



Little Monkeys



The Legends



Smells like Promotion



NRG



The Baguettes



The Narwhals



Kwazy Cupcakes



What the kids thought...





What was the hardest thing?

Not screaming at my group to get up!

Samson W

The hardest part was realising we were closer to the campsite than the checkpoint we were supposed to be at

James H

Sticking to the route and properly reading the map

Lucy T

The hardest thing was having to walk for 11 hours and being applauded when we got to camp.

Charlotte D

Making sure everyone had a go at map reading and doing what was best for the team.

Tara A

Its was hard to not just sit down and not get up again. like you had to persevere and not just give up

Arianne B

For me, the hardest thing was the heat, and it made us slightly irritable, but the adrenaline of knowing you're close to a checkpoint pushed us through.

Sophia P

Co-operating with everyone when they were tired.

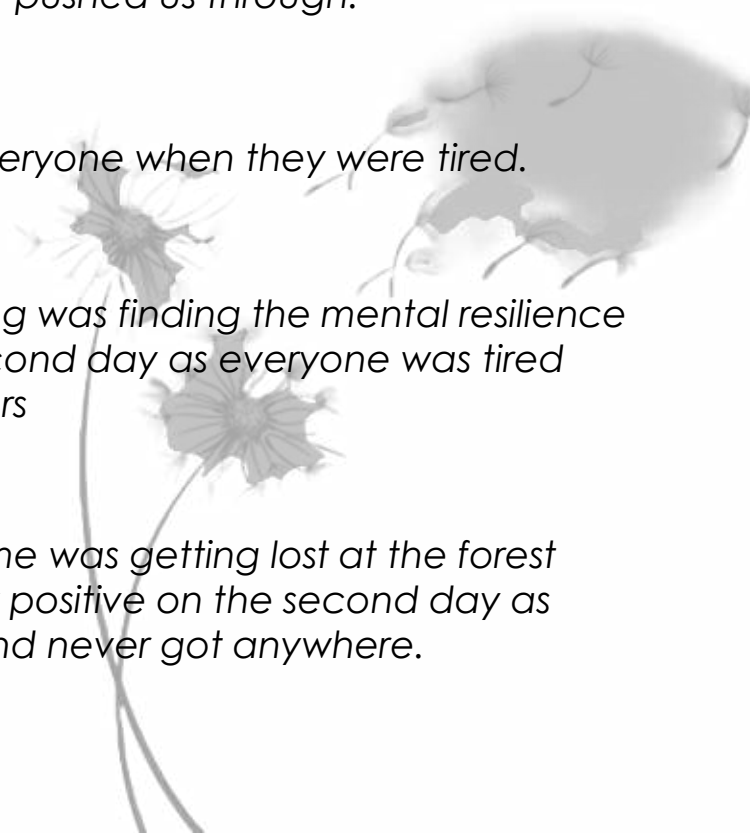
Robert C

I think the hardest thing was finding the mental resilience to carry on on the second day as everyone was tired and had sore shoulders

Edward M

The hardest thing for me was getting lost at the forest part and trying to stay positive on the second day as we kept on walking and never got anywhere.

Gunes A





What was the easiest thing?

In all honesty the easiest things were sleeping and having snack breaks

James H

The easiest thing on the expedition was putting the tent up and at times reading the map.

Pippa K

Talking -

The easiest thing was making the pasta, even though it turned out pretty bad

Franciszek C

I think the easiest thing was setting up the tents and making dinner as we had everything we needed at the top of our bags and had practiced this before

Edward M

It was all quite challenging to be honest - but in a good way:)

Sophia P

















What did you learn about yourself?

I learnt that I can help in situations where I wouldn't know what to do

- **Aleesha R**

I had learnt I am not very good at carrying heavy things whilst trekking up a very steep hill.

- **Schanel G**

I learnt that I'm much better at navigating than I originally thought and that my feet are very susceptible to blisters

- **James H**

I can read a map and use a compass

- **Franciszek C**

I am resilient and I can keep going, not letting any mistakes get in the way of the finish line

- **Farhan A**

That I should be more helpful

- **Alba M**

I learnt that if you pace yourself correctly you will always reach your target

- **Elizabeth W**

I can do infinite cartwheels

- **Gryffin S**

I learnt that once I get going and the adrenaline kicks in, I don't feel as weighed down by my bag anymore, or as achy as my feet were - you just have to be motivated and carry on!

- **Sophia P**

I'm an idiot for not wearing two pairs of socks!

