863 (Thurston) Sqn
AIR TRAINING CORPS



Recruit's Guide

ROYAL AIR FORCE AIR CADETS
the next generation










HELMET

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WELCOME TO 863 (THURSTON) SQUADRON

This guide will be a useful reference for you starting your career with the Air Training Corps.

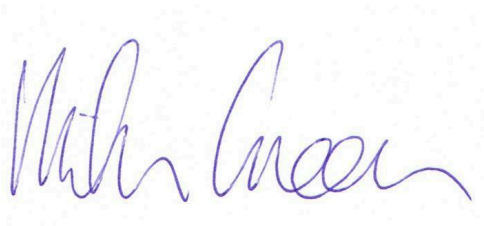
As a Cadet you will have the opportunity to explore the outdoors, take part in adventure training, attend camps at RAF stations within the UK and, if you work hard, visit locations abroad.

Flying is central to our purpose and the cadet experience. You will have the chance to go gliding, powered-flying and complete the Air Cadet Pilot Scheme.



Developing leadership qualities is very important to us and you will become a more confident and responsible person by engaging in our activities and training.

As a member of the Air Training Corps you will have many opportunities to challenge yourself and develop your skills. I welcome you to this Squadron and wish you good luck in your endeavours.



Flight Lieutenant (Flt Lt) Miles Green RAFAC
Officer Commanding 863 (Thurston) Sqn ATC

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

First of all there are some important rules you need to remember...



TIMINGS

The Squadron parades on Monday & Thursdays from 1900hrs - 2115hrs. Follow the service rule for timings - this means always be at **least five minutes early**. If you are told to be somewhere at a particular time then you should always be there five minutes earlier.

ABSENCES

If you are unable to attend a parade evening then you need to inform the Squadron prior to your absence. You will do this by logging onto your cadet portal account and finding the absence form to fill out which will be for either when you're on holiday or when you can't make it due to no transport or other reasons.

If you do not inform Squadron staff or your flight NCOs prior to an absence, your absence will be recorded as "Unauthorised" and your flight will lose points in the inter-flight competition.

UNIFORM

Usually Mondays are blue uniforms and Thursdays are combat uniforms. If you are in any doubt check cadet connect which is where the training programme is published. You will be told what uniform to wear at the next parade night at the end of the night (Final Parade)..

KIT

Regardless what activity you will be taking part in you must always have a notebook & pen



ADDRESSING PERSONS

You will be addressed by your rank of *"Cadet"* e.g. *Cadet Smith*

ADDRESSING CADET NCOs (NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS)

You will address Cadet NCOs by their rank

"Corporal/Sergeant/Flight-Sergeant/Cadet Warrant Officer"



ADDRESSING STAFF NCOs (NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS)

You will address NCOs by their rank

"Sergeant/Flight-Sergeant/ ("Ma'am/Sir" if a Warrant Officer).



ADDRESSING COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

You will address all Commissioned Officers as

"Sir/Ma'am".



ADDRESSING CIVILIAN INSTRUCTORS AND ALL OTHER ADULT CIVILIANS

You will address Civilian Instructors and all other adult Civilians as *"Sir/Ma'am"*



SALUTING

Saluting or 'paying compliments' is only done when you are wearing uniform and your beret. You only salute Commissioned Officers, whether they are in uniform or not.



OFFICERS ENTERING A ROOM

When an officer enters a room, the senior NCO or a cadet (if an NCO is not present) should bring the room to attention:

"Room, Room SHUN!"

The officer should be saluted; the officer will return the salute. The officer will issue orders e.g. *"Carry on Corporal"*

ENTERING A ROOM WITH OCCUPIED BY AN OFFICER

When entering a room occupied by an Officer(s) you must knock and wait to be invited in. On entering the room you are to come to attention, salute the senior Officer present in the room.

TASKING

Not sure what you should be doing? Need some help? First, ask a member of the recruit training team and they will direct/advise you. If you still need help - ask an NCO and failing that, ask a member of staff.

