



# CATERHAM SCHOOL COMBINED CADET FORCE

# INITIAL INFORMATION

FOR SECOND YEARS (AND PARENTS)



**WATCH OUR INFORMATION VIDEO [HERE!](#)**

## WHO?

We are a military-based youth organization who have been running military, adventure, outdoor and leadership training at Caterham for over 80 years. We have two sections (Army and Royal Air Force), staffed by officers and civilian instructors from the School's teaching staff, bursarial staff and external volunteers. We also have a permanent staff member (SSI), Capt Gary White, and are regularly assisted by personnel from the regular and reserve Armed Forces.



You are eligible to join us if you are in the Third Year, are physically and mentally able to meet the challenges we will offer, are willing to thrive on our opportunities and are prepared to play by our rules. We have about 180 cadets in Corps, Caterham's largest club, split more-or-less equally between sexes and spanning five academic years (Third Year to Upper Sixth). We would usually expect a majority of the Third Year to join us for one year at least, though membership is entirely voluntary.

## WHEN?

Corps parades every Wednesday in term-time after school, 1800 hrs – 2000 hrs. During these parade nights, lessons, training and activities will take place, covering the Army and RAF syllabuses as well as introducing other pursuits.

As well as Wednesday evenings, Corps is extremely active running field days, expeditions and courses across three terms. We will have an activity approximately **one out of every four weekends** – perhaps a Sunday spent honing marksmanship principles firing the GP rifle on a military range, or an adventure training field day including climbing, abseiling, orienteering and archery packages.



Residential camps are numerous and occur throughout the year. To mention a few: the middle three days of October half-term is a Recruits' Camp in Folkestone; an adventure training camp takes place in February half-term, caving, climbing, abseiling and walking the UK; the Easter holidays end with a three-day battle camp, Ex 'Summer Lightning'; the Summer Term features a Self-Reliance Expedition under canvass on the North Downs; and much, much more. The culmination of the



cadet year, however, comes in the form of Summer Camps in the summer holidays: a week spent immersed in military life and adventure at an Army or RAF station in the UK or overseas (places like Gibraltar or Cyprus), putting a year's training into practice.

## WHAT?

**T**raining for the Third Years ('Recruits') focuses on basic military skills: drill, skill-at-arms, fieldcraft, map and compass, first aid and basic campcraft. You will be under the leadership of your section and platoon NCOs: Sixth Formers who deliver your lessons, help you to pick up the unfamiliar military ways and look out for you at Corps. Over the course of the year, you are building towards tests which will win you the Army Cadet Syllabus I-Star or RAF Part I – and far more importantly the full title of 'cadet' with your regimental or RAF cap badge.



In your first year with us you can expect to fire (with live ammunition on the ranges or with blank on exercise) most of our main weapon systems: the bow; the Air Rifle; the .22-converted rifle; and the semi-automatic L98 A2, our general purpose rifle. You will also spend several nights in a shelter you've made, cooking your own food from military ration packs; overcome Army obstacle courses; parade in front of the whole

School; conduct a section attack on an enemy position; and navigate unaided over unfamiliar ground in day and night.

**A**nd that's just the 'green' stuff. If you join the RAF section you may well fly an aeroplane yourself (three years before you can drive a car!) under the tutelage of an RAF pilot – an unforgettable experience. And as for adventurous training, here's a few of the things we will be doing this year and did last year – not exceptional years, but all just part and parcel of our adventurous training programme:



- |                 |                |                |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| ➤ Rock Climbing | ➤ Laser Tag    | ➤ Zip Wire     |
| ➤ Kayaking      | ➤ Wet Caving   | ➤ Coasteering  |
| ➤ High Ropes    | ➤ Parachuting  | ➤ Karting      |
| ➤ Archery       | ➤ Bushcraft    | ➤ Trail Biking |
| ➤ Clay-pigeon   | ➤ Dry Caving   | ➤ Hiking       |
| ➤ Gorge Walking | ➤ Orienteering | ➤ Paintballing |

**A**s you progress through Corps, you'll find more and more doors of opportunity will open for you. You'll be instructed in leadership and methods of instruction; you might get a chance to complete a Gliding or Flying Scholarship, earning your 'wings' and qualifying to fly



either aircraft; you might join the regular-forces-run leadership courses, spending a week with serving soldiers and airmen honing your skills of command; you might even join Exercise Skyfall, our parachute cadre, and jump out of an aircraft at 3,500 feet solo for charity. The sky, very literally, is our limit.

## WHY?

**W**ell, why not? If you have the vaguest interest in adventurous pursuits, the military, achieving your potential, challenging yourself mentally and physically and, above all, having a great time with your friends, don't think twice.

**D**on't imagine you need to be super-keen on the Army or want to be the next Top Gun to join us: a vast majority of recruits have no special interest in the Armed Forces and we are certainly not a recruiting arm of the MoD. The uniform, the drill etc. provide the rationale and the framework through which we can foster and develop the qualities we value: **C**ourage, **C**ommitment and **F**riendship.

**A**nd of course most of what we do yields formal qualifications for your CV: whether it's cadet badges and ranks as you progress through training, DofE awards towards which cadetship counts so heavily, kayaking levels or course reports, universities and employers love the skills and experiences the Corps offers.