- **Matthew C**

I learnt that I could go on a hike and successfully complete it as it was not something that I had done before with 11KG on my back

- **Edward M**



What made you keep going?

The sundown on the first day was what kept me going, and the thought of hearing everyone else's experiences.

- **Schanel G**

Getting to the campsite and overtaking the boys that we were trying to beat to the checkpoint.

- **Pippa K**

Ice cream

- **Ethan S**

My friends and supportive group

- **Dylan C**

The fun of the experience

- **Freddie S**

Odile's crisps in the back of her bag

- **Josephine S & Abigail S**

The adventure of it and seeing the goal in mind

- **Alyssia C**

Something that made me keep going was all my kind friends around me

- **Elizabeth W**

The desire to complete it and do it well.

- **Tara A**

Something that made me keep going was the thought of how happy I would be if I finished it and the squash I had packed in my bag

- **Edward M**

Knowing that I was going to get home and I had to walk for the team. Also the feeling of accomplishment.

- **Gunes A**

To get to the end and beat other groups

- **Ella H**





How was 2 days without your phone?

Two days without my phone was easy - I noticed more signs on roads and features around me when walking alone which I wouldn't normally notice on walks normally

- **Amelie C**

The last 2 days without my phone was very easy

- **Aleesha R**

It was brilliant and actually super nice without a phone!!!!!!

- **Gaia R**

I think it was very easy without my phone, I didn't really think of it rather for using it so I could use some road names when navigating myself in the villages.

- **Schanel G**

Awful found out I'm addicted to TikTok and my brain is fried

- **Samson W**

Two days without my phone was so good

- **Martha F**

I lost all my snap streaks so I was sad

- **Elizabeth N**

2 days without my phone was alright, I felt bad for my parents who couldn't track me, ha!

- **James H**

Fine, except I couldn't take photos and videos of it

- **Pippa K**

Two days without my phone was horrendous- hardest thing about DofE 100%

- **Martha M**

It was frustrating not being able to take photos of the scenery, however, it helped me be more in touch with nature and my friends

- **Farhan A**

I forgot I had a phone

- **Jenin A**

Detox but I wanted to contact my parents very much

- **Honey S**

It was very refreshing and made me appreciate the environment more

- **Freddie S**

How was 2 days without your phone?

Really freeing
- **Josephine S**

Very nice I felt I was one with the nature
- **Emilia C**

Two days without my phone wasn't too bad actually! There some times when I was disappointed I didn't have it with me to take pictures of the beautiful landscapes and scenery, but at least I didn't have to worry about losing it!
- **Sophia P**

It was relaxing, allowing me to enjoy the scenery without worrying about anything else and it felt refreshing.
- **Sophie J**

Two days without my phone was very fun as I got to appreciate the countryside more and not have a constant distraction
- **Edward M**

Well I did not really notice as we got lost a lot and had to walk so much. I honestly had no time where I did nothing, and therefore I never got bored and looked for my phone.
- **Gunes A**

Annoying - but fun
- **Robert Campbell**

I didn't really notice - missed music though
- **Poppy P**

surprisingly fun
- **Isabelle S**

Fantastic. It felt very nice to not be on it constantly.
- **Pablo N**

Super easy
- **Alyssia C**

Amazeballs
- Arianne B

Not too bad
- **Matthew C**

Refreshing
- **Jad A**



20 years time What will you remember most in

In 20 years I will remember when our group overtook the group we wanted to and finally got to the camp 2 and a half hours before them

Amelie C

The talent show

Isla R

the many times we got lost

Jessica C

I will remember in 20 years time the joy of arriving at the campsite and how we sang the whole way to the campsite on the first day walk.

Gaia R

Pablo getting stuck in the mud

Oscar B

I will remember in 20 years when we had all decided to just collapse in the middle of a field to take a break and enjoy the birds and the silence. Also when we had accidentally walked into a no zone area but it was too late to turn back.

Schanel G

Laughing with friends

Thomas P

In 20 years time the thing I will remember the most will be finding ourselves back at the train station 45 minutes after we had left.

Martha F

That my feet hurt and we nearly got attacked by a horse

Pippa K

Hugging a giant tree to make sure my shoes stay clean and then sinking in mud later and getting stuck and walking next to cows and getting stared at by one

Lucy T

The sense of achievement when we arrived back at the station

Martha M

Feeding the ducks chock chip digestives

Luca G

the whole thing as everything was so amazing.