CADET RANK STRUCTURE

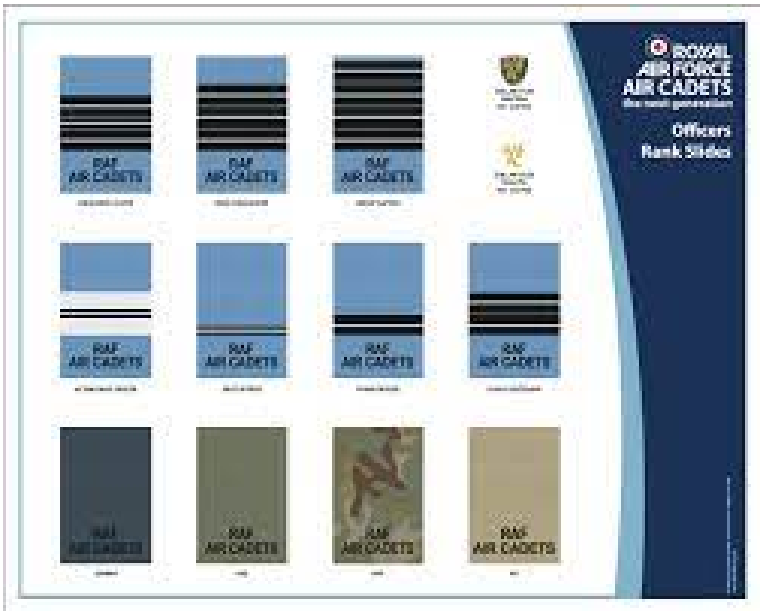
As you progress through your cadet career, and gain experience in leading other cadets, you may also obtain promotions through the rank structure.

See overleaf for all ranks

Don’t Salute



Salute



CLASSIFICATIONS

During your time as an Air Cadet, you will study a variety of classroom-based subjects, ranging from Navigation to Rocketry. As you progress through these subjects you will take a number of short exams, which mean that you progress through a series of grades, known as “classifications”.

The classification badges are illustrated in order, below.

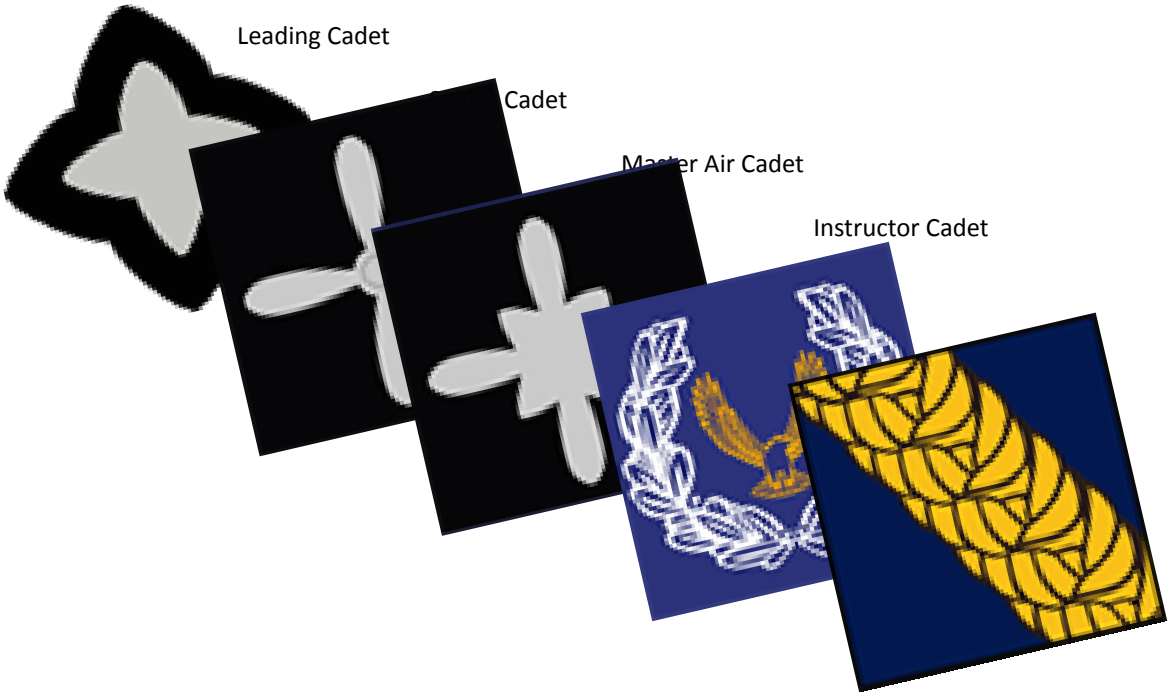
First Class Cadet

Leading Cadet

Cadet

Master Air Cadet

Instructor Cadet



KEY CONTACTS

SQUADRON STAFF

Flt Lt Miles Green	**OFFICER COMMANDING 863 SQUADRON**
CI Jacqui Sinnett	**SQUADRON ADJUTANT**
CI Matthew Millard	**SQUADRON TRAINING OFFICER**

