

WELCOME TO THE CHALLENGE!

An introduction to the Royal Naval Cadets and
Royal Marines Cadets of the Volunteer Cadet Corps



NAVY
CADETS



**VOLUNTEER
CADET CORPS**

ROYAL NAVAL & ROYAL MARINES CADETS

www.meetthechallenge.org

Welcome to the Challenge!

Welcome to the Volunteer Cadet Corps. Whether you are reading this as a cadet, a parent or guardian, a possible adult volunteer, a member of the armed forces or just someone interested in the VCC I hope this guide will provide you with useful information about our cadet corps.

The VCC was formed in Portsmouth by the Admiralty in February 1901, and throughout our history we have been proud to serve our local communities by providing challenging and enjoyable activities for our young people.

The VCC is not part of the Sea Cadet Corps, but is 'wholly owned' and sponsored by the Royal Navy. Usually based within Naval establishments, most of our funding comes from donations, subscriptions, fees and fund raising events – we try to keep our fees as low as possible though. We are lucky to benefit from a dedicated team of instructing and support staff, all of whom give up their time voluntarily. The Royal Navy also provides facilities and logistical support, plus volunteer Service Helpers.

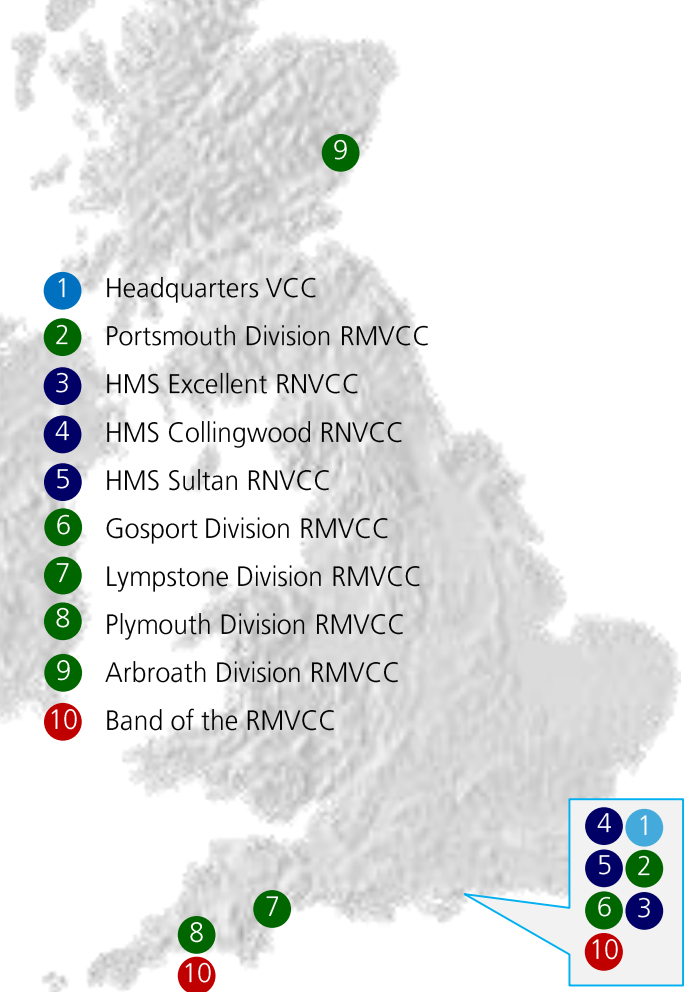
Our motto, Meet The Challenge, accurately sums up what we expect our new cadets to do – face fresh challenges and learn how to overcome them. Don't worry though, our cadets also have lots of fun too. We actively encourage our local communities, both civilian and military, to join in with our activities and support our cadets. We always welcome enquiries from potential recruits, young or old, and are also grateful for the support provided by our host Naval establishments and the MOD's sponsorship.

If you are a young person looking for something different to do in-between homework tasks, a civilian adult who would like a challenge away from the day job, or a veteran who would like to dust off the old uniform and pass your skills onto the next generation then we would like to hear from you.



