



Guide for Families

1921 (Lewisham) Squadron



1. Introduction

1921 (Lewisham) Squadron welcomes your child as a junior cadet at the Squadron, and you as supporters. This guide is intended to provide you with information about the Squadron and its activities. If you require any further information, or can think of ways we can improve this pamphlet, please get in touch.

The Squadron is staffed by a group of volunteers. Some of the volunteers are Commissioned Officers in the Training Branch of the Volunteer Reserve of the RAF. Others have positions as Adult Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs). In addition to the uniformed staff members, we also have civilian instructors, who support the work that we do. The staff have undergone selection, checks and training to ensure that we deliver a safe, varied and stimulating training programme.

The staff team are:

Officer Commanding Flight Lieutenant David Preece oc.1921@aircadets.org
RAFVR(T)

Adult NCOs: Warrant Officer Andy Lidinson ATC
Warrant Officer John Ingram ATC
Flight Sergeant Pat Adams ATC
Sergeant Steven Causton ATC

Civilian Instructors Mr Ken Hull
Miss Farzana Khan

The Squadron is supported by a Civilian Committee which assists the Squadron in numerous ways, including fundraising and organizing events. The civilian committee meets once every three months.

Chair of the Committee Mr Alan Partington
Honorary Secretary Mr Robert Cheyne
Honorary Treasurer Mr Philip Mc Elhatton
Members of the Committee *We welcome new members from parents and friends*

2. Parade nights and attendance

We parade on Monday and Friday evenings, from 7pm to 9.30pm (1900-2130). The Squadron is located on the site of Napier House Territorial Army Centre, Baring Road, Grove Park (SE12 0BH). Please note that there is no parking on the TA site, and the local roads can be difficult to park in.

We expect cadets to attend as many of the Squadron's parade nights as possible to ensure that they obtain maximum benefit from the training programme. If you are going away on holiday, please remind your child to let us know in advance of the parade night, so that we can plan accordingly. We understand that cadets may want to take time away from the Squadron during exam periods: this needs to be agreed with the Squadron in advance, but is always supported.

We accept that, on occasion, something unforeseen may happen which means a cadet is unable to attend a parade night at short notice. In this case, please notify the Squadron as soon as possible. You can do this by telephone on the parade night, sending us an email, or leaving a message on the Squadron's answerphone.

3. Training and progression

Initially, your child will join a recruit intake, which is a group of cadets who will undertake their initial training together. Each intake is looked after by Cadet Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), who are first port of call for any questions for the recruits, and will provide guidance, standards and instruction in the first months of their time on the Squadron.

This intake is split in to three phases, expected to last four weeks per phase. Basic checks of understanding must be completed at each phase: cadets who do not meet the standards, or who have missed significant portions of the training, will be required to undergo further training if they wish to continue.

The first "basic" phase gives them an understanding of how to be a cadet: teaching them about their role, the unit, and how to work in a military style environment. They will learn teamwork, communication, and drill skills to be ready for their first drill test.

If they are successful, they receive the blue Royal Air Force uniform, and commence the second phase of "Cadet" training. This teaches them about the Royal Air Force, and skills of map reading and airmanship. They will undertake a formal interview with the Officer Commanding, to confirm their interest and commitment to join the Squadron. If successful, they will be invited to graduate as an intake. This is a formal parade, where parents, friends and supporters are warmly encouraged to join us to welcome the recruits to the Squadron as they enrol as cadets.

Finally, they take part in the "First Class" training phase, which builds their skills in some of our core activities – including qualifying with First Aid Qualifications, and basic range safety qualifications. On completion of their final phase of training, they are posted to a regular Flight, and begin the rest of their cadet careers!

Further training progression involves studying a range of practical and aviation studies which can lead to the award of a BTEC in Aviation Studies. Cadets also take part in drill, target shooting, sports, leadership training, night exercises and aircraft recognition. Most of our training is conducted on parade nights, with weekend activities arranged to extend and develop the cadets' skills. The weekends are not compulsory – but are excellent opportunities for the cadets, and will be enjoyable as well as great training. The Squadron is involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and all cadets are encouraged to participate.