A FLIGHT CADET NCOS

FS Trumpess	**A Flight Commander**
FS Weeks	**A Flight 2IC**

B FLIGHT CADET NCOS

FS Colinwood-hall	**B Flight Commander**
SGT Scarbro	**B Flight 2IC**

SAFETY

FIRE

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE:

1. Shout “Fire, Fire, Fire!“
2. Operate the fire alarm
3. Call the fire service by dialling 999
4. Leave the building
5. Go to the assembly point



ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM:

1. Leave the building by the nearest exit
2. Close doors and windows behind you
3. Go to the assembly point

The squadron HQ assembly point outside the building next to the school tennis courts. You should have been shown the fire exits when you were first shown around the building, but if you are not sure then ask an NCO.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE CADETS TO ATTEMPT TO FIGHT A FIRE.

SUSPICIOUS PERSONS

Do not approach them. Report it to a member of staff immediately.

SUSPICIOUS ITEMS

Do not attempt to open, touch or move it. Report it to a member of staff immediately.



UNIFORM

RECRUIT

As a recruit, you will wear the following:

- Comfortable clothes - suitably warm or cold
- Your green overalls, affectionately known as ‘grow bags’.
- Training shoes

NO 2 SERVICE DRESS - "LIGHT BLUES"

	
MALE	**FEMALE**
Beret	Beret
Light Blue Shirt	Light Blue Shirt
Black Tie	Black Tie
Jumper	Jumper
Brassard	Brassard
Trousers	Skirt
Belt/Stable Belt*(Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)	Stable Belt***(Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)
Black Socks*	Barely Black Tights (15 denier)*
Black Shoes*	Black Shoes*

*Not issued by the Sqn
**Can be loaned from the Sqn on request
***Can be purchased

	
MALE	**FEMALE**
Beret	Beret
Light Blue Shirt	Light Blue Shirt
Black Tie	Black Tie
Brassard	Brassard
Trousers	Skirt
Belt/Stable Belt***(Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)	Stable Belt*** (Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)
Black Socks*	Barely Black Tights*
Black Shoes*	Black Shoes*

*Not issued by the Sqn
**Can be loaned from the Sqn on request
***Can be purchased.

NO 2C WORKING DRESS "DARK BLUES"





MALE	FEMALE
Beret	Beret
Dark Blue Shirt	Dark Blue Shirt
No Tie	No Tie
Brassard	Brassard
Trousers	Skirt
Belt/Stable Belt* (Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)	Stable Belt*(Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)
Black Socks*	Barely Black Tights*
Black Shoes*	Black Shoes*

*Not issued by the Sqn
**Can be loaned from the Sqn on request
***Can be purchased from the Sqn

NO 3 SERVICE DRESS - MTP

	
MALE	**FEMALE**
Beret	Beret
Olive Green/Black T-Shirt*	Olive Green/Black T-Shirt*
MTP Shirt**	MTP Shirt**
MTP Jacket**	MTP Jacket**
MTP Trousers**	MTP Trousers**
Trouser Twists 'Twisties' ***	Trouser Twists 'Twisties' ***
Olive Green Belt – For physical activities Or Stable Belt – For non-physical activities (Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)	Olive Green Belt – For physical activities Or Stable Belt – For non-physical activities (Stable Belt is optional for NCOs and can be purchased from the Web)
Dark Coloured Socks*	Dark Coloured Socks*
Brown Assault Boots*	Brown Assault Boots*

*Not issued by the Sqn
**Can be loaned from the Sqn on request
***Can be purchased

UNIFORM PREPARATION



The following pages will explain how to prepare and wear your uniform correctly.

You will be inspected regularly by both the Cadet NCOs and the Adult NCOs to make sure that you are maintaining the required standard.

If you are uncertain about any aspect of your uniform then you should ask a cadet NCO for help.