But the two biggest reasons are simple. **ONE:** you will not find experience such as we offer anywhere else. Nowhere else will a thirteen-year-old fly an aircraft, fire a rifle, survive



without a tent for 24 hours and much more beside all in a year; and nowhere else will that thirteen-year-old become a sixteen-year-old in charge of a group of ten young cadets, delivering their lessons, leading them in a night ambush or guiding them across unfamiliar terrain. **TWO:** it's great fun. Simple as that.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

In a few weeks' time at the end of term you will all spend an afternoon with us (**Friday 28 June 2024**). We'll put on a show, with some bangs and explosions, a couple of talks, and a chance to meet officers, NCOs and some of our current junior cadets. External Year 8s are very welcome to join us.



The next step for you will be to have a think over the summer holidays if you are going to give us a try – we very much hope you will and advise you do, of course. You will then be invited to come along to our Induction Period: for the **first five Wednesdays of the Autumn Term**, you can parade with us, meet the NCOs and officers, try our activities and see what you think – all with absolutely no obligation to stay after the five weeks are up.

During the course of these five weeks, the Commanding Officer will invite your parents to join him for a Parental Information Evening, where he and some of our senior cadets will answer any questions they might have about what your membership of Corps means.

Assuming you and they like what you see (and we like the look of you), you will then join us properly as a 'Recruit'. You will choose your section (Army or RAF), be issued with your uniform and begin the year's training programme. For those who make this decision, we ask that you stay with us until the end of the academic year (most, of course, will stay well beyond that).



# DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

**T**he School's separate DofE programme does not begin until Fourth Year, so there is **absolutely no** sense that you have to 'choose' between CCF or DofE.

1. In Third Year, there is no DofE!
2. Simply 'being' a cadet ticks off elements of DofE Awards.
3. The skills of campcraft, navigation and self-reliance cadets learn in Third Year at CCF mean they generally find their DofE expedition very manageable indeed.
4. Many of our cadets will do DofE as well as CCF in Fourth Year and above.
5. A majority of our senior cadets have Bronze, Silver or Gold DofE, and badges for these awards form part of the cadet uniform.



## WHO CAN I ASK ABOUT CCF?

**T**he formal channel for seeking further information is the CCF HQ - email is normally best ([ccf@caterhamschool.co.uk](mailto:ccf@caterhamschool.co.uk)). Alternatively, Capt Mathew Owen, OC Army as well as Teacher in Classics, should be able to answer most questions on training ([mathew.owen@caterhamschool.co.uk](mailto:mathew.owen@caterhamschool.co.uk)).

**B**ut the best way to find out more is to speak to those involved. Talk to Capt White or Flt Lt Hillier (Physics) when you see them around school; chat to Sixth Form cadets; and ask friends in years above what they've been doing.

**F**inally, don't worry if you don't think you understand everything about us yet. We will give you lots of information at the start of next term as well as arming your parents with a comprehensive information pack about life in Corps.



# FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Search for “Caterham  
School CCF” for videos  
(Click [here](#) for the Recruits’ Information Video)



@CaterhamSchoolCCF

## KEY FACTS SUMMARY

1. The CCF is voluntary. Attendance every Wednesday evening, 1800 hrs – 2000 hrs, is expected once joined. We are open to boys and girls in the Third Year and above.
2. We have both Army and Royal Air Force (RAF) sections.
3. There is a five-week Induction Period at the start of the Autumn Term. Recruits who join are expected to stay for the year. Membership is annual thereafter.
4. Recruits who join the CCF are issued items of uniform. This belongs to the Ministry of Defence, and is on loan whilst a member of the CCF.
5. Subscription: currently £75 per year. In their first year at CCF, however, cadets are asked to pay £200 (which includes £75 annual subs plus certain items of equipment, such as boots, socks, water-bottle, day-sack, cutlery set, hat and mess tins).
6. Hair on boys will be above the collar and ears. Boys will be clean shaven. Hair on girls will be tied back (if long) in a bun.
7. We have both Army and RAF sections. Training is a mix of military (infantry / aviation skills) and non-military (adventurous training and leadership). Elements of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme are covered in senior years.
8. Weapons: once trained and tested, recruits will be allowed to fire on a military range or training area, under careful supervision.
9. Flying (RAF Section only): Air Experience Flying (AEF) and Gliding (AEG) take place once or twice per term in school hours. Minimum criteria apply.
10. Key events are Remembrance Sunday Parade (Sunday 09 November), Corps Dinner (February) & Annual General Inspection (Sunday in early May). These are compulsory events for all members of Corps.
11. Summer Camp: usually separate week-long camps for the Army & RAF Sections. Both camps in Britain cost £200-£400. Every few years a combined overseas camp is held (Gibraltar in 2015), which costs rather more.



# KEY DATES FOR THE DIARY

## 2025

### **Friday 27 June – INFORMATION AFTERNOON**

All Second Years and external Year 8 pupils are invited to join us for an afternoon (1430 hrs – 1600 hrs) to get a flavour of what Corps is about.

### **4 x Weds from 10 September to 01 October – INDUCTION PERIOD**

All new Third Years can come along to our parade nights and see what they think.

### **Tue 23 September (tbc) – PARENTAL INFORMATION EVENING (VIRTUAL)**

All Third Years' parents can join a Teams meeting with the Commanding Officer and other officers / SNCOs to find out more about Corps and ask questions.

### **Sat 25 – Mon 27 October – RECRUITS' CAMP**

A three-day baptism of fire into military life, usually held at a military establishment in the South East. **Keep these dates in half-term free if you think you're going to join us!**

