Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme – Gold Residentials 2026

Dear Participant,

Blackland Farm Outdoor Centre is an Approved Activity Provider (AAP) for the Gold Residential Section of the Award Scheme.

For the Residential section, you need to undertake a shared activity or specific course where the majority of participants are unknown to you, in a residential setting away from home and in an unfamiliar environment. Evenings are often as much a part of the experience as daytime activities. The residential section consists of a 5-day, 4-night programme and you should be aged between 16 and 24 plus registered for the Gold Award.

This section offers a high degree of flexibility, but it must be done with an organised group, registered charity or Approved Activity Provider (AAP).

What to expect?

The residential activity week will consist of a number of activities including climbing, abseiling, high and low ropes, zip lines, paddlesports, and volunteering - all with an element of teamwork which remains in keeping with the ethos of the Award. A *sample* programme outlining a typical Gold Residential activity week is shown below to give an idea as to what you will be doing throughout your week. You will be provided with a budget for the week to plan and cook your meals as a team. This will require you to discuss and work together to cater for any dietary requirements and allergies.

What is included?

- A full time Residential Course Director who will be available to assist with anything before, during and post activity week.
- High quality activity week delivered from our Ashdown Forest site with a variety of different outdoor activities to keep you busy!
- Experienced instructors holding National Governing Body qualifications relevant to the environment in which they are working. All of our instructors hold a current and relevant first aid qualification and Enhanced DBS certificate.
- All technical equipment and PPE provided.
- All supervision and developmental training throughout the programme. We aim to help young people develop their personal and practical skills as much as possible throughout their experience with us, both as individuals and as part of their team.
- Smiles and encouragement throughout!

We also provide the following equipment:

- Harnesses, Helmets and PPE for roped activities
- Kayaks, Buoyancy Aids, Paddles and PPE for water activities
- Group First Aid Kits
- Hi-Vis Vests (for any potential road walking)
- Refreshments throughout the day
- Insurance

Residential Venue

Our residential packages are run from our site at Blackland Farm on the Ashdown Forest which is situated over 126 acres of woodland and open space. Accommodation will be in Weavers Lodge which features four 8 bedded dormitories plus a fully catered kitchen and dining room.

Our PaddleSports activities are run from nearby Weirwood Reservoir where we have private access to launching facilities.

The site itself features a multitude of high ropes activities plus zip wires, indoor and outdoor climbing, archery, abseiling, low ropes and team building activities, canoeing and kayaking.

What does the Gold Residential Activity Week package cost?

Probably the most important question!

We are offering the Gold Residential Activity Week for £462.00 (incl VAT) per person!

This price includes all activities, facilities and food for the week plus instructional staff. It also includes a full residential report and the sign-off required to complete this section of the Award.

Please ensure that you have completed your aims and goals section prior to our assessors completing their reports otherwise they will not upload to your eDofE account.

A kit list is provided on the following page to help you plan your expedition:

Personal Equipment Kit List

Adequate clothing for 5 days of outdoor activities / conditions;
Clothing for travelling and wearing around the centre;
Appropriate shoes / trainers for wearing in the kitchen facility – No sliders, flip-flops or any other open toed shoes;
Warm fleece or jumper;
Warm (preferably windproof) jacket;
Boots - offering good ankle support;
Warm hat and gloves;
Waterproof jacket with hood;
Waterproof bottoms;
Sun hat and sunglasses;
Daypack approx. 25 to 30lt;
Personal First Aid Kit and any other personal medication – Inhalers, Epipens etc;
Torch / Head Torch & spare batteries;
Note book and pen;
Water bottle and/or Flask;
Sleeping bag, single bed sheet (mattress cover), pillow and pillow case;
Trainers for climbing;
Wet Shoes or old trainers for canoeing plus clothes you don't mind getting wet (swimming shorts / costume and t-shirt);
Sun Lotion and Insect Repellent;
Wash Kit and 2 x towels.
Tea Towel;
Cake!

For further information and to view all of our Residential or Open Expedition opportunities, please look us up on the official DofE Opportunity Finder here: https://www.dofe.org/opportunity-finder/

DofE Residential Activity Week – Sample Programme 2026

Note: your actual programme might differ from the sample programme below.

