



# Children's Sailing Trust

# Impact Report 2025



Since 1997, Children's Sailing Trust (CST) has been committed to transforming lives through our mission to empower children and young people by providing accessible, life-enhancing sailing opportunities regardless of background or ability. Over the past year, we have continued to create pathways for personal growth, adventure and essential life skills, ensuring that every child has the chance to discover their potential on the water.





# 549

children benefitted  
from our charitable  
sailing program

## 215



children had 100%  
subsidised sessions

## 819



watersports activities  
across the River & Lake

## 182



specialist SEND school  
sessions at the Lake

## 221



Cornwall Council  
Time2Move attendees

## 1000



volunteer hours spent  
across the River & Lake

## 429



certificates awarded for  
RYA & CST achievement



# Welcome to CST

Our charitable programme has delivered 16 weeks of sailing each year for children aged 8–11. For those in Special Educational Needs (SEN) settings, we are proud to offer this enriching experience up to the age of 25, making our activities truly inclusive. Over the course of 3 years, a child can benefit from up to 120 hours of expert tuition, with many progressing to achieve Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Stages 3 and 4 - a testament to their skills and dedication.



The wellbeing benefits of sailing and spending time on the water are profound. Being outdoors, surrounded by nature, provides a calming and restorative environment that can help reduce stress and anxiety. Through sailing, children learn to focus, problem-solve and build self-belief, while the supportive atmosphere encourages friendships and a sense of belonging. These positive experiences contribute significantly to their mental and emotional wellbeing, equipping them with tools and memories that last a lifetime. We also positively encourage a career pathway, supporting young people through gaining RYA Instructor qualifications and offering volunteer and employment opportunities.

During school holidays, we further extend our reach by offering both bursary-funded and paid sailing courses. This ensures that all young people have the chance to participate, regardless of financial circumstances, at one of our two incredible locations - along the Helford River or at our fully accessible Trevassack Lake HQ on the Lizard peninsula.

This 2025 Impact Report highlights another successful year for CST, sharing the achievements, stories and milestones that reflect our on-going commitment to making sailing and watersports accessible and inclusive. With the support of our partners, volunteers and community, we continue to believe that every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive through the unique benefits of being on the water.

“

I've really enjoyed working for CST this year as well as the past two years volunteering. I feel really proud that I've managed to gain my qualifications, enabling me to become a sailing instructor. I really enjoy being on the water not only at work but also socially with family and friends.

- Young sailor-turned-instructor

”

# But what did the children think?

We place great importance on listening to the children and young people we support. Their voices guide our work and shape how we measure our impact, fostering genuine partnerships with individuals and communities. By truly hearing them, we can drive meaningful and lasting change, transforming lives through sailing.

**92%** FELT BRAVER

**100%** TRIED NEW THINGS

**94%** FELT MORE CONFIDENT

**100%** KEPT TRYING

**96%** HAD FUN

**96%** WANT TO KEEP SAILING

“  
One of the best bits of my year.  
It was phenomenal!  
”

“  
It was SO awesome and I would do it every day of the year if I could!  
😎  
”

“  
There was lots of fun parts to the course like capsizing, games and going on the speed boats!  
”





# Why it matters

We are not mental health specialists. We are sailors, kayakers and paddleboarders. Yet the feedback we receive from parents, carers and teachers consistently shows that our sessions make a meaningful difference to the physical and mental wellbeing of the children and young people we support.

By fostering a love of sailing within a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, we are laying foundations that extend far beyond a single session. Young people gain skills, confidence and friendships that encourage continued participation in watersports, while strengthening connections between families, schools and the wider community.

Through participation in our programmes, children and young people experience enhanced self-esteem through positive social interaction and engagement in new, challenging activities;

- Improved wellbeing and mental health, including reduced anxiety
- Increased confidence gained from achievement and enjoyable peer experiences
- Stronger social skills and peer relationships, supporting the formation of friendships
- Improved water confidence and vital water safety awareness
- Development of teamwork, leadership and problem-solving skills, building resilience
- Growth in creative and critical thinking through goal-based challenges

Our programmes have a genuinely transformative effect. Sailing challenges young people to step outside their comfort zones, work together and persevere. The sense of achievement that comes from mastering new skills and contributing to a team leaves a lasting impression.

For many participants, this is their first experience of sailing but its impact goes far beyond learning a new sport. In a supportive and inclusive environment, young people develop confidence, resilience and life skills that carry into education, relationships and everyday life.

