

## STUDENTS HONOURED AT THE PALACE



Four former Sixth Form students travelled to St James' Palace to receive their Duke of Edinburgh Gold award from the award's founder, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. Their group was the first to be presented to Prince Philip in the throne room and he engaged them in conversation: the girls were able to tell him that they had done their residential project as handmaidens at the Catholic shrine of Lourdes.

The school has an outstanding record of success in Duke of Edinburgh, with pupils commencing their Bronze award in Year 10 and progressing to the Gold in their Sixth Form. The Good Schools' Guide called the school's participation in the scheme "the best we have ever seen."

Derek Budd, Duke of Edinburgh Award Officer for Cambridgeshire, said: "To achieve their Gold Award, participants undertake a wide range of activities and expeditions. People have taken up to seven years to achieve their Gold Award, so this is no small achievement on the part of the St Mary's students."

St Mary's Maths teacher Susan Brown, who coordinates the Duke of Edinburgh scheme at the School, said of the Palace's awards: "To be presented with their awards by the Duke of Edinburgh makes it a unique and special occasion for the girls and recognises their superb achievements. I felt privileged to be invited."

And they will be followed by many more. In Year 10, there are sixty girls – nearly 70% of the Year group – taking their Bronze award. Currently, over a third of the Sixth Form are undertaking their Gold and may take a trip to the Palace later this year!