

News story: Defence Secretary announces latest wave of cadet units in schools

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson at Phoenix Collegiate School in West Bromwich. Crown copyright.

Schools across the UK will benefit from the latest round of openings, including three in East Anglia, two in the East Midlands, four in Greater London, one in the North East, four in the North West, one in the South East, six in the West Midlands, three in Yorkshire & Humberside, one in Scotland and one in Wales.

The announcement came as the Defence Secretary had the opportunity to meet cadets at Phoenix Collegiate School in West Bromwich and see first-hand the new skills that students have gained.

Speaking at the event, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Being a cadet offers students unrivalled opportunities to develop new skills, enjoy unforgettable life experiences, and be inspired by our world class Armed Forces.

I'm delighted to announce a new round of cadet units in schools across the UK, showing our commitment to ensure students from all backgrounds have the chance to fulfil their potential.

The cadets I met today impressed me with their confidence, problem solving and teamwork – skills that will stand them in good stead in the future.

Phoenix Collegiate was approved in the last wave of cadet units, and has been on parade now for over a year.

The latest round of cadet units ensures the Government remains on target to have a total of 500 running in the UK by 2020. 418 cadet units are already up and running and this latest wave takes the total approved units to 453. Many are opened in less prosperous areas where opportunities for cadet units were previously limited.

The Cadet Expansion Programme is backed by £50 million funding from Libor fines, which covers set up costs, uniforms, equipment and training. The benefits of the cadet experience were highlighted in an independent report published by Northamptonshire University, which found that being a cadet can increase social mobility and help disadvantaged children reach their potential.

Robert Goodwill MP is also conducting independent research into how schools can best utilise their cadet units; assessing the benefits of having a military ethos and values in schools provides to its pupils. The findings will be completed by the end of September 2018.