We are proud of what has been achieved together and excited about the long-term impact this work will continue to have on the lives of our young sailors.

“

One particular child was very reluctant to engage in sessions (and in school).

Since developing their resilience through sailing, they are now much more engaged in both sailing club and school.

”





# Educational benefits

Sailing aligns with key areas of the school curriculum and offers experiential learning with a focus on both academic and personal growth:

Physical Education	Science, Tech, Engineering, Maths	Personal, Social, Health & Economic	Environmental Studies
Sailing promotes important fitness, coordination, water safety and teamwork components of physical education.	Practical applications of physics (wind, water resistance), geography (weather patterns, tides) and maths (navigation) enrich students' learning.	Developing lifeskills of resilience, confidence and leadership, contributing to students' emotional and social development.	Students engage with nature, fostering environmental awareness.

## Social & Emotional Learning

Sailing pushes children out of their comfort zones in a safe, team-based environment, building confidence, resilience and communication skills. Taking charge of a vessel also fosters independence and responsibility.

## Health & Well-being

Sailing provides both physical fitness benefits (cardio, strength and flexibility) and mental health benefits (reducing stress and improving mood).

## Inclusivity & Accessibility

CST offers adapted sailing programmes to ensure children of all abilities, including those with disabilities, can participate. This inclusivity broadens access to new experiences and potential career pathways, supported by bursaries for students showing interest in further sailing development.

## Character & Leadership Development

Sailing nurtures leadership, problem-solving, and critical thinking, key skills transferable across school subjects and life.

## Outdoor & Experiential Learning

Hands-on sailing connects students with nature, reinforcing academic concepts through experiential education.

## Cultural & Historical Awareness

Sailing introduces students to Cornwall's rich maritime heritage, linking to local history and inspiring career interests in marine industries.

## Supporting Key Deliverables for Schools

Ofsted Focus Areas: Emphasise how CST's programmes align with school performance indicators such as student personal development, behaviour and attitudes, as well as the broader cultural, moral and social development outlined in the Ofsted framework.

Enrichment and Extra-Curricular Offerings: Sailing offers a valuable addition to a school's enrichment programmes, providing extra-curricular activities that foster a well-rounded education.



# What the parents say

"An amazing experience that we wouldn't necessarily give her! Knowledge, skills, experience and most important, fun!"

"My son absolutely loved his sailing experience and thoroughly enjoyed the fun sessions as well as the skills he was taught throughout the sessions."

"My daughter was very nervous about going sailing but on day one the instructors made her feel safe, encouraged her and took their time with her. She absolutely loved her sailing experience."

"My child is nervous in the water but since going sailing their confidence has grown."

"What an incredible opportunity for children to get!"

"My daughter went from very nervous and not wanting to put on a wetsuit to falling in love with sailing and continuing on to do Stage 2 with her best friend in the summer holidays with CST."

"Sailing is my child's absolute favourite after school club. We feel very lucky to have access to this in such a beautiful location."

"Both my children have been on sailing courses with CST & both absolutely loved it."

"Noah had the best time. He absolutely loved every second. Even convinced his Grandad to buy a 2-seater kayak because he loved it so much."

"This is such a great opportunity for the children and I hope they may get another chance to participate. Thank you!"

"Maddie had no experience of sailing whatsoever, CST ensured that her very first experience was nothing but positive. She came home each week excited to share everything she had done/learned including the 'lingo'. It was a pleasure to listen to."



# Stories from the Helford River

B refused to sail on the first session of Spring term and spent the whole term refusing to sail without an instructor in the boat.

We very slowly tried going out of B's comfort zone and would give one small challenge a week (sail on a tether with a friend, then without, then steer for five minutes etc).

First session back in Autumn after school holidays, B was a little nervous still, but on the second session B blended right into the crowd of confident, happy sailors, playing games on the water! Towards the end of the season B was sailing single-handed, smiling and feeling so proud.

T hid behind the teacher for the first few sessions, wouldn't speak to any instructors, had lots of tears and it was a struggle to encourage her to sail.

T ended up running down the beach, screaming with excitement to see the team. She nicknamed all of us different animals and now spends the entire session afloat.

F came to us with sailing experience already, pre-grouped into the higher level group who were sailing RS Zests. However, F kept leaving the group in tears to find their parents. Parents requested moving down groups to stick with a friend and also warned about F being really scared about the Zest due to a bad experience with the boat tipping over.

Sessions were spent growing confidence in the Zest with the beginner friend and ended with F requesting the Zest or cheering when put in one - and loving capsizing them!

