

MYTHBUSTER

Dealing with student misconceptions

Young people can have a fixed idea of the CCF – and it can be way off the mark. Here, experienced CFAVs address some common myths and queries

1 “My family can’t afford it”

Initially the only expense to the cadets will be the purchase of boots. However, when schools bulk-buy additional kit they are given a discount, which can reduce costs. Additional cost will only come when the cadets start to attend camps, but there are a range of things they can do to raise money to reduce the cost, such as bag packing in supermarkets.

2 “If I join the RAF section I’m going to be flying every week”

Unfortunately not. That might come as a disappointment so it’s worth managing expectations when first giving out information. There are lots of fantastic reasons to join the RAF section – aviation training, sports, competitions, and occasionally the chance to fly – so make sure you highlight all of these.

3 “It will be really militaristic – I’ll be marching all the time”

Drill is part of what the CCF does and it helps to encourage and support teamwork. But it is not the main part of the cadet experience. Work out what percentage of a cadet’s time will actually be spent on drill compared to the whole range of other activities they will take part in.

4 “I’ll get a gun and will be able to shoot at anything”

Well, obviously not. Shooting activities are strictly regulated and controlled, and cadets only get to shoot at targets once they are properly trained. Parents also often have

queries about shooting – but can be reassured that safety is always paramount.

5 “Annual camp will be like boot camp”

CCF camp has changed hugely in recent years. Far from being a boot camp, it is a sought after opportunity for cadets to experience activities not available in their schools, and to have lots of fun.

6 “Boys and girls will have to sleep in the same place on camp”

There is always more than enough accommodation to ensure that male and female cadets stay in separate living quarters. When sleeping in the field they are paired with someone of the same gender – so there is no reason for not attending camps.

7 “I only eat Halal meat so I won’t have any food on camp”

Every camp will cater for every dietary need – and that includes the military rations they’re given during field training.

8 “There’ll be no wifi on camp”

Actually, this one’s not a myth. They just have to live with it.



RESOURCES

WAYS OF PROMOTING YOUR CCF TO POTENTIAL CADETS

- » Use the brand centre on the CCF website to make posters, banners and bunting. See www.combinedcadetforce.org.uk/schools-area.
- » Ask your cadets to create their own resources, such as a leaflet about annual camp (with a checklist that includes what to take and what will be provided).
- » Encourage potential cadets to follow the school CCF social media channels to see what the cadets have been up to.
- » Organise a talk and/or Q&A session with an older cadet who can speak about their experiences in the CCF.
- » Show potential cadets the cadet videos on the CCF website.

Connected would like to thank Keith Smith of Whitgift CCF and Gary Newbrook of Rockwood Academy CCF for their contributions to this article

» ADDRESSING PARENTAL CONCERNS

It’s not just the potential cadets who might have concerns or questions. Have a look at the Summer 2017 edition of *Connected* for advice on engaging with parents or find it online at combinedcadetforce.org.uk/news-media-centre