

News story: Cadet Forces increase social mobility and help disadvantaged kids reach potential, report finds

The independent report, compiled by the University of Northampton, undertook research across the entire cadet programme and found that joining the cadets offers a range of benefits to individuals involved and the wider community.

Speaking at the launch of the report at the Albion Academy in Manchester, itself a school which has a Cadet Force, Sir Michael also announced the approval of 31 new cadet units in state schools across the country under the Cadet Expansion Programme. The new units also include the first school cadet unit to be approved under the programme in Wales.

The benefits outlined in the report include increasing social mobility, contributing directly to the Prime Minister's vision for a 'shared society' and helping kids from disadvantaged backgrounds.

More specifically the report found that:

- The social impact of Cadet Forces is vastly greater than the annual cost of the cadet programme to the defence budget.
- Cadet Forces help children receiving Free School Meals achieve their potential.
- Children excluded from school who join the Cadets are more likely to have improved attendance and behaviour on their return to school.
- Cadet Forces help make communities more inclusive by helping people to overcome disadvantages in the way school does not.
- Serving soldiers who used to be in the Cadets are four times more likely to be a senior non-commissioned officer or an officer.

Meanu Bajwa-Patel, Senior Researcher, The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact, University of Northampton said:

The evidence so far has been overwhelmingly positive and demonstrates that the Cadet Forces can make a huge difference to social inclusion, social mobility and the mental wellbeing of young people. More research on the Cadet Expansion Programme and Cadet Forces across the devolved nations is planned, allowing us over the

next three years to evaluate the social impact further.

The report also found that Cadet Forces help to develop an individual's communication, confidence and leadership skills, as well as increasing their awareness of the Armed Forces and improves respect for veterans.

The new cadet units, established under the MOD and Department for Education's Cadet Expansion Programme is backed by £50 million funding from LIBOR fines, which pays for set up costs, the cadets' uniforms, equipment and training.