



# RIPLEY ST THOMAS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



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May 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

## RIPLEY ST THOMAS ACADEMY COMBINED CADET FORCE

I am writing to let you and your child know about an exciting opportunity we have to offer at Ripley. From Year 9, pupils have the opportunity to join our **Combined Cadet Force (CCF)**, a cadet organisation offered in some schools across the UK. We currently only operate as **RAF**, giving pupils experience in, among other things, airmanship, principles of flight and, due to the wealth of experience of our staff, field-craft (navigation, camouflage and skill at arms).

We parade after school on a **Tuesday**, usually finishing at approximately **17:30**. A typical parade night consists of a short parade and then cadets take part in various activities. These activities could include basic first aid, weapon handling, shooting (once qualified), archery and lessons on the principles of flight, airmanship, navigation, or leadership skills. There are also regular opportunities to go to various air bases and activity centres across the UK. During these visits cadets have had the opportunity to fly a light aircraft with a trained instructor and have taken part in a variety of adventurous activities such as climbing, abseiling, shooting and leadership tasks.

Below are examples of activities we've undertaken in the last 12 months:

- Summer visits to Inskip Cadet Centre, for daily multi-activities, climbing/abseiling, archery, leadership, air rifle ranges and more.
- Taken part in a Royal Visit to The Lake District.
- Attended the RAF Air Cadets Muster, with over 1000 cadets, where many cadets got to fly in RAF Helicopters.
- A glowing Biennial Inspection by a Senior RAF Officer.
- Several trips to RAF Spadeadam in Cumbria for military equipment training.
- One of the largest groups on the City's Remembrance Parade.
- Third place listing on a multi-skilled Regional Competition, qualifying for Nationals.
- Placed 11<sup>th</sup> in the top 15 CCF-RAF Sections in the country. This was no mean feat for a unit that had not yet existed for 4 years, competing with units which have existed for 50+ years.
- Post Covid19, the return to flying at RAF Woodvale for selected cadets.

*Believe.....*

Uniform Provided. Cadets are provided with a full uniform of RAF blues, which is ordered during the summer break, ready to the Autumn term. We also purchase camouflaged 'Green', uniform as soon as we have accurate sizes and try to kit the new recruits before the summer break.

Uniform Not Provided. The only thing not provided is footwear. We do recommend the purchase of army style boots which cadets can buy through us (£27) or source themselves (cost varies from £45 to £200). We will order footwear during August, details to follow, to ensure the cadets have correctly fitting footwear at the beginning on the Autumn term. As they grow they can exchange boots for bigger sizes.

Costs. Due to the nature of the activities there is a small cost to joining Ripley CCF. This is currently **£40 a term** (the first payment isn't due until September). This allows us to offer a wide variety of activities, replace kit and reduce the costs of trips throughout the year. Funding for those pupils who qualify for the Pupil Premium is available.

First Attendance. In order to get accurate measurements of prospective cadets, to purchase or order the best fitting uniforms, we would need the new recruits to attend a separate parade on Monday 6 June 2022 after school (1500 to 1645 hours). Depending on the number of recruits we may need to continue taking measurements on the normal parade on Tuesday 7 June 2022 but we will notify those we don't cover on the Monday to attend on the Tuesday.

First Parade Attendance and Onwards. We expect the new recruit cadets to start parading with the contingent on Tuesday 14 June, whilst they are still in Year 8. This will allow us to hopefully kit them with some basic uniform whilst other items are ordered over the summer holidays ready for a September start.

Benefits. The CCF is an incredibly rewarding organisation to join as it gives pupils a great many opportunities to develop themselves as individuals, work as part of a team, lead teams and have fun too. As Contingent Commander, it is an absolute privilege to be able to see pupils grow from fresh recruits into young adults able to use skills they did not know they already possessed and to achieve something they never thought they would be able to do.

I asked our current cadets to provide some insight into why they enjoy attending cadets:

*"My favourite activity at cadets was flying because it allows you to experience the places around you from a different perspective. Cadets has taught me about leadership. It has helped me learn how to instruct and help people to get to their full potential."* **Corporal Hill, Year 10**

*"Being part of cadets has built my confidence to lead and helped me expand my ability to work as part of a team. I believe cadets has taught me some life skills such as the ability to follow instructions, lead others, work as a team and be punctual and well presented. As well as this I have learnt skills specific to the RAF CCF such as shooting, radio use, camouflage and many others. I would highly recommend the CCF to anyone interested and think it is an amazing experience that no one should miss out on."* **Corporal Tulley, Year 10**

Briefings to Potential Cadets and Parents. The Cadet staff team will be providing a **briefing to the Year 8 group at an Assembly on Thursday 19 May 2022**, including giving out joining paperwork (to be signed by parents) for those who may be immediately interested. **Additionally, we will be providing a further virtual briefing using Microsoft TEAMS at 1930 hours on Monday the 23 May.** This should only last approximately 45 minutes and give an opportunity **for parents** and pupils to see what we are offering, meet the team, and ask any

relevant questions they may have. You can join the meeting using a web browser by using the link below - you do not have to have MS Teams installed on your device.

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## Microsoft Teams meeting

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

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Communications and Information Flow to/from Cadets. Most of our detailed communication to/from cadets is via the school email system. Cadets will be informed of this, though we would ask parents to remind their child/ward to check their school personal email at least twice weekly. Otherwise they could miss out on activity opportunities. Cadets and parents can communicate with the CCF Staff via email using [ccf@ripley.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:ccf@ripley.lancs.sch.uk). We also strongly encourage both cadets and parents to follow our Twitter feed, @ripleyccf and @ripleystthomas. This is used to point cadets to details on school email or short notes to parents to publicise activities or potential delays in returning from activities.

The cadets section on Firefly has some excellent information and resources, including digital copies of this letter and accompanying enrolment forms. Unfortunately, we cannot accept digital copies of the completed enrolment and medical forms, they **must** be signed. Please fill in all medical sections fully. The information you supply is unlikely to prevent your son/daughter/ward joining cadets or limit what they can do; it will enable them to be fully supported so they can take part and achieve.

If you would like your son/daughter/ward to join the CCF, **please complete the form they will be given and ask your child to return it in a sealed envelope to the mail box in the CCF Portacabin** (on the back yard), **no later than Thursday 26 2022**. If they decide they wish to join after listening to the virtual session they can request forms be given to them using the email above and we will ensure they come through they form teacher.

Please contact Ms Atkinson or Mr McAlister via Parentline if you have any queries before the Teams meeting.

Yours faithfully,

*S ATKINSON*

S ATKINSON  
Pilot Officer (RAFAC)  
Contingent Commander