All cadets are encouraged to achieve their potential. Some cadets – those who show aptitude, set a good example, and demonstrate leadership potential may be selected to become Cadet NCOs, who help the staff to manage the cadets and some activities.

4. External activities

The Squadron has an extremely active programme of external activities. These can be broadly broken down into 4 types.

1. Squadron activities: these include Duke of Edinburgh's expeditions, other expeditions, weapons training, trips to RAF Stations, and other fun trips.
2. Inter-Squadron activities: these include sporting events and other competitions.
3. Air Cadet Core activities: these include flying, gliding and target shooting.
4. Local community activities: these involve helping out local organizations, and Lewisham Council, with events that they run. Cadets are encouraged to show their civic pride and are usually very welcome at a range of events throughout the year.

We expect all cadets to participate in the Remembrance Sunday parade. Parents who wish to withdraw their child from this event are asked to write in to do so.

Cadets learn about the activities through briefings and sign up sheets on the Squadron. Cadets are given basic information and dates, and are then expected to ensure they are available for selection if they sign up and commit to an event. If your child is not doing many weekend activities, please do ensure that they are encouraged to sign up and participate!

Briefing sheets are issued for all events, giving details of the event times, locations, required equipment and any costs. If your child does not bring one of these home, please encourage them to get hold of the information.

All adventure training activities, and some other activities, require consent forms. Other activities require reply slips and payments. Please help us by returning consent forms promptly.

5. Medical and Special requirements

There are no formal medical requirements for cadet membership, and all applications will be considered. Equally, children with learning or other difficulties are welcome to join the Squadron – our practical training is often an excellent counterpoint to classroom-based activities and offer a chance for children to excel. Any medical or support issues can be discussed with the staff in confidence when the recruit phase is ongoing.

It is in the child's, your and our best interests that all known medical conditions are declared when joining the ATC, and that they are indicated on the Consent to Join form (RAF 3822A). If any conditions materialize after your child has joined, please let us know in writing. These medical conditions should be restated on consent forms for camp/activities. Cadets with personal medication (e.g. asthma, hayfever) should carry their medication at each activity. Cadets who may have emergency medication (e.g. epi-pen for anaphylaxis) should ensure that the Squadron has a spare pen or medication for activities. Please ensure you speak to the Officer Commanding if your child has this sort of medical condition.

Some activities have specific requirements, and others have a relatively strenuous level of activity which requires a basic level of fitness. In all cases, we will try to support cadets who wish to participate, but we may need to exclude individuals for certain events. We will always be willing to explain our decision in conversation with parents – please do contact us if you feel this has happened.

6. Discipline

The ATC is a uniformed youth organization which is parented by the Royal Air Force. We require a level of maturity above other youth organizations and we expect self discipline to be maintained at all times. We also require cadets to act in a mature and professional manner when dealing with the staff and other cadets.

Each parade night commences with “first parade”, where the uniform, haircut, smartness of bearing and personal hygiene are assessed. Please help us by encouraging (or supporting) your child to polish their shoes and iron their uniform appropriately. They will be taught how to do this, and should be confident in doing this for themselves: please do not do this for them!

Our standards do not stay on the Squadron. Should cadets join a weekend or residential activity, they need to clearly understand that the military ethos will pervade, and some of their ordinary privileges may be restricted: we typically restrict access to mobile phones, for example, during the working day. We are also quite restrictive on access to cameras, or the use of photographs from certain activities. This will always be clearly explained to cadets, and they should be in no doubt about what is expected of them. Our standards may also be enforced across multimedia or social networking sites where we feel that the Squadron has been brought in to disrepute. Any queries on this may be directed to the Officer Commanding at any stage.

Repeated issues in any of these areas will result in disciplinary action, which may, in extreme cases, involve suspension or recommendation of dismissal. Matters of a serious disciplinary nature will be dealt with “in house” where appropriate, but may be discussed with parents.

7. Costs and Expenses

Our priority for Squadron activities is to deliver value for money. We try to ensure minimal cost for all activities, and will be clear about where the money we charge is being spent. There is assistance available for those who may not be able to afford activities. Please contact the Civilian Committee via the Squadron.