Ella H

The fun laughing and times I had

Alexander D

20 years time
What will you remember most in

Little moments that made me laugh for no reason

Alexa K

The whole experience

Freddie S

That it was very tiring but worth it

Josephine S

In 20 years time I will remember my group walking, laughing and chatting thought the quiet peaceful forest only surrounded by birds and nature

Elizabeth W

the inside jokes

Arianne B

How much fun I had with my friends

Robert C

The fun

Bella D

The massive blister that I have on my foot (it might still be there).

Matthew C

In 20 years time I will remember how all the groups stuck together and the joy of arriving back at Dorking train station

Edward M

In 20 year's time, I will definitely remember how muddy and aching we were when we came back! When we in the forest we made a deal that we would all go out for curry when we got out but it's a good thing we didn't because I couldn't even walk up the stairs when we got back because of how sore I was!

Sophia P

The random singing while walking

Isabelle S

The excitement of it

Alyssia C

When a bunch of cows started to moo at us

Pablo N

All the new experiences

Tara A

Being lost in some random field

Abigail S



- Picked me up and helped me keep going
- Let me borrow toothpaste
- Reassured me how long we had left and carried my bag when I couldn't
- Shared food and helped out with the course
- Packed my sleeping mat because I was struggling
- Gave me some of their snacks
- Helped me take down the tent
- We all worked together to get everyone packed and fed
- Helped me get up because I couldn't get up after lying on the floor with my bag on
- Ella helped me tie my shoelace
- The locals smiled at us and said hi
- Lent me a sleeping mat for the night
- Put water in my bag
- James let me put a face mask on him
- Made me dinner
- Ethan gave me food
- Helped me with map skills
- Gave me cheese for my pasta
- Carried my water bottle
- Arianne and her group helped us when we were lost
- Eliza helped me as I had a swollen ankle
- A parent at a checkpoint refilled my water bottle – before I nearly died of dehydration
- Ms Mannion coming to help us and doing what she could for us. Thank you so much, Miss.
- Miss Casey told me and Charlotte that our tent was missing a piece – honestly, saved our lives!

*What was the nicest thing
someone did for you*



- Try harder and keep pushing not taking too many breaks
- Take a bit more time to figure out which path was right and remember to have more fun
- Practise how to use a compass properly
- Bring a bigger sleeping bag
- Be more calm when walking and not trying to rush
- I wish I had learnt how to read a map more for the first day
- Not sleep with 9 people in a tent
- Not to blindly follow our navigator
- Reduce the amount of clothes I took
- Worn less thick socks and tied my hair
- Don't bring porridge pots as they explode
- Bring a larger tent
- Organised my packing a lot better and brought more food with me
- Study the route more
- Reading the map beforehand
- Have patience
- Get there earlier and to do this I will make sure we have lots of food, comfortable footwear and a better bag
- Share our tent
- Keep a steady pace
- Help more with map reading
- Walk slower and take more breaks
- Make sure I put blister plasters on earlier
- Bonded more as a team
- Used the compass from the start and followed the path
- Next time, I will take out the unnecessary snacks
- Take longer breaks
- Remember my water bottle
- Not rush and read the map properly
- I wish that we had been more prepared and realised that it was actually quite difficult
- Brush up on my map reading skills

What did you wish you had done differently and what will you do differently next time?



What do you love most about Mr Aitchurch?

- His humour
- His bear hat and his cool green van
- His enthusiasm and ongoing joy
- How funny he is
- **His singing on the walk and the hat he wore**
- How he helped us get to the campsite within 2 hours
- His kindness
- His jokes
- His shoes
- **He gave us water at the checkpoints**
- He's a genuine guy!
- **His motivational words kept me going through both days**
- Helping us get to camp without getting lost (mostly)
- His hat, his converse and he was very helpful
- He expresses himself confidently
- His good attitude at each checkpoint and keeping people entertained
- **Sir, your walk with us on the first day was honestly the best and I had so much fun even though we were all mentally and physically drained.**



What do you love most about Miss Mannion?

