



# **Dunblane High School Duke of Edinburgh's Award Group Trustees' Annual Report**

**Period From 1 October 2024 to  
Period End 30 September 2025**

## **Charity Contact Information**

Dunblane High School Duke of Edinburgh's Award Group

Scottish Charity Number: SC052684

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## **Charity Trustees**

1. Juan Escala, Chairperson
2. Alastair Scott, Treasurer
3. Donna Waddington, Secretary

## **Group Objectives**

To promote and develop the objectives of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award for the benefit of the young people of Dunblane High School by providing, or making them aware of, a range of opportunities which are of a high quality, enjoyable, challenging and rewarding.

To inspire, guide and support the young people in their personal development through involvement in the Group.

To promote the advancement of education by encouraging the development of knowledge in the areas of a healthy lifestyle, the outdoor environment and how to look after it, and educating the young people in the benefits of community involvement both for themselves and for their community. This will be done through involvement in the activities the young people undertake, and any training they are given during that involvement.

To help develop a sense of citizenship by establishing links between the young people and their community through volunteering and involvement in local clubs.

To establish and develop an ethos of support for the Group within local clubs, charities and businesses, through increased participation by the young people.

## **Group Activities**

The Group runs the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at all 3 levels. The Group promotes the objectives of the Award and supports and enables the young people of Dunblane High School to achieve all sections of the Award.

By engaging in the Award, the young people advance their education and knowledge in many areas through the skill, physical and expedition sections and develop a sense of community and citizenship by engaging as a volunteer.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity is governed by our Group Constitution dated 4 May 2023.

## **Trustee Recruitment and Appointment**

Trustees are recruited by the Group Committee and appointment is by vote at Committee meetings.

## Achievements and Performance

In 2024/25 there were 113 young people enrolled across the 3 levels of the Award: Bronze 57, Silver 35 and Gold 21. During the year there were a good number of completions of Bronze 50, Silver 29 and Gold 2 (the Gold Award is usually completed over an 18-month period due to the level of time commitments required).

The young people engaged in a variety of activities to achieve the physical and skill sections of their Award. Examples included barista training, learning Japanese and digital music programming. As part of their Award the young people complete a period of volunteering, either 3, 6 or 12 months, depending on the award level. Individuals and Community groups, including local youth groups, The Dunblane Centre Chess and Lego Clubs, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, British Trust for Ornithology and many others, benefited from over 4,108 hours of volunteer activities. Duke of Edinburgh calculate the social value of these volunteering hours as £26,289.

This year all our walking expeditions were on mainland Scotland and were completed in the Trossachs, Perthshire and the Cairngorms areas. One group took part in a Canoe expedition in The Dordogne in France. This expedition was the Group's first overseas expedition and was fully self funded by the participants and leaders. We were able to keep the cost of the expedition modest due to the generosity of the qualified leaders donating their time.

We had over 60 active volunteers from the local community involved. The roles included the Group Committee, Expedition Supervisors and helpers, Bronze, Silver and Gold Level Coordinators and Group leaders, and Training and Kit Coordinators.

We arranged training for our volunteers including Child Protection/Safeguarding, First Aid and outdoor leadership qualifications. The latter requires the most onerous commitment by volunteers, who typically need to attend 2 week-long courses and complete 20 to 40 quality walking/mountain days, depending on the qualification. During this year we have supported one volunteer working on his Mountain Leader award and one working on his Paddle Sports qualification. Should the Group organise all expeditions through commercial providers, it is calculated that the total cost for participants would be in excess of £36,825. Instead, the cost recovered from DofE participants amounted to £4,746.

In November we hosted an annual Celebration evening in Dunblane High School to recognise the achievements of all the young people who are participating in the 3 levels of the Award. We also recognise and thank our volunteers, the local community and the Dunblane High School Senior Management Team for their support.

We wish to express the Group's thanks for grants and donations generously received from Dunblane Windfarm Community Fund.

## Outcomes and Impact

It is the belief of the Group that through involvement with the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, there is a positive and long lasting benefit for all the young people involved. There are also benefits for the Groups' adult volunteers and the local community.

The Group has carried out a survey of the pupils (participants and non-participants) in S4, S5 & S6 at Dunblane High School to understand the impact of their involvement in DofE and also the reasons for not engaging in DofE. The school roll is falling and the percentage of young people requiring some adaptation is increasing, so the Group needs to establish how to improve our engagement and adapt to the needs of the young people to ensure that DHS DofE is accessible for all and we are continuing to provide the opportunities to the young people to develop and be their best.

Participants were asked about personal improvement in the Award areas and responded as follows:

	Strong Personal improvement	Some Personal improvement	No Personal improvement
Skill	38.9%	55.6%	5.5%
Physical	5.6%	72.2%	22.2%
Volunteering	27.8%	61.1%	11.1%
Expedition	50%	38.9%	11.1%
Overall wellbeing	11.1%	50%	38.9%

Participants gave a variety of reasons for taking part including to improve their CVs, to have fun, to try something new and to be with their friends.

We asked participants for comments on how the Group could improve their experience and they expressed that taking part in the award took up too much time and they would like more support in securing volunteer places and uploading evidence.

Some reasons given by non-participants for deciding not to take part include that the Award took up too much time, they didn't understand fully what was involved and that there should be more flexibility to join an Award level in any school year. Also that it would be useful to take part but that the challenges were too demanding.

We asked non-participants what would help them to consider taking part in the future. The most popular answer was less time commitment, followed by clearer explanation of benefits and better information about safety and support.

The timescales for each Award level are set by DofE, but the Group intends to improve our communications at our information evenings about the benefits of taking part, the qualifications of our expedition leaders and provide more support for the participants throughout their Award.

Following some comments in the surveys the Group has decided to add flexibility to participation and from 2026-27 open up enrolment in Bronze level to S3 - S6 year groups and Silver level to S4 -S6 year groups .

The Group intends to develop future surveys of the Parents/carers of the young people and of our adult volunteers to further understand how to improve and increase engagement of the young people and adult volunteers.

## Financial Review

### Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Group believes that an appropriate level of reserves is £25,000. This is to cover the cost of any unexpected items of expenditure, particularly related to expeditions either emergency extraction/accommodation, or outsourcing of supervisors, and training of volunteers. It is also appreciated that the camping and sports equipment has a finite life which requires replacement.

### Details of any deficit

The Group does not have a financial deficit.


### Donated facilities and services

The charity operates with a large group of volunteers from the community who voluntarily provide their time and skills. This commitment includes attending training courses (such as child protection and outdoor leadership qualifications) in addition to directly engaging with the young people. This engagement extends to several thousand hours per year.

No goods were donated to the Group during the financial year.

## Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Juan Escala', is written inside a green rectangular box.

**Print Name**

**Juan Escala**

**Designation**

Chairperson

**Date**

3rd June 2026