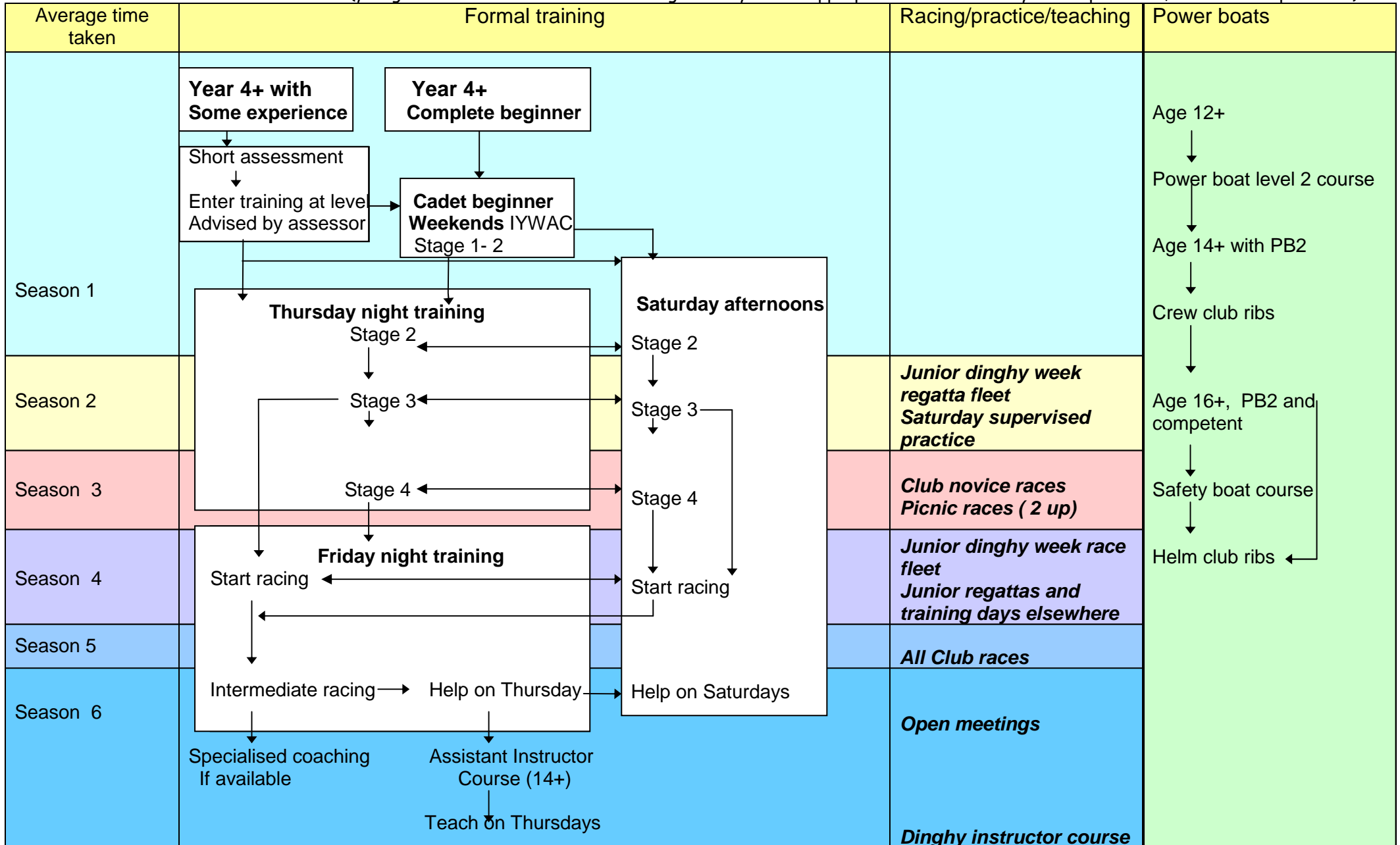




Gurnard Sailing Club Cadet Pathway

For School Year 4 and above (younger children cannot access training but may sail as appropriate to their ability and experience , with adult supervision)



Training Pathway for Cadets at Gurnard Sailing Club

Gurnard SC was founded in 1931 as a club where members could race against each other and promote dinghy racing. These are still the main aims of the club, so the training offered by the club reflects this by teaching members to first sail then race.

The following tries to show a progression for cadets through the various training and racing activities at the club.

The choice of boat for each cadet will depend a great deal on the size of the child, but because of the damage the rocks, just offshore and on the beach, can inflict on a hull, most are made from plastic rather than wood or GRP. Most of our training is delivered in Picos and Fevas. The club has 4 Picos and 3 RS Fevas to hire for racing or training, with priority going to those who have not hired before. The Training Principal (currently Mark Harrison) or any member of the coaching team will happily give advice on the choice of boat for any cadet. In Picos, most young cadets start racing by sailing two up as the extra crew weight makes the boat easier to control.