- Her energy and humour
- I love Miss Mannion's energy and humour
- I love that she's a proper legend with fun energy
- **Her moral support**
- **How bossy she is**
- Her attitude
- How she didn't make my group do the talent show because we arrived to the campsite so late
- Her handstands
- **Her extreme insistence on everyone's participation in the talent show**
- She is really friendly
- She gave us water at the checkpoints
- Miss Mannion is really funny. Loved her head standing skills, the obvious real winner of the talent show
- **I love that she has no filter**
- Her appreciation
- Her need to point out how I looked like I had gotten electrocuted on day 1 and checkpoint 3
- **How proud she was of us getting to the campsite before Oscar's group. She is very good at comforting you**
- **Her efforts on trying to cheer us up and all of her help. I am honestly so thankful for everything miss, I do not think we could have done it without you**
- She let me wash my face and her headstands and cartwheels
- Miss Mannion has such a great sense of humour and kept all of our spirits high in camp - also she is amazing at headstands!!

Why do you think Mr Nair is much cooler than before?

- I saw another part of his personality and how funny he can be
- **Mr Nair was very chill and he's just genuinely a cool guy – no explanation!**
- His car is sick
- I think Mr Nair is so much cooler than I thought he was before because I heard him laughing for the first time
- Because he was wearing fashionable clothes
- I didn't realise he had such a cool car
- **He was always cool**
- He was wearing jeans
- Because he laughed at a parent's joke about us after the trip
- **The sunglasses**
- Because he rescued us at a checkpoint
- He is very knowledgeable
- **He helped us so much**
- Because he was vibing and that was funny
- I think Mr Nair was already very cool but what made him cooler was him driving to check point 3 (in his gorgeous red Ford) on day 1 to come and send us on our way to camp
- He gave me fuel to cook
- **Apparently he makes good curry**
- His jacket was something else
- He was very helpful and joked around at checkpoints
- **I already knew he was that cool (legit one of my favour teachers. His honest comments are very entertaining).**
- He was wearing cargo pants!



Why do you think Mr Nair is cooler than before?

I already knew he was that cool (legit one of my favour teachers. His honest comments are very entertaining)

Gunes A

Who do you want to thank?

- My group for helping us make it
- Mr Allchurch for getting us to the campsite in the end after we had gotten lost
- ***I think all the teachers were amazing for putting up with that many of us and all the complaining throughout the day***
- Ms Casey because she gave us a tent
- I want to thank all the teachers for arranging DofE
- Oscar B for helping me when my group wasn't doing any work at camp and all the teachers for organising and being fun
- I want to thank all the teachers for helping us, especially when we were lost on many occasions and called to check us and help us...
- The teachers for the lessons
- ***Tom in my group for helping everyone pack away***
- My friends because they gave me food
- Miss Mannion for being an amazing organiser and being so helpful
- ***Martha because she is the only reason we aren't sill in the forest***
- Frank, he carried our group with his map reading
- Ethan S for letting me use his tent because I would have been colder without it
- My group – they aren't slow walkers
- ***Joseph B – because he's just really cool***
- John – because he brought a football
- My group – they didn't complain
- ***I am most grateful for my amazing group! They're great friends and we laughed so much and pushed each other through to the end***
- Oscar, Leo and Amelie for food, laughs and emotional support
- ***Esther and Coco because they did all of the navigation***
- All my group because I couldn't have done it by myself
- The man that let us wait at the campsite grounds when we arrived early
- The checkpoint people
- ***Mannion – just cuz!***





What are you looking forward to most about the next expedition?

- **The memories**
- The campsite
- The camping
- **Looking forward for the positivity and adventure of getting lost**
- The cool experience
- Looking forward to actually sleeping
- Looking forward to not walking for 10 hours
- More time with my mates
- Looking forward to the peaceful walk and countryside in the silence
- The weird paths that haven't been touched
- Talking with friends
- The food
- Looking forward to the feeling of relief when we arrive at camp and the nice relaxing feeling of putting on sliders
- The whole experience and especially the campsite
- Knowing what not to pack
- Walking in the New Forest – it is really beautiful
- I am not looking forward to the white fields
- The hike
- **The things we can do at the campsite when we arrive and actually being prepared**
- That we know how to do it better
- Camping with friends
- The different walk and the experience
- Some karaoke and fun laughs with the rest of my group
- The hike
- **Candy salad**
- Looking forward to doing it again with my friends
- The long walks on the farmland
- I'm looking forward to working together as a team to not get lost! We have done experience now, and I think it will be 10 times more enjoyable!
- **In the next expedition I am looking forward to using the skills I learnt from this expedition and the muscles I gained to hopefully make the weight of the bag easier.**
- The jokes
- Walking
- Adventuring



Why the current year 8s should do the DofE next year?

