

Thousands more pupils to benefit from cadet programme

Thousands of pupils in schools all over England will benefit from life skills that set them up for success as adults through a new £1.1 million investment to expand cadet units in schools.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced the expansion today (Friday 2 April), to increase capacity in existing state school-based cadet units in England, giving more pupils the opportunity to build important skills such as resilience, self-discipline, teamwork and leadership skills.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The values of our Armed Forces – those of resilience, perseverance, and teamwork – are the same that we want to instil in all our young people. These are skills that will serve pupils both now and well into adulthood.

As we move out of national lockdown and back to normality, we want to make sure that children have a balance between academic and extra-curricular activities to set them back on track towards excellent futures. The cadets programme will widen extra-curricular activities available to disadvantaged children, as well as boost a culture of self-discipline in schools.

The success of the programme since its launch in 2012, leading to 500 units in schools, is testament to a strong partnership between schools and the Armed Forces in enriching pupils' skill set and extending a culture of discipline in education to other areas of a young person's life, including extra-curricular activities.

The boost to the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) builds on the Government's support for children's wellbeing as they make the transition back to the classroom, as well as its £1.7 billion investment in programmes targeted at young people who may benefit from additional help with academic, social or emotional skills.

The joint Ministry of Defence and Department for Education programme (CEP) originally launched in 2012 with a target of creating 100 cadet units in state secondary schools in England, which was later boosted to having 500 units in UK schools by April 2020 due to the success of the programme.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I thoroughly welcome the expansion of the Cadet Units in schools. This is about giving pupils the opportunity to develop a range of

important skills beyond academic learning, teaching resilience, leadership and working as a team.

The scheme was introduced by the Government to increase the numbers of units which could equip young people with unique skills and experiences which can help them in day-to-day life.

Research has shown the cadets offers a range of benefits to individuals and the wider community, including:

- Increased an individual's belief in their ability to complete specific tasks
- Improved their motivation;
- Improved school attendance which leads to better behaviour and attitudes;
- May lead to greater academic success which can contribute to increasing social mobility.

Today's announcement reaffirms the Government's support for achieving the ambition of having 60,000 cadets in school units, and delivers on the Education Secretary's commitment to support School Staff Instructors (SSI) in Combined Cadet Forces (CCFs) in state schools in England to sustain cadet units in schools, which in turn will assist with the growth of cadet numbers, ensuring that many more young people benefit from what cadets offer. Funding will go directly to schools to employ School Staff Instructors.

The announcement to expand cadet units in schools and develop "soft skills" in children and young people during the pandemic, builds on the Government's £1.7 billion investment in recovery support to help tackle the impact of any lost learning and physical time in school during the pandemic.