All on-Squadron activities have to be funded from the Squadron’s funds. These come from the combination of cadet subscriptions, fund raising and occasional donations. The subscription for enrolled cadets is **£5 per month**. We encourage subscriptions **to be paid by standing order** (or by cheque in exceptional circumstances) – please complete the Standing Order Mandate. Subscriptions must be paid regardless of attendance.

Some off-Squadron activities are paid for by the Royal Air Force, for example flying and gliding, and we may only make a small charge to cover costs of transport. Other activities have to be paid for in advance.

8. Uniform and Squadron equipment

Junior Cadets will be expected to wear coveralls for the first part of their recruit training. Should they make it through in to the Cadet phase, and their blue uniform is ready, we will provide them with the required uniform. This is likely to be a mixture of new and part-worn uniform.

All cadets need to purchase a pair of service-style shoes by the time that they parade in uniform, and a 'combat' uniform of green disruptive pattern material by the end of their First Class training phase. Guidance is available on both the types and sources of this uniform – please do encourage your child to ask and get all the information they can before spending money. Your first port of call should always be the Squadron – we have some stock available for sale to the cadets at cheap prices.

Please follow the instructions for washing each item of uniform. **PLEASE CHECK THE POCKETS BEFORE WASHING** – the cadet's record of service book, when issued, is ruined by a visit to the washing machine.

The Squadron has a good stock of adventure training equipment and syllabus training manuals for issuing to cadets. These are loaned to cadets for specific activities, and we expect them to be returned promptly and in good condition. All losses, whether of uniform or other equipment, must be paid for. In addition, major damage to items of Squadron equipment must also be covered.

Cadet uniform is loaned to the cadet for the duration of their service. We are happy to exchange clothing that no longer fits (or is not serviceable) – this must be washed and brought back for us to swap. When a cadet decides to leave, we expect the uniform to be washed and returned in full. Failure to do so may result in a bill being sent home to parents.

9. Getting involved

Keeping in touch with the Squadron and our activities should be an easy process. We have a Squadron website (www.1921squadron.org.uk), that is regularly updated with key news and photographs. We also have a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/1921-Lewisham-Air-Cadets/294346270617939>) which you and your cadet can “like”, for more photographs and an update on our regular activities. We strongly encourage you to keep in touch with what we are doing and see how your child is getting on!

The Squadron organizes a presentation evening each year for you, supporters and guests of the Squadron, to see what we do and find out about the cadets achievements and activities. This event includes the presentation of Squadron trophies.

Supporting the Squadron – Standing Orders

The regular subscriptions paid by parents and cadets (just £5 per month) are critical to our success as a unit. If you can pay by Standing Order, it makes life significantly easier for all concerned, and would be much appreciated.

Supporting the Squadron – Civilian Committee

Each Squadron is supported by a Civilian Committee – a group of volunteers who meet 3-4 times per year to look after the Squadron’s funds and to support the Officer Commanding. Made up of local community members, friends – and crucially, current parents – the Committee aim to provide the Sqn with the material resources to do our training well: whether it’s fundraising for activities, or a new minibus! If you feel like you could commit to a few meetings a year, and would be interested in research, grant applications and management of money, please do contact us. The current Chair, Alan Partington via the OC (oc.1921@aircadets.org) would be delighted to hear from you.

Supporting the Squadron – Potential Staff

If you are jealous of all the activities that your child is now getting involved in, and would like to know more about becoming a member of staff, then please do speak to us. There are a variety of roles and commitments available – no former military or specialist experience is needed: just an enthusiasm and willingness to get involved. Email the Officer Commanding (oc.1921@aircadets.org) to make an appointment, and we can talk you through what’s available.

We are always looking for new staff and new members of the civilian committee. Please get in touch with the OC if you are interested.

SQUADRON SUMMARY INFORMATION

Address	Napier House TA Centre Baring Road, Grove Park, SE12 0BH
Parade Nights & Times	Monday & Friday 7pm – 9.30pm
Contact – Telephone	0203 248 2052
Contact – Email Address	oc.1921@aircadets.org
Website	www.1921squadron.org.uk
Facebook Group	https://www.facebook.com/pages/1921-Lewisham-Air-Cadets/294346270617939