T E Wing
Lieutenant Colonel RMC
Commander VCC

The Volunteer Cadet Corps currently has ten units, some being Royal Naval Cadets and other Royal Marines Cadets. Each is staffed by unpaid civilian adults, with some serving Armed Forces personnel attached as Service Helpers but giving up their time in addition to their normal duties.



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

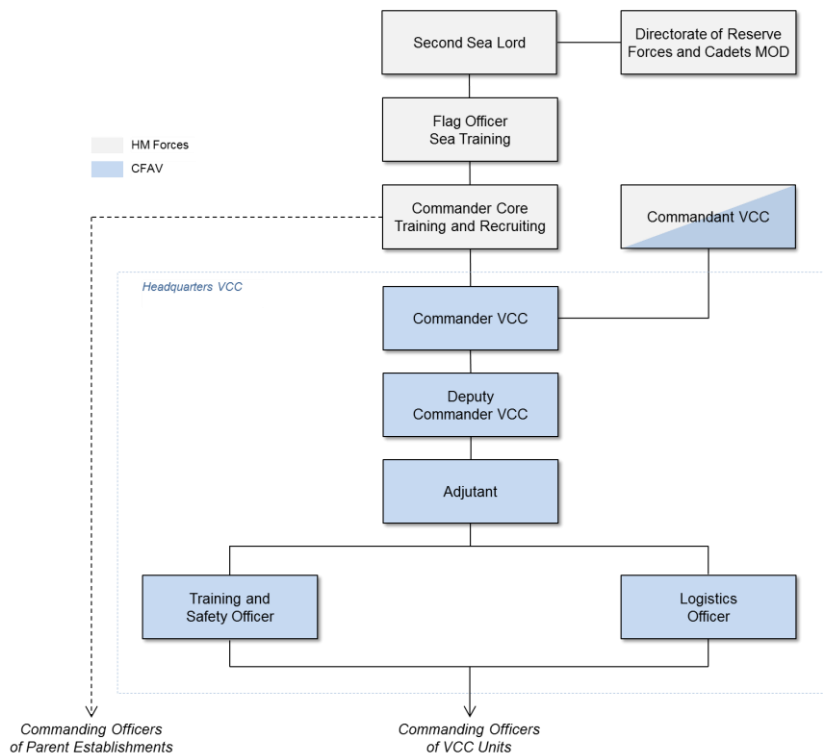
Our aim is simple:

“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 |
| DofE Award | Visits |

Our Management



Headquarters Volunteer Cadet Corps (HQVCC) is located at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth, a little over a mile away from where the first VCC unit was formed in 1901. HQVCC is responsible for the day to day governance and assurance of the Cadet Corps, ensuring that all units adhere to the VCC Regulations and applicable MOD regulations.

HQVCC is headed by Commander VCC, a cadet force adult volunteer, who is assisted by a staff of other CFAVs and/or service helpers. Commander VCC reports directly to COMCORE through his Cadets, Universities and Youth (CUY) organisation.

The VCC is separate from the Sea Cadet Corps and RN sections of the Combined Cadet Force although both organisations are overseen by CUY. Unit COs also have a 'dotted line' report to the COs of their parent establishments, via the appointed liaison officer through whom local facilities and logistical support is provided.



Our Governance

As with any professional, albeit volunteer, organisation having an effective governance structure is key to good management and the wellbeing of its members. The VCC is supported by the Royal Navy with a Memorandum of Arrangements (MOA) sponsored by the Second Sea Lord. The MOA defines the governance of the VCC but also specifies how the Royal Navy provides personnel, funding, logistical and estate support.

The VCC Regulations are a suite of documents that define how HQVCC and unit COs should run the organisation. These include discipline, dress standards, data protection, branding, and codes of conduct. The Regulations include policies on child welfare and protection as well health and safety. All of our activities are risk assessed and where necessary staff have or can obtain qualifications.