DAY: Monday			
0930 - 1030	Arrival and Introductions		
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
1030 - 1230	All Aboard High Ropes Activity	Crate Stack High Ropes Activity	Jacobs Ladder High Ropes Activity
1230 - 1300	LUNCH – Personal Packed Lunch		
1300 - 1400	Menu Discussion and Budget for Dinner, Breakfast and Lunch Budget £200.00		
1400 - 1600	Food Shopping Sainsburys	All Aboard High Ropes Activity	Crate Stack High Ropes Activity
1600 - 1700	BREAK		
1700 - 1900	Jacobs Ladder High Ropes Activity	Dinner Preparation and Serving	All Aboard High Ropes Activity
1900 - 2000	DINNER and Washing Up		
2000 - 2200	De-Brief and Plan for Next Day / Free Time		
2200	Lights Out		

DAY: Tuesday			
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
0800 - 0830			Prepare Breakfast
0830 - 0930	Breakfast and Action Plan for the Day		
0930 - 1130	Low Ropes Team Building Exercise	Low Ropes Team Building Exercise	Archery Moorhens
1130 - 1200	LUNCH – Prepared by Group 1		
1200 - 1300	Menu Discussion and Budget for Dinner, Breakfast and Lunch Budget TBC		
1300 - 1500	Archery Moorhens	Volunteering	Low Ropes Team Building Exercise
1500 - 1530	BREAK		
1530 - 1730	Crate Stack High Ropes Activity	Archery Moorhens	Ball and Wobbly Log High Ropes Activity
1730 - 1930	Free Time / Chill Out	Free Time / Chill Out	Dinner Preparation and Serving
1930 - 2030	DINNER and Washing Up		
2030 - 2200	De-Brief and Plan for Next Day / Free Time		
2200	Lights Out		

DAY: Wednesday			
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
0800 - 0830	Prepare Breakfast		
0830 - 0930	Breakfast and Action Plan for the Day		
0930 - 1130	Perch 'Leap of Faith' High Ropes Activity	Jacobs Ladder High Ropes Activity	Indoor Climbing Wall (Teach Belaying)
1130 - 1200	LUNCH – Prepared by Group 2 / FOOD SHOPPING		
1200 - 1300	Menu Discussion and Budget for Dinner, Breakfast and Lunch Budget TBC / Food Shopping		
1300 - 1500	Indoor Climbing Wall (Teach Belaying)	Perch 'Leap of Faith' High Ropes Activity	Volunteering
1500 - 1530	BREAK		
1530 - 1730	Abseil Tower High Ropes Activity	Indoor Climbing Wall (Teach Belaying)	Perch 'Leap of Faith' High Ropes Activity
1730 - 1930	Dinner Preparation and Serving	Free Time / Chill Out	Free Time / Chill Out
1930 - 2030	DINNER and Washing Up		
2030 - 2200	De-Brief and Plan for Next Day / Free Time		
2200	Lights Out		

DAY: Thursday			
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
0800 - 0830		Prepare Breakfast	
0830 - 0930	Breakfast and Action Plan for the Day		
0930 - 1130	Rock Climbing Stone Farm Rocks	SOT Kayaks Weirwood Reservoir	Abseil Tower High Ropes Activity
1130 - 1200	LUNCH – Prepared by Group 3		
1200 - 1300	Menu Discussion and Budget for Dinner, Breakfast and Lunch Budget TBC		
1300 - 1500	Volunteering	Rock Climbing Stone Farm Rocks	SOT Kayaks Weirwood Reservoir
1500 - 1530	BREAK		
1530 - 1730	SOT Kayaks Weirwood Reservoir	Abseil Tower High Ropes Activity	Rock Climbing Stone Farm Rocks
1730 - 1930	Free Time / Chill Out	Dinner Preparation and Serving	Free Time / Chill Out
1930 - 2030	DINNER and Washing Up		
2030 - 2200	De-Brief and Plan for Next Day / Camp Fire		
2200	Lights Out		

DAY: Friday			
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
0800 - 0830			Prepare Breakfast
0830 - 0930	Breakfast and Action Plan for the Day		
0930 - 1130	Zip Wire 1 High Ropes Activity	Indy Bridge High Ropes Activity	Zip Wire 2 High Ropes Activity
1130 - 1200	LUNCH – Prepared by Group 1		
1300 – 1500	Indy Bridge 1 High Ropes Activity	Zip Wire High Ropes Activity	Indy Bridge 2 High Ropes Activity
1500 - 1600	De-Brief / Pack and Clean Weavers Lodge / Feedback and Evaluation		
1600 - 1630	Individual Assessor Debriefs / Any Questions?		
1630	End of Residential and Depart		

And Finally!

Hopefully, this has provided you with an insight as to how your residential will run this year. Please feel free to contact us should you have any further questions or concerns!

Kind regards,

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Duke of Edinburgh Manager

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