

WELCOME TO THE CHALLENGE!

A guide for new Royal Naval Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets
in Portsmouth VCC (useful for their parents and guardians too)



**VOLUNTEER
CADET CORPS**

ROYAL NAVAL & ROYAL MARINES CADETS

WELCOME TO THE CHALLENGE!

Welcome to the Volunteer Cadet Corps. Whether you are reading this as a new recruit or the parent or guardian of a new recruit, I hope this induction guide will prove to be not only a useful resource for information during your first few weeks with us but also a handy reference tool during your time with us.

The VCC was formed on 14 February 1901, and throughout our history we have been proud to serve our local communities in providing a challenging but enjoyable range of activities for our local young people.

Our motto, Meet The Challenge, accurately sums up what we expect our new cadets to do – face fresh challenges and learn how to overcome them. Don't worry though, our cadets also know how to have fun and enjoy themselves. The VCC is sponsored by the Royal Navy but most of our funds come through our own activities such as fund raising events, donations, subscriptions and fees – although we try to keep the last two as low as possible. We are lucky to benefit from a dedicated team of instructing and support staff, all of whom give up vast amounts of their time totally free of charge.

I look forward to hearing about and seeing the progress of our new recruits over the next few months. There will be challenges along the way and we will continually drive and stretch abilities. Parental support is pivotal to a successful and fun time in the VCC, and of course our instructing and support staff are always available to guide and encourage.

Don't forget we are always looking for new volunteers to join our staff, and previous cadet or military experience is not necessary. Please contact us for a no obligation discussion if this is of interest. I am sure that you will find your time with the VCC both enjoyable and rewarding.

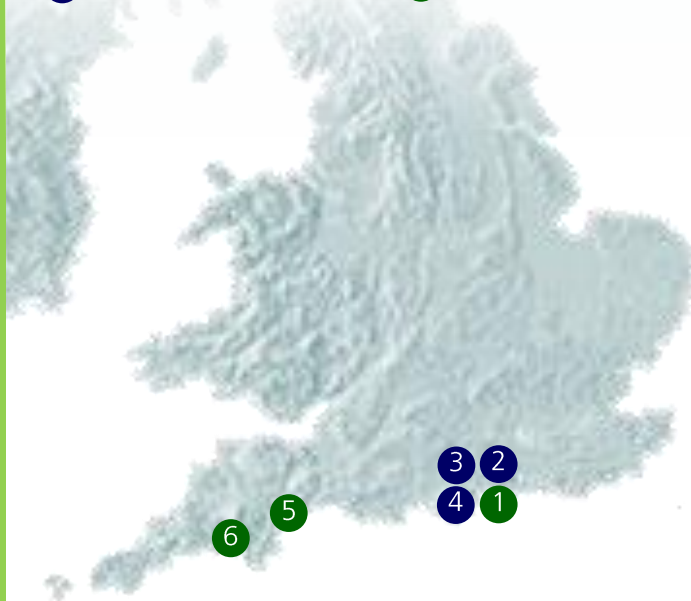


T E WING
Lieutenant Colonel RMC
Commander VCC

The Volunteer Cadet Corps currently has six units. Each is staffed by unpaid civilian adults, with some serving Armed Forces personnel attached but giving up their time in addition to their normal duties.

Our intention is to open new units in Cornwall and Scotland soon.

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Portsmouth Division RMVCC | 4 HMS Sultan RNVCC |
| 2 HMS Excellent RNVCC | 5 Lymington Division RMVCC |
| 3 HMS Collingwood RNVCC | 6 Plymouth Division RMVCC |



The VCC has both Royal Naval Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets. Some units may only have one type whilst others (like Portsmouth VCC) will have both. Our aim is that in time all VCC units can offer 'blue' and 'green' options.

The Royal Navy's Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) sponsors the VCC through his Commander Core Training and Recruiting (COMCORE) organisation. Day to day command of the Cadet Corps rests with Headquarters VCC with each unit managed by a Commanding Officer and Management Board.



