

HRH The Earl of Wessex visits Manchester City Football Club to celebrate success of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

HRH The Earl of Wessex has visited City Football Academy, the training ground for Manchester City Football Club, to see first-hand the positive impact of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE).

Manchester City FC is the first Premier League club to be licensed to run the DofE, where it has been offering DofE programmes as part of the education curriculum for its academy players in the U14 and U15 age groups since 2014.

The DofE gives young people a unique opportunity to gain valuable life experience and develop essential skills. At Manchester City FC, 23 young players have achieved their Bronze Award and a further 16 are currently working towards their Silver in 2016. Participation in the DofE is part of the Club's wider multi-skills lifestyle curriculum for academy players, designed to help equip them with the values, skills and experience required to succeed in life on and off the pitch.

In order to achieve a DofE Award, the players complete a combination of activities through volunteering, skills, physical development and the all-important expedition. As an example, for the Volunteering section of the DofE, the players deliver coaching sessions to local children at the City Football Academy as part of the club's 'City in the Community' programme.

The DofE is celebrating its Diamond Anniversary this year, having helped to transform the lives of millions of young people in the UK and across the globe since it was founded in 1956. As part of the celebrations, HRH The Earl of Wessex, a Trustee of the Charity for many years, is travelling around the UK to meet DofE participants and volunteers.

Peter Westgarth, CEO of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award says:

"It's fantastic to see Manchester City FC being recognised for the outstanding work it does with its young players and the wider community through its participation in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. We hope to see many other professional sports clubs follow Manchester City's example by offering the DofE in the future, helping us to achieve our Diamond Ambition of enabling two million more young people to start their DofE in the UK by 2020."

Brian Marwood, Managing Director of City Football Services, adds:

“The DofE plays an invaluable role in our programme to enhance the skills and attitudes needed to develop well-rounded and confident individuals at the Club.

“Today’s visit at the Etihad Campus has been a great experience for our players and has demonstrated the variety of activities undertaken to achieve their Awards, including DJing, expedition training and a popular volunteering element. As part of the Club’s commitment to the local community, we feel it’s important that our players volunteer and deliver coaching sessions to local young people, not only to shape them as individuals but to inspire the next generation.”

In its anniversary year, the DofE is encouraging people of all ages to set and achieve their goals through the **DofE Diamond Challenge**. This is a one-off initiative for 2016 that aims to give everyone a flavour of the life-changing benefits of The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. The Charity is encouraging people to get involved at www.DofDDiamondChallenge.org and set themselves a challenge – be that an adventure, learning a new skill or something personal.

HRH The Earl of Wessex will be continuing his DofE Diamond Anniversary Tour of the UK For the remainder of the year.

Ends

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You can also follow the DofE on Twitter ([@DofE](https://twitter.com/DofE)) and like us on Facebook ([DofE](https://www.facebook.com/DofE)).

Notes to editors:

About The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award:

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award is the world’s leading youth achievement award that develops over 300,000 young people for life and work every year in the UK.

Through achieving their Bronze, Silver and Gold DofE Awards, 14-24 year olds from all backgrounds and circumstances have the unique opportunity to grow as young adults; gaining valuable life experience whilst developing essential employability skills. Setting their own challenges, they learn practical skills, improve their fitness, volunteer in their community, plan and go on an adventurous expedition and, for Gold, they also spend time away from home with people they’ve never met, completing a shared activity.

The DofE develops tenacity, commitment and determination, admirable attributes that have a lasting impact, broadening each young person’s life and work prospects.

The DofE is run all over the UK under licence by over 1,200 partners who offer it in over 13,000 DofE centres – including schools and academies, youth clubs, businesses, voluntary organisations and young offender institutions – which are run and supported by around 50,000 adult volunteers.

The DofE is a charity and therefore dependent on charitable giving to sustain and grow the DofE so more young people can take part and transform their lives.

For more information please visit www.DofE.org

About the DofE's Diamond Anniversary

2016 is The Duke of Edinburgh's Award's Diamond Anniversary, celebrating 60 years since the DofE was founded by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 1956.

During its Diamond Anniversary year the DofE will celebrate the achievements of millions of young people across the UK and the world whose lives have been transformed by their DofE experience, thank the hundreds of thousands of volunteers that have made that experience possible and fundraise for the future so the DofE Charity can continue to reach out to more young people.

At 60 years young, the DofE has never been more relevant for young people in the UK, providing a tried and tested framework of activities through which young people gain vital life and work skills. In the last 60 years, over 5.6 million young people have started their DofE in the UK and almost 2.5 million have achieved Awards.

The DofE has set a Diamond Ambition to enable two million young people to take part in the DofE by 2020, 400,000 of whom will be from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The DofE is planning an array of activities, royal visits and events across the year to celebrate and raise funds to support this ambition.

About the DofE Diamond Challenge

The DofE is launching the DofE Diamond Challenge in 2016 to celebrate its Diamond Anniversary and give everyone a flavour of the life-changing benefits of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, all whilst generating funds for the Charity so that it can reach out to even more young people in the future and offer free places and bursary grants to those most in need.

People can register for the DofE Diamond Challenge at www.DofEDiamondChallenge.org and challenges can take place any time before 31 December 2016.

Signing up to the DofE Diamond Challenge has an amazing double benefit – whilst challenging yourself and pushing your boundaries, you're also raising money for the DofE Charity so that it

can transform the lives of more young people and offer free places and bursary grants to those most in need.

About Manchester City Football Club

Manchester City FC is an English Premier League club whose roots began in East Manchester in 1880 as St Mark's West Gorton. It officially became Manchester City FC in 1894 and has since then gone onto win the European Cup Winners' Cup, four League Championship titles, including two Premier League titles in the last three years (2012, 2014), and five FA Cups. Manchester City FC is one of four teams comprising the City Football Group and counts New York City FC, Melbourne City FC and Yokohama F-Marininos among its sister clubs.

Under manager Manuel Pellegrini, the Club plays its domestic and Champions' League home fixtures at the Etihad Stadium, a spectacular 55,000 seat arena that City have called home since 2003. Today, the Stadium sits on the wider Etihad Campus, which also encompasses the City Football Academy, a world leading first team training and youth development facility located in the heart of East Manchester. Featuring a 7,000 capacity Academy Stadium, the City Football Academy is also where Manchester City Women's Football Club and the Elite Development Squad train on a daily basis and play their competitive home games.

For more information, please visit www.mcfc.co.uk