WEDGEWOOD AND WORKING BLUE SHIRT

Both shirts should be kept clean and properly ironed at all times.



Both shirts should have a single crease in each sleeve, running from the centre of the epaulette to the cuff.

During the summer months, when you are not wearing your jumper, your working blue shirt is worn with sleeves rolled to just above the elbow. The width of the fold should be approximately three finger-widths. Working blue shirts are worn open-necked, with no tie, and so the collar needs to be ironed flat.

Shirts are easy to iron if you know how - you will need a good quality iron and water spray. You do not need to use spray starch on your shirt.

HOW TO IRON YOUR SHIRT:

Iron the inside of the collar.

Undo the epaulettes and iron them.

Place the sleeve along the length of the ironing board. Use a good water sprayer and soak the crease - not too much though. Place the iron at the cuff end of the sleeve while pulling the crease to keep it tight. Press firmly on the iron and steadily move up to the shoulder end of the sleeve. Repeat for the other sleeve and you should have a perfect pair of creases.

Place one of the shoulders into the end of the ironing board so that the yoke lies along it and iron that.

Take your shirt off the board and place one of the sides on so that the neck is at the end of the board.

Place the back of the shirt on the board next and iron the back of the shirt (you will have to do this in two parts).

Now place the other front panel on the board and iron that.

Your shirt should now be neatly ironed! Remember to make sure that you keep it on a hanger when you are not wearing it so that it does not become creased.

TROUSERS

Take care ironing trousers as you can make the material shine if you don't follow this simple guide.



Place the front crease of one leg onto the ironing board.

Pull both ends of the crease and make sure no material is ruffled up underneath.

Spray the crease with your water sprayer.

Place a plain (preferably white) cotton cloth over the crease and spray this too.

Now place your iron on the cloth over the crease and press firmly, and slowly move the iron up to the crease taking care not to go off the cloth and onto your trousers. Repeat as many times as necessary to do the entire crease.

Repeat the process in the following order: next front crease, then rear creases.

The use of a cloth prevents shining of the material when the iron is placed directly on to the material. You end up with razor sharp creases with a shiny patch down one side which looks pretty daft.

Once you have ironed your trousers, you will need to keep the creases pin sharp. Use a purpose made trouser hanger - available from all good military surplus stores and hardware stores.

SKIRT



As with trousers, skirts should be ironed with a pressing cloth to prevent damage to the fabric.

Turn the skirt inside out and slide onto the end of the ironing board.

Move the lining out of the way.

Spray the skirt with water and iron with a pressing cloth between the iron and the skirt.

Rotate the skirt around the ironing board until the whole skirt has been ironed.

As with the rest of your uniform, make sure that you hang your skirt up as soon as it is ironed.

JUMPER



The jumper should be neatly pressed and free of fluff and bobbles. Iron the epaulettes and fabric patches with a pressing cloth and water spray.

SOCKS AND TIGHTS

Male cadets should wear plain black socks.

Female cadets should wear 15 denier Barely Black tights.

HAIR

Male cadets should be clean shaven and keep their hair short and tidy.