OUR AIM AND OUR MANAGEMENT

Our aim is simple:

"To provide opportunities for young people to develop into responsible, dependable and useful members of society by employing the traditions and practices of the Naval Service as a basis of their activities."

We achieve this by putting cadets into uniform, teaching them basic discipline, and engaging them fully in a range of exciting, fun and useful activities.

These include:

Adventure training	Sports
Map reading	Swimming
Competitions	Parades
Weekend exercises	First aid
Display groups	Camps
Field gun	Band

We place great emphasis on standards of dress and behaviour, and its our standards that cadets must aspire to and achieve.

Parents and guardians can assist us in this regard by helping cadets keep their uniforms in a clean and tidy condition, ensuring cadets have regular hair cuts, and making sure they arrive at their training or event on time (and this always means at least five minutes early!).

COMMANDING OFFICER

Captain Chris Spratt RMC is the CO of Portsmouth VCC, responsible for both Royal Naval Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets. He's a former cadet with 35 years' VCC experience.

SECOND-IN-COMMAND

Midshipman Alfie Richardson RNR is the 2IC of Portsmouth VCC, responsible for the day to day operation of the unit. He is also a former cadet, having been in HMS Sultan RNVCC.

TRAINING OFFICER

Our Training Officer is Warrant Officer Class 2 Lee Bridgeman PhD RMC, who is responsible for the planning and delivery of all training including exercises and camps.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER SERGEANT

Warrant Officer Class 2 Sharon Scott RMC is our RQMS and responsible for managing all of the unit's stores, transport and logistical requirements.

OFFICER COMMANDING ROYAL NAVAL CADETS

Warrant Officer Class 1 Trevor Coleman RNC is responsible for the training and development of our Royal Naval Cadets. WO1 Coleman is a former senior rate in the Royal Navy.

COMPANY COMMANDER, R COMPANY

Warrant Officer Class 2 Oli Seeböhm RMC is tasked with the training of recruits in the Royal Marines Cadets and making sure they are of the required standard before they Pass Out.

REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR

Cadet Warrant Officer Class 1 Charlie Roberts RMC is our RSM. He oversees the discipline and standard of all cadets, and follows his father who was also the RSM thirty years ago.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE OFFICER

Lieutenant Shirley Wing RNC is our Senior Administration and Finance Officer and is responsible for ensuring all of our finances are managed accurately including your subscriptions!

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Chief Petty Officer Michelle Kennedy RNC is our Administration Officer and should be your first point of contact with any queries via navyvcc-poradmin@cadetmail.mod.uk.



USEFUL INFORMATION

ABSENCES

Cadets are expected to attend all parade nights, plus other important events (eg: ceremonial parades on occasional weekends). They must also attend all other events for which they have volunteered. If a cadet is unable to attend a letter or email must be sent to us in advance (addressed to the company commander or other member of staff in charge of an event) to explain why. For unplanned absences (eg: sickness) a retrospective letter or email must be sent.

These letters are important so we know that cadets are genuinely absent and not missing training without the knowledge of their parent or guardian.

Continued unexplained absence will result in the cadet being dismissed from the VCC unless there are exceptional circumstances.

ATTENDANCE

Regular training takes place on Tuesday and Friday evenings (parade nights) between 1830 and 2030. This means cadets should arrive by 1815 ready to fall in on parade at 1830, and will usually be free to leave by 2045 (final parade taking place at 2030).

Cadets arriving late on parade should fall in off to the side of the parade ground and wait to be called forward by the Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major (Cdt RSM). Parents are not to lead their cadets onto the parade.

Cadets will often need a bit of time after final parade for administrative purposes (eg: changing uniform in our clothing store or receiving a briefing on weekend activities) if they are not able to carry out these tasks during the rest of the evening.

BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

The VCC has a zero tolerance policy towards bullying and harassment. Should a cadet feel they are being bullied or harassed, by either another cadet or member of staff, either they or their parent or guardian should report the matter to the Welfare Officer or another member of staff of their choice if they so wish. The matter will be investigated thoroughly and a full report given back.

