

WHO WE ARE



“WE WERE VERY WORRIED AT FIRST TO COME ON THE TRIP BECAUSE WE DIDN'T WANT TO BE SICK OR FALL OFF THE BOAT, BUT WHEN WE GOT ON THE BOAT WE DIDN'T FEEL THAT WORRIED ANY MORE BECAUSE THE SEA STAFF MADE US FEEL WELCOME AND TOLD US EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE.”

KAYLEIGH AND TAMASIN, 14

Ocean Youth Trust South is a registered charity (no. 1079959) which grew out of the Ocean Youth Club, founded in 1960.

We are the first sail training charity to have been awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – equivalent to an MBE.

450 young people sail with us each year as active crew members in a purpose-built sail training vessel, *Prolific*.

Most crew members are selected through partnerships with mainstream and special schools, youth clubs, local authorities and other charities, who undertake long-term work to build on what is achieved during a voyage.

Voyages are designed to develop confidence, team-working, communication, the ability to cope with unfamiliar situations and more - all skills needed by families, schools, employers and the wider community.

Crew members are aged 12-25 and come from the widest possible variety of backgrounds, the great majority vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way. This includes:

- Young people not in education, employment or training
- At risk of exclusion from school
- Young carers
- Children in care
- Siblings of life-limited children using children's hospices
- Individuals with physical or learning difficulties, or emotional or behavioural problems
- Children who have been bullied, neglected or victims of crime
- Those from families affected by crime, drug or alcohol abuse
- Young people with low aspirations and limited horizons

Young crew members are involved in everything on board from sail-handling, steering and navigation to cooking and cleaning.

We don't even decide in advance where to go: the skipper will discuss the weather forecast with the young people and talk through the options with them. If they make a choice – such as sailing through the night – then there's no opting out if they get tired.

The experience takes young crew members right away from computers, TV, mobile phones and the problems that many face at home or at school. Although young people do learn to sail with us; this takes second place to using our voyages as a platform for some highly effective youth work.

“I REALLY ENJOYED IT: SO MUCH THAT I HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO COME AND HELP DURING REFIT AND A VOYAGE NEXT YEAR. YOUR TEAM IS REALLY AWESOME: KIND, KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ENTHUSIASTIC. THEY REALLY ARE SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE TO BE A PART OF.

”
JOSEPH MACDONALD, RYA YACHTMASTER OF THE YEAR 2013, AFTER AN ADULT WEEKEND VOYAGE

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