Ratios of staff to cadets are adhered to and if we use an external provider their safety measures are checked.

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 their unit 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.

We encourage all of our personnel to use social media to keep in contact with the VCC and up to date with our activities. Each unit has its own Facebook page, and the VCC has its own YouTube channel and website; just visit www.volunteercadetcorps.org to see more.

Our Training

RECRUIT TRAINING

VCC units recruit from their local communities often by holding public events or having displays at local shows. Each unit generally has two intakes each year and the recruits spend between 4 and 5 months learning basic skills such as drill, uniform maintenance, badges of rank, Naval history and fieldcraft. The recruits will then Pass Out in front of families and friends usually with a senior Royal Navy or Royal Marines officer as the Inspecting Officer. After Recruit Training the new cadets can join Naval General Training (RNVCC), General Duties Training (RMVCC) or Musical Training (if their unit has a band).

GENERAL TRAINING

The new cadets will join a Division or Company depending on whether they are in the RNVCC or RMVCC. Cadets aged under 13 will join Phase 1 and cadets aged 13 or over will join Phase 2. This allows the VCC to tailor the training to suit their age and maturity. Cadets will then progress through a personal development plan (PDP) engaging in subjects such as seamanship, navigation, military knowledge, drill, and skill at arms. We also encourage the cadets to engage in community activities and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Once a cadet completes a Phase they will undergo a brief assessment and if they pass they are awarded their first promotion (Able Cadet or Lance Corporal). They will then progress to their next phase (Phase 2 or Phase 3) and receive the next level of training in similar subjects. Another assessment follows which allows the cadet to attend a command course to try for their next promotion.

"I felt so proud the first time I was on parade in Blues"

This process continues until the cadet reaches the rank of Petty Officer or Sergeant whereupon they join the Cadet Training Team. Promotion after that is by merit and interview board.

Many of our cadets stay in the VCC as cadet force adult volunteers once they 'retire' upon reaching the age of 18. Whilst we will give some support to cadets who express an interest in a career in HM Armed Forces we are not a pre-service organisation; many cadets go on to equally rewarding civilian careers.



MUSICAL TRAINING

Cadets may join Musical Training instead after Pass Out if their VCC unit has a Band or Corps of Drums. If a cadet already has good musical skills they will progress to Phase 2 and if their skills are less or they are a novice then they join Phase 1. Much like General Training the cadet progresses through a range of musical subjects and tuition and will progress through the phases depending on performance. The VCC is lucky to have the services of a number of talented musicians, some of whom are serving or former Royal Marines Band Service personnel. Our Bands and Corps of Drums can often be seen on

display in local community shows, fairs and events, giving our cadets the opportunity to show off their skills in public and development their confidence. These occasions are also good recruiting events.

DISPLAY TEAMS

The Display Teams of the VCC are popular with cadets and public alike. These allow the cadets to development their confidence and practical skills whilst also raising money for their unit. Displays include the Band, Corps of Drums, cadet Field Gun competition, physical training displays, battle re-enactment displays and drill displays.

Our Funding

The VCC offers a cost-effective youth activities solution through a range of different funding streams:

- **Capitation Grant.** Each October the VCC units submit a Capitation Grant Application to the Royal Navy with details of numbers of cadets and staff in return for which a per capita amount is awarded.
- **Real Estate.** Unlike most other UK cadet forces the VCC is wholly accommodated within the Naval estate with local support services and buildings provided by the parent establishment. Utilities and maintenance is provided by the parent establishment as part of the Royal Navy's MOA agreement with the VCC. The VCC also has access to other facilities from the MOD such as training areas and camps via DIO.
- **Transport.** Each unit can apply for use of appropriate 'white fleet' vehicles through their parent establishment subject to licence requirements and booking.
- **Fees.** The VCC asks new cadets' parents and guardians to pay a modest joining fee and monthly subscription. The VCC endeavours to keep these as low as possible and arrangements can be made for families on income support.

