



Dear Sir/Madam,

In the first instance I am writing to you with regards to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme and the lack of opportunities for your child to take part within your local community. We have become increasingly aware that there are a limited number of centres within your area for young people to access. Some centres aren't delivering the programme, others are at capacity and are having to use selection methods to decide who will participate. Compared to neighbouring regions there are also a limited number of Silver and Gold Award opportunities. Following the withdrawal of Lancashire County Council's DofE Operating Authority licence, the only pathway for students to enrol is to sign up within their place of education, if a direct licence is held there. If the school has chosen not to pursue a direct licence, there are currently no alternative centres available for young people to access the award.

This is something that causes us great concern and we are actively searching for ways to overcome any potential barriers that young people may face when trying to embark upon their DofE journey. We have heard from many of you already through our Regional Office communications systems however we want to engage with everybody affected in person, in order to fully understand what action needs to be taken.

We will be holding a meeting for all parents/carers and children who want to take part in the award on Thursday 10th January 2019 at St Mary's High School from 6pm to 8pm.

- St Mary's Catholic High School, Royal Avenue, Leyland, PR25 1BS

Whilst we cannot guarantee at this time that we will be able to support your child, we are keen to propose several options to you to measure uptake and demand for the DofE programme within the area.

If you are interested in your child taking part in the Bronze, Silver or Gold programme or would like to find out further information, please email me at tom.kelly@dofe.org to reserve a place at the meeting. If you are interested but not able to attend, please email me the details of your child including name, date of birth and the school attended. If you know of anyone else in your situation who would benefit from attending this meeting, please pass the message on. The larger the demand for accessibility to the DofE programme, the easier it will be to find potential solutions.

Kind regards

Thomas Kelly

Operations Manager – DofE North of England