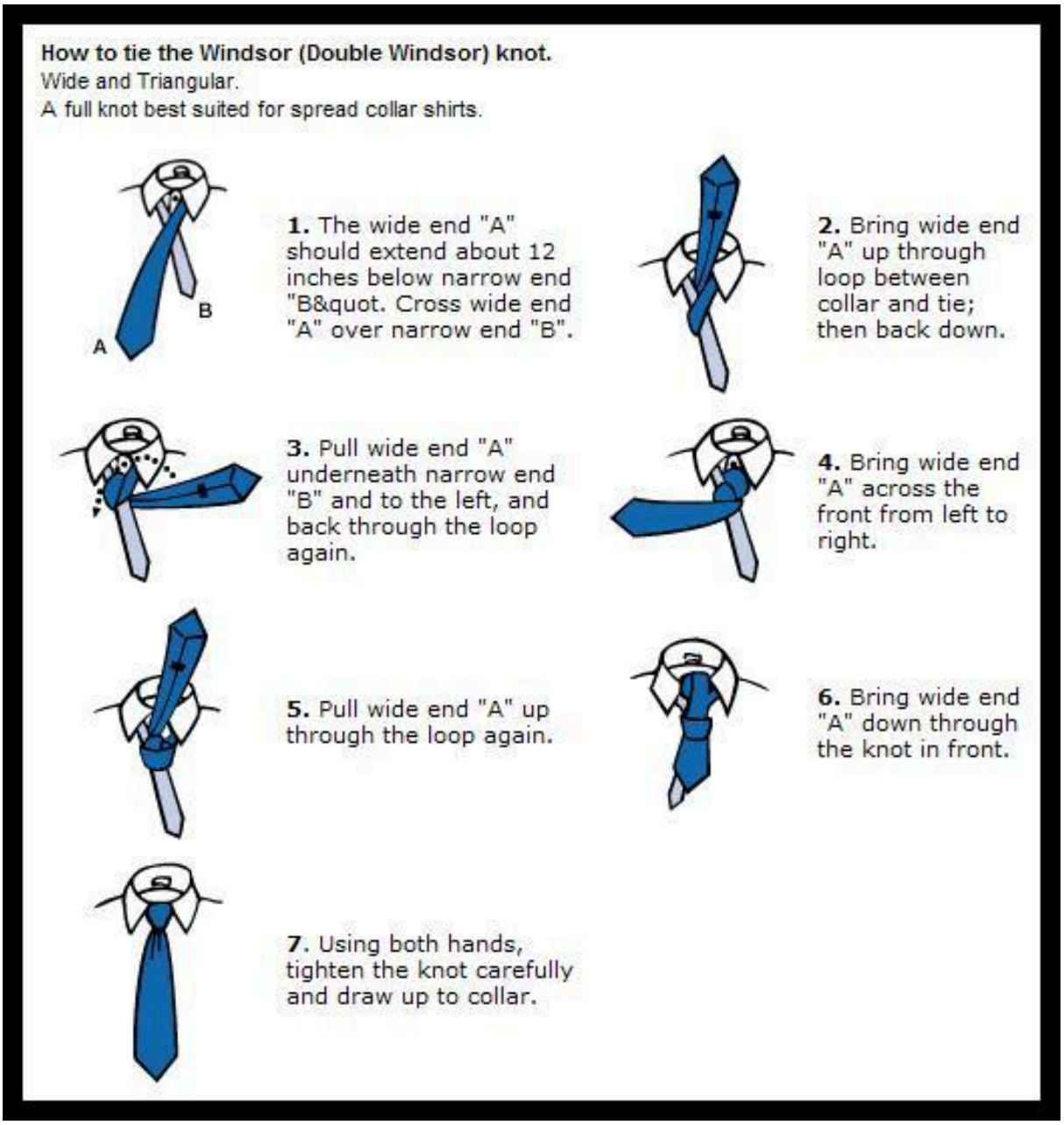
Female cadets may either have short hair, or keep their hair tied neatly in a bun, held with a bun net and hair grips that blend with the hair colour.

BRASSARD

The brassard should be pressed flat and worn on the right arm. All badges are to be sewn on neatly in the correct position with dark coloured thread.

TIE

The tie should be tied in a Windsor knot, as shown below. The bottom of the tie should line up with the bottom of your belt buckle.



SHOES

Your shoes are not issued as part of your initial uniform issue, so you will need to purchase them.

The recommended shoe is an RAF parade shoe. They come in a pattern for female and male cadets. The male pattern has a toe cap that can be highly polished. Female shoes do not have a toe cap.



Male pattern shoes with toe caps



Female pattern shoes without toe caps

Search the web for “RAF Parade Shoes male” or “RAF Parade Shoes female” to buy shoes.

Your shoes need to be polished until they are shiny.



You will be shown how to clean your shoes during your recruit training.

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to polish your shoes - different people find that different techniques work best, so you will have to find a way that suits you.

This is just one way of polishing your shoes to the required standard.

Begin with Kiwi Black shoe polish, a soft duster or silver cloth, cotton wool balls and a pot of clean cold water.

Dip the duster into the water until it is wet.

Put a small amount of polish onto the cloth and work the polish into the shoe in circular motions.

Keep adding water and polish to the cloth and polish until a shine begins to appear.

When the shoe is beginning to shine, swap the cloth for a wet cotton wool ball and continue with smaller amounts of polish and more water.

When the shoe is very shiny, run it under a cold tap to run the water droplets off the shoe.

This takes patience if you have a new pair of shoes, but once they are polished, they will be easy to maintain if you store them in a shoebox.