- **Displays.** VCC cadets often appear in the local community and sometimes wider afield, usually showing off their musical or competitive skills. Event organisers are asked to provide a reasonable donation to cover these appearances.
- **Donations.** Many organisations and individuals make donations to the VCC and sometimes the Cadet Corps is remembered in wills, often by ex-cadets and veterans. All donations, whether large or small, are gratefully received and used for the cadets' benefit.

Each VCC unit is covered by MOD indemnity and insurance as long as the activities undertaken are on the approved list. Any activities taking place outside of this require additional insurance which is usually arranged by HQVCC. The VCC's own transport is also fully insured.

The VCC is also supported by the issuing of uniform and basic equipment through Naval stores, although some items are bought by individual units and many cadets buy their own additional kit.

"Being in the cadets really gave me the best start in life"



Our History

FORMATION

The first cadets in the Royal Marines were formed at the Mission Hall, Prince Albert Street, Portsmouth on 14 February 1901 as the Royal Marines Artillery Cadet Corps (RMACC). It is said that the Cadet Corps was formed to "gainfully occupy the spare time of sons of senior Non-Commissioned Officers" after an occasion when the Colonel's office window was yet again broken by a ball kicked by a RMA SNCO's son playing outside. The Hampshire Telegraph reported that the Cadet Corps was formed "with a view to instructing the young generation in drill, discipline, rifle shooting and gymnastics, which all authorities agreed as being about the most important for ensuring the vigour of the nation". The Portsmouth Evening News also reported the new Cadet Corps (see below) the following day.

The RMA cadets wore a uniform of khaki with bandoliers, belts, leggings and a Veldt slouch hat taken from headdress worn during the Boer War. Cadets were aged between ten and fifteen and they met for training for two hours a week, in the Royal Marines Artillery barracks at Eastney, using the gymnasium in the winter and on the drill field during the summer.

The RMACC took as its first motto 'Manners Maketh Man' and by 1902 had over one hundred and fifty boys as cadets. Usually the Adjutant of the parent establishment became CO of their respective RMVCC Division, the first CO being Capt William Bathurst Harkness RMA.

Annual summer camps were held, in such places like the New Forest, and usually lasted a week. The cadets also attended the coronation of HM King Edward VII in August 1902 and were inspected by HRH the Prince of Wales in 1904.

EXPANSION

By 1904 further units had been formed at RM Barracks Chatham, RM Barracks Stonehouse (Plymouth) and Forton Barracks in Gosport (RMLI) followed later by units at RM Depot (Deal) and Commando Training Centre Royal Marines at Lympstone.

The first Royal Naval VCC unit was formed in 1904 at HMS Victory Barracks, now HMS Nelson (Portsmouth), followed by Devonport (Plymouth), and was originally called Royal Naval Barracks Boys Brigade. It was "considered that it would be an advantage to the Petty Officers and Men serving in Barracks to have their sons brought under control, and that an impetus may be given to recruiting the most suitable class of lads". The request was submitted to the Admiralty by the office of the then CinC Portsmouth, Admiral Jackie Fisher.

By 1913 the RMA Cadets were part of the VCC alongside their Royal Naval Cadets counterparts. The VCC existed during the First World War with at least Portsmouth Division RMVCC marching in the local Victory Parade.

The VCC was suspended in the Second World War but remained on the Navy Lists. In 1922, the children of civilians were allowed to join the VCC.

Girl Ambulance Companies were formed at the RM Divisions from 1910 and at Eastney there was a troop of Girl Guides. In 1927 the wife of the then Commandant formed the Royal Marines Girl Cadet Corps (RMGCC) with the aim of "the inculcation of discipline, individually and collectively, improvement of physique and carriage, habits of civility, punctuality, mental and bodily alertness, self-reliance, resourcefulness and comradeship". The RMGCC was only open to the girls of serving Royal Marines with an entrance fee of 15 shillings and weekly subscriptions of 2 pence. On 31 October 1930 the Boys and Girls RM Cadet Corps were, in common with other UK cadet forces, disbanded as part of the government's policy to withdraw funding from military cadet forces. They were quickly reformed as the 'Roymar' Boys and Girls Clubs but the demilitarisation of the Cadet Corps was not popular and by 1932 the Girls Club had reverted to their former name, the Boys Club following some years later.

