

D of E at Nether Stowe

Taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) at Nether Stowe offers students a unique opportunity to develop essential life skills, build confidence, and gain valuable experiences outside the classroom. Through a mix of volunteering, physical activities, skills development, and adventurous expeditions, students grow in independence, resilience, and teamwork. The DofE Award is widely respected by employers, colleges, and universities, making it a strong addition to any application. At Nether Stowe, students are supported every step of the way, helping them to challenge themselves, discover new passions, and make lasting memories.

The Awards

Bronze Award



- You can do a Bronze DofE programme once you're in Year 9 or Above
 - A Bronze DofE programme has 4 sections, Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition. You must do a minimum of 3 months activity for each of the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections, and plan, train for and do a 2 day (1 night) expedition & 2 practice expeditions.
 - You also have to spend an extra three months on one of the Volunteering, Physical or Skills sections. It's your choice which one and, though you can change your mind later, you should decide which section you want to do for longer at the beginning. Knowing how long you're going to do it for will help you to choose your activity and set your goals for each section.
 - It will usually take you at least 6 months to complete your Bronze programme.
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Silver Award



- The next step up from Bronze... you need to be 15 or in Year 10
 - A Silver DofE programme has 4 sections, Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition. You need to do at least 6 months Volunteering and a minimum of 6 months on either Physical or Skills and 3 months on the other. It's up to you which one you do for longer.
 - If you did Bronze, you can choose the same activity for Silver, but you need to show development in it. It's best to try something new!
 - The Expedition section involves planning, training for and doing a 3 day (2 night) expedition & 1 practice expedition.
 - If you start your Silver without doing Bronze first you'll have to do an extra 6 months volunteering or doing whichever of the Physical or Skills sections you have spent more time on. Though you can change your mind later, you should decide which section you want to do for longer at the beginning. Knowing how long you're going to do it for will help you to choose your activity and set your goals for each section.
 - It will take you at least 6 months for Silver if you've already achieved your Bronze, or 12 months if you've jumped straight into Silver.
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Gold Award



- Once you are 16 you can do your Gold DofE programme. No activities can be counted for this before your 16th birthday.
- If you did a previous level, you can choose the same activity for Gold, but you need to show development in it. It's best to try something new!
- You'll spend 12 months on your Volunteering section. For Physical and Skills you must spend 12 months on one and six months on the other – you decide which way round you do it.
- Your qualifying expedition will be for four days and three nights (plus an acclimatisation day) and should take place in 'wild country' (plus a practice expedition).
- The big difference at Gold is you'll also do a Residential section – staying away from home for five days and four nights doing a shared activity with people you don't know. It's great fun and a real chance to do something different!
- If you've jumped straight into your Gold DofE programme you'll need to do a further six months either volunteering or whichever one of your physical or skills activities you spent the most time on.
- For Gold, you'll need to do your programme for at least 12 months if you've achieved your Silver Award, or 18 months if you've started at Gold level without doing your Silver – even if you've done Bronze