



**Houlton School**  
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**Lorna Pountney**  
Head of School

11<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to apologise that we have had to postpone the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Celebration Event that was due to take place today. There has been a slight delay in the final sign-off of each student's evidence and, in order to ensure that all awards are properly verified and that every student receives the recognition they deserve, we felt it was important to move the event to a later date.

The Celebration Evening will now take place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 5:30pm, and we very much hope you will be able to join us.

Celebrating the achievements of our students who have completed their Duke of Edinburgh Awards is incredibly important to us as a school community. The DofE programme requires commitment, resilience and determination. Through volunteering, developing new skills, completing physical challenges and undertaking expeditions, our students have shown exceptional perseverance and teamwork. The celebration evening will be an opportunity to recognise these accomplishments and to acknowledge the effort and dedication that each student has demonstrated.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Hunter for the tremendous work he has done in leading the Duke of Edinburgh programme at Houlton School. Mr Hunter has been instrumental in building and developing the programme over the past few years, supporting our students through their expeditions and award journeys. We wish him every success as he begins a new role later this month.

Moving forward, Mrs Cunliffe will be leading the Duke of Edinburgh provision along with Mrs Kirsopp. They are both very much looking forward to continuing this fantastic programme and will be sharing further exciting updates with students and families regarding upcoming Silver and Gold expeditions available in year 12. I would also like to thank all parents and carers for the support you provide behind the scenes. Whether helping students prepare for expeditions, encouraging them through challenges, or supporting them in completing the different sections of the award, your support plays a vital role in their success.

We are incredibly proud of the students who have completed their Bronze and Silver expeditions. The Duke of Edinburgh Award reflects the core values of Houlton School and the ambitions we have for every young person. Through the programme, students demonstrate courage as they step outside their comfort zones, tenacity as they persevere through the physical and mental challenges of the expeditions, and loyalty and kindness as they support and encourage one another as a team. At the same time, they strive for excellence by committing to volunteering, developing new skills and completing each stage of the award to the highest standard.



The experiences gained through the Duke of Edinburgh programme develop resilience, teamwork, leadership and independence. These qualities not only support students in future education and job applications, but also prepare them to lead successful and purposeful lives beyond school, which is central to the ambitions we hold for every student at Houlton School.

We look forward to celebrating these wonderful achievements with you on Wednesday 6th May at 5:30pm.

Kind regards,



Mrs L Pountney  
**Head of School**