A change in government led to the restoration of cadet forces in the late 1930s. The Boys and Girls cadets were reformed in 1945 upon the end of the Second World War, and being given back their tradition title of Royal Marines Volunteer Cadet Corps. However, at Portsmouth the girl cadets were not readmitted for unknown reasons and the unit there retained the 'Boys Corps' name until 1979; girls were eventually allowed to join Portsmouth Division RMVCC in 1992.

The RM Cadet Band was in the 1955 film 'The Cockleshell Heroes'

Extract from The Portsmouth News on 15 February 1901 reporting the first night of the RMA Cadet Corps in Eastney Barracks

R.M.A. BOYS' CORPS

STARTS WELL AT EASTNEY.

The Royal Marine Artillery Boys' Corps was formally inaugurated under most favourable auspices at a meeting held in the Mission Hall, Prince Albert-street, Eastney, on Thursday evening. There was a large attendance, and at the conclusion of the proceedings a large number of eligible lads gave their names in as recruits. The chair was occupied by one of the Captains of the Royal Marine Artillery, who mentioned that the corps is to be recruited from the sons of Royal Marine Artillerymen, the eligible ages for enlistment being from 10 to 15 years inclusive. The uniform will consist of a black cap with dark blue band and an R.M.A. grenade in front. It was hoped, he said, to instruct the boys in musketry, and one of the initial expenses would be the purchase of a couple of rook rifles which would take the Morris tube, and enable the boys to practice shooting at the range in the barracks. A certain number of rounds of ammunition would be supplied free, and afterwards the boys would be able to pay for any extra rounds they might require at the same rate as the R.M.A. men paid. In addition it was hoped to secure a dozen or so Service carbines, with which the lads could practice shooting at the rifle ranges at whatever distances the instructor thought fit. The boys would be able to qualify for musketry badges and would also qualify for promotion to non-commissioned officers as they

Chatham Division RMVCC transferred to the Sea Cadet Corps as a Marine Cadet Detachment of the Sea Cadet Corps when Pay and Records RM left Chatham in the 1960s. Deal Division RMVCC closed when the Royal Marines School of Music left the town and moved to HM Naval Base Portsmouth in the 1990s. Portsmouth Division RMVCC left the ancestral home of the Cadet Corps, Royal Marines Eastney, in December 1991 moving first to HMS Nelson and then to HMS Excellent, effectively taking over the RNVCC units that existed in those establishments.

TRAGEDIES

Two significant tragedies have affected the VCC, sadly in the same community. On 11 July 1929 four Royal Naval cadets (aged 10 to 12) plus scouts and firemen died during the Gillingham Fair when a fire fighting demonstration went disastrously wrong. In Chatham the RMVCC lost 24 cadets on the evening of 4 December 1951 when a bus drove into a column of cadets marching in Dock Road to watch an inter-unit cadet boxing match. The funerals of the cadets were attended by senior RN and RM officers with coffins carried by Royal Marines. The Captain General and CGRM attended the 50th anniversary memorial unveiling, accompanied by the remaining survivors and the families of the deceased.

MORE RECENT HISTORY

Portsmouth Division RMVCC formed a drum and fife band in 1952, latterly appearing at the Royal Tournament and at Wembley Stadium. It was also the main feature of the cadets' own annual Tattoo held annually at Eastney Barracks from 1957 to 1986. The band also appeared at the opening of the Corps Museum in 1975 and continues to this day. The RMLI Cadets of Gosport were reformed in the 1979 as a non-MOD sponsored marching band, still employing the traditions of the RMLI, but closed in 2006. Other RNVCC units opened during the 20th Century including HMS Collingwood, HMS Daedalus, HMS Dolphin, HMS Dryad, HMS Excellent, HMNB Chatham, HMS Sultan, and HMS Vernon.

