

The Vale of White Horse Gliding Centre

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PARENTS

Introduction

On behalf of The Vale of White Horse Gliding Centre (VoWHGC) I would like to welcome your family to the club and provide you with some information about our activities. The club provides opportunities for young people between the ages of 13 and 19 to receive coaching, instruction and to take part in competitions. All coaching and instruction is given by qualified instructors who are trained and have been screened for their suitability for working with young people.

The VoWHGC has been awarded Sport England's Clubmark, which is awarded to clubs by the BGA when the club is able to demonstrate that it meets the BGA's criteria as to playing programme; child protection; sports equity and ethics and club management. Clubmark is an acknowledgement that we take these issues seriously and that we are striving to provide a high quality and welcoming environment for young participants in the sport.

Getting Started

There is no specific lower age limit to undertake a dual flight in a glider, but young people must be mature enough to understand and comply with instructions. They must be heavy enough for the safe operation of the glider and they must be big enough to be safely strapped in, see out of the cockpit and operate the controls.

Under current rules, a pilot may be sent solo on or after their 14th birthday. This will be done with the utmost caution and only after consultation with the Chief Flying Instructor (or his deputy) and yourselves and then only in the most benign conditions.

Prior to and following this your young person will follow a structured training programme prescribed by the British Gliding Association (BGA): www.gliding.co.uk/ We would encourage you and your young person to explore this web site to take advantage of all the information that can be found there.

We would also ask that you purchase a logbook to record all flights and a copy of the theory book to accompany the training

The VoWHGC requires young people to be at least 13 years old before commencing flying training. The young person will need to be close to 5ft (1.5m) tall and weigh at least 98 lbs (45 kg) due to the design of the gliders which the VoWHGC currently operates.

Young people who do not meet the above requirements may only occupy the rear seat of the glider and cannot receive instruction.

Prior to commencing any flying at the VoWHGC the young person and their parents must complete the following documentation:

- Junior Membership Form
- Code of Conduct for parents, signed to show acceptance and understanding
- Code of Conduct for Juniors, signed to show acceptance and understanding
- A signed under 25 medical declaration
- A signed photography and publicity consent form

Young people under the age of 15 are only allowed on the airfield and premises if they are in the continual supervision of their parents or an adult nominated by their parents. During the flying day 08:30 – 18.30 the VoWHGC will agree to no parental presence for young people aged 13 – 16 provided that the Duty Instructor has a contact number.

We ask for the first 2 occasions that your son/daughter is present at the club a parent or responsible adult remains with them. This is to fast track their confidence but also to give you an insight into what they will be doing and not least share in their fun.

Commitment

Joining a gliding club is more than turning up and flying a glider. It requires team work to launch the gliders and team work to get them ready for the day and put them away at the end. We require that every member either arrives at the airfield in time to get the gliders ready first thing or stay behind to clean them and put them away – ideally both. Arriving mid-morning and then going home midafternoon is not acceptable.

Whilst learning to fly members are expected to attend the airfield at least 2 days a month and take 3 to 4 flights during that month.

Cost

- The cost of gliding comes in several parts:
- Membership
- Launch cost
- Air time
- Instruction (Free)

The VoWHGC offers junior members reduced membership fees which can be paid monthly and reduced air time costs in wooden gliders.

Helping with the Cost of Flying

There are several grants that juniors can apply for. The VoWHGC will assist in helping young pilots to secure funding from third party organisations such as the Air League and Caroline Trust.

Behaviour

Whilst the VoWHGC is entirely realistic about young people, we do expect junior members to understand and obey club rules. Individuals who feel that the rules do not apply to them or do not follow the reasonable directions of those in responsible positions will simply be asked to leave the airfield and the club.

Dressing Properly for the Airfield

It is important that clothing suitable for the weather is worn. Warm clothing and stout footwear are essential as airfields are open and exposed places. Hats, gloves and scarves are often necessary. Skirts are impractical for flying. Long sleeves, sun hats and high SPF sun lotions, together with plenty of water are all essential in the summer.

Activities that Young People can expect to get Involved in

All members are expected to fully participate in most of the activities inherent in running the club on a daily basis. The list below illustrates the type of activities we all get involved in whilst in training:

- Learning to fly
- Helping to take the gliders and other equipment out and back into the hangar at the beginning and at the end of the day's flying activities
- Helping to perform the Daily Inspections on the gliders and ground equipment – including making sure that they are washed, dried and polished as necessary
- Hooking the tow rope on and running the wing
- Acting as the launch marshal
- Making radio calls
- Maintaining the flight log
- Movement of gliders

If you would like to talk to someone at the club about this information or your young person's involvement with the club, please contact a member of the VoWHGC committee either at the airfield or by email swindongliding@gmail.com