Copies of our Child Protection Policy as well as our Regulations are available on request.

CADET NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS/SENIOR RATES

All cadets have the opportunity to progress through our ranks (having passed out as a Recruit to become a Cadet) from Cadet Lance Corporal/Able Cadet all the way up to Cadet Warrant Officer Class 1. Our cadet NCOs/Senior Rates assist the staff with supervision of other cadets and in delivering appropriate training, and promotion is a fantastic way for cadets to learn about responsibility and leadership. Cadet NCOs/Senior Rates do not have powers of punishment but do have authority over cadets of subordinate rank.

CANTEEN

Our canteen (also called Tuck Shop or Galley) is open on most parade nights and sometimes during other activities, offering a choice of refreshments including tea, coffee, soft drinks, burgers and sweets at great value prices. Canteen profits are returned to the VCC.

COMMITMENT

The VCC expects a high level of commitment from all of its personnel. In general we expect cadets to attend at least 65% of all parade nights annually and a significant number of other activities and events. Experience has shown that those who are most committed to the VCC not only go further in terms of promotion and achievement but also gain the most enjoyment from our activities.

Cadets who attain four years good conduct service are awarded the VCC Long Service and Good Conduct medal.

CONSENT

To attend events outside of normal cadet nights we will usually issue a letter providing outline details and asking for a consent form to be returned. This ensures we know your child has your permission to attend. Please ensure these are returned by the deadline date stated.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please address all letters to the Commanding Officer (except for absence letters – see Absences) and include your child's name, and cadet number. We welcome emails but our mailbox is not monitored continually so replies may take a few days. Please do not send official correspondence or complaints via our Facebook page.



DISCIPLINE

Any large organisation requires an appropriate measure of discipline to be able to function efficiently and properly. Our staff strive to maintain a high level of discipline and our cadets are expected to do the same, especially when they start to attain some rank and responsibility. Serious breaches in discipline will result in cadets being subject to disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal. All punishments are in line with our disciplinary code as approved by the MOD.

DRESS AND UNIFORM

All cadets are expected to wear their uniform with pride. That means it needs to fit correctly, be clean, ironed where appropriate and free of fluff and dirty marks. Items that need to be polished (eg: boots and belt buckles) must be highly polished to a shine. Cadets who do not meet our dress standards will be given guidance, but repeated failures to attain those standards will result in disciplinary measures. Parental support in assisting the cadets to maintain their uniforms is absolutely essential.

All uniform and other equipment issued by us remains the property of the MOD and/or VCC. It must be returned in a clean and usable state when the cadet leaves or upon request.

Charges may be made for any property damaged or not returned, and we reserve the right to recover unreturned property via legal means if appropriate. Uniform may not be worn outside of VCC activities without permission.

DRINK

Cadets are not permitted to possess, buy or consume alcohol (including low or non-alcoholic beers), or enter public houses and off-licences when engaged in Volunteer Cadet Corps activities. Any cadet disobeying these rules may be subject to disciplinary action including dismissal from the VCC.

DRUGS

Cadets are not permitted to take any drug whilst engaged on VCC activities except those prescribed by a GP or hospital in connection with an illness or medical condition. Any cadet found to be taking, in possession or distribution drugs will be dismissed, and the matter will be reported to the police.

EDUCATION

The VCC appreciates the importance of cadets' education. School and homework come first, although learning how to balance varying commitments is a good skill for cadets to develop. If a cadet is having problems balancing school and cadet commitments we are happy to discuss the matter and see what solutions can be found. Just contact us by email.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The VCC prides itself on providing equal opportunities for all cadets subject to ability and welfare. All VCC personnel will be treated on merit irrespective of gender, race, nationality or sexual orientation.

EVENTS

Details of our training, activities and events can be found on the Events page on our website.

- volunteercadetcops.org/royalmarinescadets/events/portsmouth/
- volunteercadetcops.org/royalnavalcadets/events/excellent/

HAIR

Being part of the VCC means hair to be kept neat and tidy:

- **Boys** Long hair is not acceptable. Hair is to be kept sensibly short (off the neck and ears); grade 2 is ideal.
- **Girls** Long hair is to be worn in a bun with black accessories.