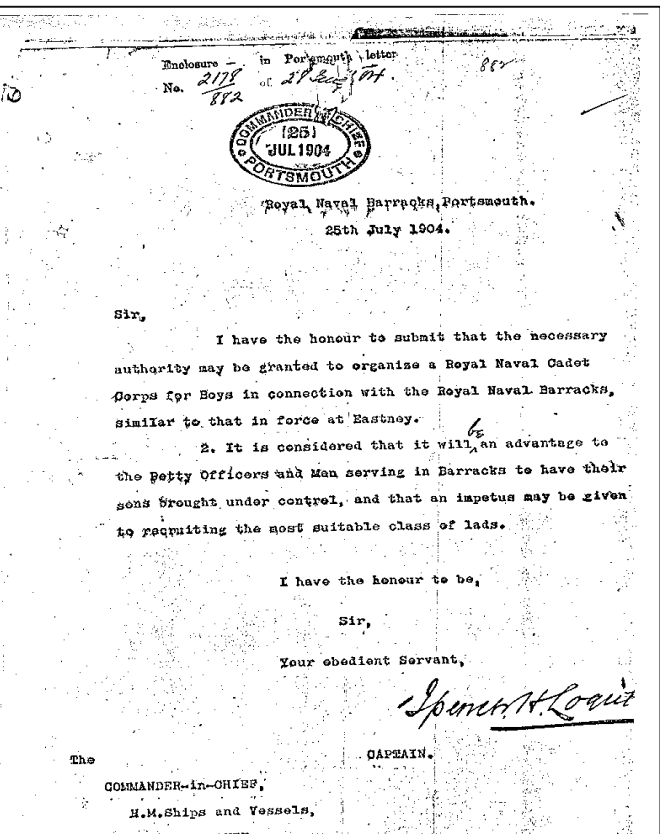
The use of the term 'Division' to describe each unit of the RMVCC was adopted in 1991 as recognition of the history of the Parent Corps upon the closure of RM Eastney, and reinstated a previous description of each RMVCC unit used earlier in the 20th Century.

"This beats anything my mates at school do"

The RMVCC was incorporated into the tripartite family of the Royal Marines Cadets on 25 September 2011, and permitted to use RMC insignia along with the hitherto Marine Cadet Detachments (MCD) of the Sea Cadet Corps and Combined Cadet Force (who were allowed to use the title 'Royal' from that date). Cadets in the RMVCC have always been designated as 'Royal Marines Cadets' from their formation in 1901.

Along with the rest of the RMC family, the cadets of the RMVCC were given the privilege of using the title "Her Majesty's" during a parade at Buckingham Palace in the presence of HRH the Prince Philip, Captain General Royal Marines, on Tuesday 6 July 2014. This was also in celebration of the 350th anniversary of the formation of the RMVCC's Parent Corps of Royal Marines.

"My cadet training certainly helped when I was at CTC"



The original letter establishing the Royal Naval Cadets in 1904

In January 2016, the VCC was re-confirmed as a Naval Cadet Force in COMCORE's new Cadet and University Youth (CUY) organisation, under FOST's command.



Royal Marines Cadets' graves in Chatham

And Finally

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

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By Phone: **02392 547495**

By Mail: **Headquarters VCC
158 Building
HMS Excellent
Whale Island
Portsmouth
Hampshire
PO2 8ER**

Website: www.volunteercadetcorps.org

You can also search for **Volunteer Cadet Corps** on **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Facebook**



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. Serving personnel are equally invited to volunteer and may often be excused other duties so they can dedicate time to supporting the sailors and marines of the future.

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. All of our CFAVs undergo an enhanced DBS check and we ask that applicants are patient whilst we undertake reference checks; the safeguarding of our cadets is our paramount duty.

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

Apply today...it's not just the cadets who can Meet The Challenge!