- **It's fun and you learn life skills**
- Because it's fun and a physical challenge
- It's an interesting experience to do with your friends
- I think the year 8s should do DofE because it creates so many memories and you won't regret it
- It really makes you appreciate things you never thought you would (like necessities)
- It's an opportunity you will never experience again
- Because it's actually fun despite the pain and it looks good on your CV when you apply to Uni
- Because you learn skills and it is so fun
- **Because it really shows how we don't need our phones and can have lots more fun with our friends, to create good, and unforgettable experiences. It is also a nice break from all the noise, and you can enjoy the landscape without the pressure of anything**
- To have fun with friends and have a good time walking
- Because you see so many random things along the way
- **Because it is great for making/strengthening friendships and offers a new experience... it is an enjoyable thing to do. You will not normally get an opportunity to be on your own with your friends in the middle of nowhere, it feels surreal but trust me it is worth the hike**
- It was nice to walk in the countryside since you can't really do that sort of thing where I live
- **It is challenging but a really good experience- gets you closer with your friends and helps you work as a team and stay organised- all key skills that will be helpful later in life**
- It teaches resilience and perseverance while also allowing you to have a couple weekends without being drowned in social media allowing you to connect with nature



Why the current year 8s should do the DofE next year?

- Because it is a great team building exercise to do with our mates
- Because it's very fun and a once in a lifetime experience
- Although it's demanding, the expedition is worth it. Because it allows you to experience lots of new things and is a very eye opening experience
- **It's a really great experience that teaches you really valuable life skills that have been forgotten in our virtual lives. And some people say it's just to get "lazy people" outside, but it's really not, it's about recognising achievements that people who are not necessarily that sporty do, and learning to survive on your own in the wild and it's an anthem to those who have been doing so for hundreds of years**
- because you have so much good times and laughs with your friends and learn new skills
- It's really fun and being off your phone is very relaxing
- Because it's a really fun experience and let's you hop out of your comfort zone because it's fun and brilliant for making memories
- Because it's really fun and a great experience
- **Because you learn how to read a map**
- They will have a laugh
- It's worth it and they will learn lots of new skills
- So they can walk 40km with their friends and have a go at them when they get lost
- **Because it's a really fun experience and let's you hop out of your comfort zone**
- I would recommend to do bronze DofE to the current year 8s as it's a great bonding experience and an adrenaline rush.
- **I think the year 8s should do DofE next year as it is a chance to do something new, give back to the community and improve yourself**

[Sign up](#)



What the adults thought...

The Bronze DofE expeditions are always full of excitement and fun, having usually lost a few groups during the day, however we are very proud to announce that all 96 students made it back to Dorking Station after a gruelling two day hike. The year nine students were impeccable in all aspects, team work, cooking, tent building, mastering maps, to name but a few skills they developed along the way.

All involved had a brilliant weekend, with the sun popping out to say hello intermittently. The talent show was fantastic, with some many happy faces all supporting each others efforts. It made everyone smile. I thoroughly look forward to the 4 assessed expedition in a few weeks, especially the campfire and toasting marshmallows.

Ms Mannion



A huge number of year 9s took to the hills this weekend, the aim; preparation for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition. Ecstatic students arrived at Dorking station, kitted out with their 65L rucksacks and walking gear ready to take on the two day practice run.

Whilst there were some wrong turns taken and altered routes, all students persevered to end up at Hen folds camp, Ms Casey didn't have to drive out in the dark to rescue students, Mr Allchurch only had to offer some guidance and well Mr Nair, the king of the fire was on hand to help and support with their cooking in the early evening.

Day two went very well, with students really learning the routes and understanding their navigational skills, all students made it back to Dorking station in good time, despite being tired with all the excitement of the weekend. They behaved so well and us teachers at Grey Court are so proud of their efforts.

Ms Campbell

This was the biggest and best one yet!

Everybody walked every single bit of the way, even with injuries, aches and tears, you all pushed on. I am so so so proud of you all.

Considering we took almost 90 13-14 year olds to wander around the countryside, mostly unsupervised, and then have them all hang out and sleep in a field together, the pupils were exceptionally well behaved.

There are not many members of staff that want this kind of responsibility and most of them would run away from it as far as they possibly can - but I am looking forward to doing the assessed one with them all in a few weeks time even more now.

We would not have been able to take nearly 90 pupils on the expedition without the staff who volunteered their time to make it such a success. So thank you ever so much to: Mr Nair, Ms Casey, Ms Farrugia, Ms Campbell, Ms Cowper and of course my DofE 'other half' Ms Mannion.