Cadets may start training at GSC from school year 4 onwards, and the speed of progression will depend on their age and the amount of sailing they do outside of the training courses, either racing or practice at GSC, or training with outside organisations. Typically, it will take about 6 years for a cadet starting to sail at 8 to 10 years old to progress through the scheme, and become a confident club racer.

Cadet training is offered mainly on Thursday and Friday evenings from May to July, but there are also Saturday sessions for cadets who cannot access weekday nights. All cadets have to either complete an assessment before being allocated to a training level, or complete the beginner's course run in conjunction with IYWAC.

Thursday evenings offer training up to stage 4, Fridays offer race training (start racing and intermediate racing) and Saturdays offer stage 2 up to Start racing.

Sailing at GSC is challenging because of the very open area in which we sail and the strong tides in the Western Solent.

Most cadets start by doing the two-weekend course at IYWAC then move in the same season to the Thursday evening cadet training, where they learn the basic sailing skills.

There is a very basic introduction to racing at the end of stage 3, which should enable **confident** cadets to race in light winds and favourable tides in both the Cadet Novice racing and in the Junior Dinghy week Regatta fleet.

The move from the basic sailing courses (Thursday evening) to race training (Friday evenings) is made on completion of stage 4, but the more confident cadets can often bypass this stage and progress to Fridays after stage 3.

The requirements of the sailing scheme get harder to achieve as cadets progress through the stages, with the Intermediate Racing syllabus alone usually taking 2 to 3 years to complete, even with regular practice in club racing.

The race training programme is supported by participation in club races and events, which are aimed at a range of abilities:

Junior Dinghy Week, Regatta Fleet.

Races (in Picos or Bugs) are run on a very small course with on the water coaching and help, but they are expected to be able to make progress upwind against a weak tide in a moderate breeze (Force 4). Suitable for those at stage 3 and above. Cadets usually sail Picos 2 up.

Saturday Afternoon Supervised Practice sessions.

These are aimed at those who can sail a little, but feel more confident with the presence of a safety boat. In these sessions there is no formal coaching, and the sailing area is limited to the part of the bay described on the day. Sailors are expected to inform the safety boat that they are taking part in the session and stay in the described area. Suitable for confident cadets at stage 3 or above

Club Novice races

These are run as part of club racing in the summer and have small, achievable courses with a briefing ashore, for everyone before the race, to describe the tide and course, and on the water coaching for the back of the fleet only. Suitable for cadets at stage 4 and above. Cadets may, initially, be happier sailing 2 up.

Gurnard Pico Open meeting.

“Training sail” class racing is usually held in the mornings of this two-day event and is open to anyone in a Pico with a training sail sailing one or two up. The event is a fun one with coaching for the boats at the back of the fleet. Suitable for cadets at start racing or above. Afternoon racing is a full open meeting, sailing single handed with race sails and is only suitable for confident racing helms.

Picnic Races.

These are usually a race with the tide, lasting up to 2 hours, then a sail home later, and have, in the past been, to Newtown Creek, Yarmouth, Bucklers Hard (Beaulieu river), Wotton Creek and Calshot spit. After a picnic lunch and waiting for the tide to change the sail back can be winds of up to force 5, which makes long tows very difficult. Parents must ensure that there is someone in each boat capable of sailing the entire course in the prevailing conditions. Suitable for start racing and above. This is very weather dependent!

Junior Dinghy Week Race Fleet.

Racing (in Picos and Fevas) uses only training sails, one or two up, on a larger course than the Regatta fleet, and with much less coaching. There is also an Optimist Fleet. Sailors should be able to confidently race and apply the basic racing rules, without assistance.

Club Races

These are about one to two hours long and, for the slow handicap, are usually confined to Gurnard Bay. The slow handicap is open to any boat from Bug to Laser 4.7, but the majority of boats are Picos or Fevas. The Slow handicap fleet is known for being noisy because of all the banter between the cadets! Cadets can move up from novice racing when they feel confident to cope with the bigger fleets and larger courses.

By the time cadets reach this level, they should be able to compete effectively against adults in the same fleet, and they are usually looking to move out of Picos and into Fevas, Lasers, or other dinghies, as helm or crew.

Open meetings and regattas at other clubs

These provide a new challenge to the cadets, because they are in unfamiliar water with different tidal flows, courses and starting procedure. The entry into this level is made easier if it is done as a group, with the mutual support found in a group. Some open events also offer training opportunities.

Further training

Cadets who sail Fevas, Optimists or Laser 4.7 to a good standard are encouraged attend training camps locally and on the mainland, and can compete to be part of the RYA squads.

Instructing

Cadets who are 14 or over and are competent in all areas of sailing, can become Assistant Dinghy instructors and, if they have also passed powerboat level 2, help on the water on Thursday evenings, under the supervision of a dinghy instructor.

They can then go on when they are 16, to become Dinghy Instructors and pass on their knowledge to those learning the basics, by running their own Thursday night group.