Excessive colouring or bleaching, decorative patterns or 'stepped' cuts are not permitted.



USEFUL INFORMATION

HEALTH AND SAFETY

As part of our commitment to the welfare of our personnel, we equally regard our health and safety obligations as pivotal to our activities. All of our activities are risk assessed, and we have our own 'suitably qualified and competent' Health and Safety Officer. All of our activities are regulated by the MOD and we follow all of their regulations and guidelines. This includes the ratio of staff to cadets for supervision purposes.

Where we employ an external agency to deliver any of our activities (eg: an adventure training centre) we assess their health and safety procedures and competence before engaging them.

The VCC is not responsible for the supervision of cadets before 1815 (or arrival at an activity at other times) nor after 2045 or when cadets have been dismissed by their staff. Responsibility for cadets whilst they travel to and from our activities also remains with parents/guardians unless the cadet is travelling in VCC supplied vehicles.

JEWELLERY

We have strict rules regarding the wearing of jewellery, generally for safety reasons:

- **Boys:** Earrings and other jewellery (including necklaces) are not permitted, except for one modest finger ring (although these may need to be removed for safety reasons during some activities).
- **Girls:** Only one gold or silver stud may be worn in each ear; rings may be worn as per the boys. Other jewellery, including nose studs, is not permitted.

Cadets found wearing more jewellery than stated above will be asked to remove it; failure to do so will lead to that cadet being sent home. Skin coloured plastic fillers or plasters covering earrings are not allowed.

MAKE UP

Cadets are not permitted to wear any make up (this includes nail varnish) when in uniform, and then only in civilian clothing when authorised (eg: during social events).

MARKS OF RESPECT

It is the tradition of uniformed organisations to employ marks of respect. Officers and Warrant Officers will be addressed as "Sir" or "Ma'am" as appropriate, whilst personnel of other NCO rank will be addressed by their rank. Officers are to be saluted by cadets when in uniform. Adults outside of the VCC will always be addressed by cadets as "Sir" or "Ma'am".

Cadets will usually be referred to by their surname.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

It is very important that cadets and/or their parents or guardians inform the VCC of any on-going or temporary medical condition which cadets may have. This enables us to assess whether they are suitable for particular activities, and we can make this information available to the emergency services and hospital staff in the unlikely event of an accident. All medical information is held in the strictest confidence and only released to appropriate third parties in the event of an emergency.

Whilst this may seem a burden, we ask that parents and guardians complete a Consent Form for all 'out of area' and other specific activities. Again, this information helps us to protect the welfare and safety of our cadets.

MOTTO

Our motto is '**Meet The Challenge!**'. Additionally, Royal Marines Cadets of the VCC have a traditional extra motto, '**Be Worthy**'. All cadets and staff are expected to continually strive to live up to our mottos as befits the uniforms they wear.



PARENTAL SUPPORT

Support from parents and guardians is essential although we do ask you not to interfere in the training given to cadets (as an example, saying to a cadet they don't need a haircut when they have been told they do). If you feel you need to question anything please contact us either in writing or, if urgent, by telephone so the matter can be dealt with appropriately. This avoids confusing cadets and undermining their respect for our staff.

SAFEGUARDING

The welfare of our cadets is our paramount concern. All of our staff receive regular child protection training as well having regular criminal records checks.

SECURITY

Security is important as most of our training takes place in MOD establishments. Cadets are issued with an identification card which must be kept safe, not be transferred to anyone else and returned upon request. Cadets are to have this card in their possession at all times when engaged in VCC activities. Loss of this card must be reported to us at the earliest opportunity. Parents and guardians wishing to enter HMS Excellent must ask for an appointment via the Administration Office and cadets must be dropped off and collected at the main gate.