This time I even got to do some walking. I enjoyed my walk on the Saturday evening with two of the groups a lot, and then on Sunday seeing how both groups took on board how we managed to work out where we weren't, where we were and then where to go on the Saturday evening, was really rewarding to see these two groups especially, as well everyone else, improve so much on the Sunday.

So, just one more thing, when one student has said in their feedback: "I will remember walking Mr Allchurch who also got lost", I would like to point out that we were not lost, we just weren't where we expected to be at that specific moment in time.

In teaching we call this demonstration... so to be clear, I didn't get lost, I was *demonstrating* how you work out that you are not where you thought you were, and then how you backtrack until you do, and then how you reorientate your bearings and then finally how you successfully get back to the campsite in time for dinner (all to the wonderful accompaniment of me singing "Reach" by S Club 7).

Again, I was not lost!

Thank you for a lovely weekend. I am proud of every single one of you.

Mr Allchurch



Helping with the expedition is an enriching experience. The positive impact on young participants makes it memorable and rewarding

Parent Volunteer

I turned up at my designated checkpoint on Sunday morning to wait for each of the seven groups that were due to pass me that day. On the edge of a village green and directly outside a pub whose website said it opened at midday and served decent food. I settled on a bench in the sun with my book to wait for the first group.

At 12 the first group of five girls arrived and were happy to be told that they could take a break, have their lunch and refill water bottles with cold water. They were the first to tell me that they didn't get to sleep until gone 11pm and were all wide awake by 5am. I was to hear the same story from every group that came through. Often with the addition that they had been so cold that it must surely have been sub zero overnight.

The next two groups arrived in quick succession 50 minutes later looking slightly more tired than the first group had.

Then nothing for more than an hour (an hour in which I realised that the pub was permanently closed and my pub lunch wasn't going to happen). Two groups then turned up one after the other, followed ten minutes later by the last two groups who arrived together from a completely different direction.

With the sun still out it was now hot (at least hot for the UK in May) and all four groups quickly ditched their packs and sought the shade. I was told tales of fierce cows blocking paths, gates that wouldn't open, hedges with no gaps to get through and checkpoints that were tricky to find (with some accusations that they can't possibly have been where they were supposed to be). Some groups turned up with boots and legs covered in mud while others were spotless, and the order in which they left the last checkpoint seemed to have little bearing on the order in which they arrived at this checkpoint.

By the time they reached me they had been walking for five hours and were all clearly finding it tough going. However, without exception, they were all smiling and in good spirits. Where there were individuals who were finding it harder than others, the rest were providing encouragement and support. At least one, who would have stopped there and then, was gently pushed, encouraged and helped by his friends to keep going for the final hour back to Dorking station.

And all so polite! Even though they'd had little sleep and walked for miles, every question was prefaced by 'Sir'.

Sir, do you work at the school?

Sir, how far do we have left to go?

Sir, can we buy an ice cream / a slushie / some chocolate?

All of them were clearly well prepared for what they had to do and are a credit to the school. They should be proud of themselves for completing the challenge and for making sure that they didn't let anyone give up. The real expedition will seem easy with this one successfully conquered.

Parent Volunteer

What made you laugh the most?

Holly getting stuck in a giant pit of mud and her whole shoe being covered in wet mud

When Emilia fell in a pod and when Abi got stuck in the mud.

Getting stuck in mud and slipping into a the river





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Staver Award



Applications are now open to Year 9 to take part in the Silver DofE Award in Year 10.

This will be run by Mr Nair and Miss Casey.

This involves no further training sessions (as this has been done for the Bronze) and only 4 sessions each of max 2 hours route planning for the Practice Expedition and the Assessed Expedition (Dates/location TBC)

All Expeditions and route planning will run between March and June 2025.

Volunteering/Physical & Skills Activities will be completed between August '24 and March '25 and can be the same as Bronze or completely new activities.

Activities length will be:

3 months/6months/6months (if the Bronze Award has been completed)
3 months/6months/12months (if you are a direct entrant onto the Silver award)

Priority will be given to those who have completed the Bronze Award but there will be some places also available for direct entrants so get yourself on the waiting list if you are interested.

DEADLINE for applications will be: FRIDAY 5th JULY 2024

APPLY [**HERE**](#)

COSTS will be approx. £36 to enroll and £85 for each of the expeditions (£170) TOTAL: £206



Summer Award