BOOTS



Your boots are not issued as part of your initial uniform issue, so you will need to buy them.

They should be brown, but if you can only get hold of black boots this is acceptable.

The military do not have one style of boot, so there is no one recommended boot.

Search the web for "MTP Combat Boots" and choose brown ones. They range in price from £30 to £200. The £30 boots, for growing feet is fine.

Your combat boots do not need to be polished to the same standard as your parade shoes; however they do need to be reasonably well polished with black or brown shoe polish (as appropriate) and free from mud and dirt.

BERET

Your beret is worn with all types of uniform.

When you first receive your beret you will need to mould it so that it fits your head.

Your beret is worn with the badge one inch above the left eye. The fabric of the beret should be pulled down over your right ear.



MTP SHIRT

Your MTP shirt needs to be ironed flat with creases down the centre of each sleeve.

Your DPM shirt is worn over a neatly ironed green t-shirt with the sleeves rolled up to just above the elbow.

MTP TROUSERS

Your MTP Trousers should be ironed with a single crease down the front and back of each leg.

MTP JACKET/SMOCK

Your MTP Jacket should be clean and free from creases.

CONTACTS

CADET PORTAL

This is where you find out about events and sign up to activities

https://cadets.bader.mod.uk/

Scan this code

Squadron events and activities are posted on Cadet Portal. Cadets can sign up for activities directly. Staff will give updates for cadets and parents and can use Discord or Whatsapp to communicate. Reminders for upcoming events will be posted and updated here on Cadet Portal.

Documents, forms and other important information will be hosted on the portal and can be easily downloaded and printed at home.

Cadet absences can be notified through cadet portal.

Please note that it is **compulsory** for cadets to sign up to Cadet Portal. Parents can find out most things from the Parent Group on Whatsapp.

SQUADRON CADETS DISCORD

Scan this code

Under 18's are not allowed to participate in our Sqn Whatsapp group (RAFAC Rules) - so cadets must communicate using Discord.

Here is the link: https://discord.gg/EF22pDuV9V

Scan the QR Code left to join the Discord server. The Sqn training programme and details for upcoming events and opportunities are posted here.

This is a forum where you can ask questions of staff, NCOs and fellow cadets.

STAFF EMAIL ADDRESSES

E-mail addresses to for all staff accounts are as follows:

Commanding Officer: oc.863@rafac.mod.gov.uk – this is to contact the commanding officer Flt Lt Green directly. This is primarily for important administrative matters, authorisations or safeguarding issues. Before contacting this address, please consider beforehand whether the Duty Officer, Adjutant, SWO or Training Officer would be more appropriate to contact.

Adjutant: Adj.863@rafac.mod.gov.uk – This is for the Squadron Adjutant whose role is to manage the administrative tasks of the squadron. In terms of events and activities, query with the adult in charge of the event before contacting the Adj. Cadets should address initial issues with parade attendance, questions about activities or camps and other squadron business to their flight NCOs in the first instance.

SWO: Snco.863@rafac.mod.gov.uk – This is a direct email for the Squadron senior non-commissioned officer - SNCO, with any specific enquiries within their responsibility. If you are unsure what this is, please ask your flight NCOs. Attendance and absences are **not** to be directed to the Sqn SNCO; they must be notified on Cadet Portal, through voicemail or texted to the Sqn mobile number.

Training Officer: Training.863@rafac.mod.gov.uk – This is the direct email for the Squadron Training Officer. Any training enquiries should be addressed to them.

Duty Officer: 863@rafac.mod.gov.uk – Office email for the Duty Officer. General, everyday enquiries should be addressed to this account or raised through TeamApp.

SQUADRON PARENTS WHATSAPP GROUP

Under 18's are not allowed to participate in our Sqn Whatsapp group (RAFAC Rules) - so the group is restricted to parents/guardians only.

Please ask squadron staff for the parents' WhatsApp invitation.

The Sqn training programme and details for upcoming events and opportunities are posted here.

It's a chance for parents to ask questions.

USEFUL LINKS:

Squadron Website: thurstonaircadets.co.uk

Air Cadet Website: www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets

Download TG21 forms here:
https://rafac.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/interim/QM/EfhrSpaRhRNOrLMjvFDKJp8Bgkl25I-FjQAR69Y6lyhyAw