SMOKING

Cadets are not permitted to smoke, or be in possession of cigarettes or tobacco when engaged in VCC activities. Any cadet found doing so will be subject to disciplinary action and the items concerned removed for disposal.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

We encourage all of our personnel to add our groups to their Facebook account should they have one. However, in line with our Social Networking and Child Protection Policies we ask cadets not to add staff as 'friends' on social networking sites; staff will refuse invitations. Please do not use our social networking sites for formal correspondence; please use our main email instead.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

All cadets have to pay £5 per month as a subscription. This fee covers our main running costs in addition to other self-raised funds and the modest grant we receive from central government. All subscriptions need to be made by the second Tuesday of each month to the Finance Officer by standing order.

If there is a problem with paying subscriptions please do talk to us. Please contact us to make an appointment to discuss further with either the Treasurer or Welfare Officer. We would much rather come to an arrangement than see a cadet leave.

However, in the event that we are not contacted and a cadet fails to pay four month's worth of subscriptions, and enquiries from us go unanswered, the cadet concerned will be dismissed. Parents and guardians will still be liable for the payment of any outstanding funds, as well as for the return of all uniform and other property issued by the VCC. We reserve the right to take action to reclaim our property.

Payments for other activities like annual camps must also be made to the Finance Officer. Other staff, unless acting in the FO's absence, are not able to accept payments. Please note that once paid, fees for activities will not usually be refunded if the cadet fails to attend as usually the VCC has made financial commitments.

OUR TRAINING

RECRUIT TRAINING

Recruits are introduced to uniform care, drill and ceremonial matters, as well as RN, RM and VCC history and basic seamanship, fieldcraft and navigational skills. Parental support is crucial at this stage. The best recruits can win awards which are presented during the cadets' Pass Out parade in front of family and friends.

After Passing Out from Recruit Training the newly appointed cadets proceed to Naval General Training (RNVCC) and General Duties Training (RMVCC), or Musical Training (RMVCC) to learn new skills and have lots of fun.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Once in training cadets progress through a number of phases as they get older and acquire a range of different and new skills. At the end of each year cadets can take assessments to see if they qualify to attend a Command Course so they can be promoted.

Our Command Courses allow cadets to acquire additional skills to see if they have what it takes to be promoted and climb up through the rates/ranks. Cadets that progress far enough can join the Cadet Training Team and ultimately may be invited to stay as Cadet Force Adult Volunteers.

AND FINALLY

If you need further information or wish to discuss any matter please contact us:

"Being in the VCC was
the best preparation
for adult life"

By Email: navyvcc-poradmin@cadetmail.mod.uk

By Phone: 02392 547495
(Tuesday and Friday nights, voicemail at other times)

By Mail: **Portsmouth Division**
Royal Marines Volunteer Cadet Corps
Alamein Block
HMS Excellent
Whale Island
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Hampshire
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Royal Naval Volunteer Cadet Corps
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Website: www.meetthechallenge.org

Facebook: **Portsmouth Division**
Royal Marines Volunteer Cadet Corps

HMS Excellent
Royal Naval Volunteer Cadet Corps

When visiting our website please register for an account so you can access the full range of contents, including up to date news from the VCC and our forthcoming events. If you have any problems registering please contact us via our usual email address. Please do not use social media for absence notifications and making complaints, and make sure you apply to join our Facebook groups so you know what our cadets are up to.

CADET FORCE ADULT VOLUNTEERS

The VCC is always looking for new volunteers to join our uniformed and non-uniformed staff as Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs). Whether you have previous military or cadet experience, or have a civilian background, if you are willing to meet our standards and commit some of your spare time we would be delighted to hear from you.

We are particularly interested to hear from people with adventure training, Duke of Edinburgh Award, sailing, shooting, first aid or musical qualifications. We are also looking for catering, stores, fundraising, marketing and administration staff. As long as you share our aims and values, and are prepared to commit some spare time, we'll probably have a job for you to do in support of our cadets.

If you are aged 18 to 60 and interested please contact us to arrange a no obligation discussion with our 2IC or CO. It's not just a hobby; you will be helping to develop the potential of some talented young people whilst making some excellent friendships and learning new skills.

It's not just the cadets who can Meet The Challenge!