O's first session, they were terrified and capsized during their first go steering - lots of tears and so confidence boosting was needed. By the end of term, O was asking to try to sail all by themselves. By Autumn term, O was taking out new students and telling them the story of being scared but if they could be brave, O promised they would love sailing too!



# Teacher's tales

“It has been the best thing for her in her life so far”

“One pupil stands out as loving Thursdays (her best day of the week) doing something she never knew she'd have the chance to do. As a disadvantaged pupil, we supported the family by providing a wetsuit, boots and kit and each week she thrived and bounced to school (no matter how tricky her life was) plus the family also rallied round to ensure she didn't miss a session. Even when sometimes blue with the cold, she did not stop smiling from start to finish and was so proud to tell her friends she had sailing club each week. She was literally bouncing all day. She first realised she wanted to try sailing when CST came in for an assembly and she was a little young to attend so has been on my waiting list for 18 months. Whenever she heard the word sailing, she'd asked if she's still on the list and how long until she can go. She beams from ear to ear, mixes with other year groups and loves being near and on the water and learning sailing skills. She has such a passion and enthusiasm for it and her family mentioned the technical vocabulary she uses when she comes home - they aren't sure what she means but they see a light in her eyes that they've never seen before. Despite challenges, they make sure they can pick her up each week as it has been the best thing for her in her life so far.”

“ One child was reluctant to even get in the water.  
By the end of the sessions, they were sailing independently.  
The child then went on to complete surfing, coasteering and  
further sailing in and out of school. ”

“ A child who was very nervous about sailing enjoyed their first session so much they were bursting with enthusiasm for it and continued subsequent sessions with much more confidence. ”



# Case Study: Curnow School

**CST are pleased to work with Curnow specialist SEND school, who ensure students experience a practical, interest led timetable of activities which promote independence and exploration. They have a clear focus on preparing all students well for their futures, working to remove barriers to ensure young people reach their fullest potential, developing resilience and nurturing individuality.**

In order for their students to make the most out of their visits to our fully accessible facilities at Trevassack Lake, preparations start long before anybody gets on the bus to travel from Camborne. Last winter the Curnow Team Lead asked to borrow buoyancy aids, so the students could become familiar with wearing one before arrival, enabling them to overcome the anxiety many students feel when trying something new.

At Curnow School, they have also built a set of steps to mimic stepping down into the Drascombe Lugger sailing boat. For students lacking depth perception, or who need help walking, this action can be a huge barrier to experiencing the joy of sailing but by practicing in a familiar environment, the change in confidence shown by students compared to previous years has been extraordinary, just through a little forward thinking. Back at school, students are reminded of what they have achieved, looking through photos of their visits to further build confidence and to prepare for future visits.

Working with the Curnow students and staff team has been a highlight of 2025 for CST staff and volunteers. Seeing young people get so much from what we offer makes everything we do worthwhile. What this success looks like varies hugely between students:

T uses a wheelchair and has powerboat rides with us, which she loves. She is hoisted into the powerboat from the pontoon. We have worked closely with Curnow School to ensure we have the correct sling and to help T understand she needs to behave in a safe way when in her sling.

T loves helping the Lugger! Our instructors have taken him from just having a little go at assisted steering, to him being able to steer the Lugger for the whole session. The growth in confidence and self-esteem this has given him has carried over into other parts of his school experience.

F started the year very nervous about even stepping on to the floating dock. His practice with putting his buoyancy aid on and using steps helped him board the Lugger, but the movements the boat made in the water meant he took a long time to build up enough courage to take that first step. With encouragement from his teachers and CST staff, his confidence grew and his delight at being afloat is obvious to everybody.







All of the young people we worked with in 2025 showed bravery and tenacity in reaching their personal achievements and we are so proud of each of them.





## Conclusion

2025 has been another great year for inspiring and supporting young people in expanding their horizons through sailing but we cannot continue without further support from people like you, who understand the importance and impact of our mission.

There are many ways to be a part of this life-changing experience for young people. Support can be directed towards funding a school/group or an individual, an entire sailing programme or a specific project. Others choose to give through regular donations by becoming a Friend of CST or by creating a lasting legacy through a gift in their Will. Every contribution, however it is given, helps ensure that young people continue to access life-changing opportunities on the water. If you would like to find out more about how you can support Children's Sailing Trust, please get in touch or visit:

**[www.childrenssailingtrust.org.uk/donate](http://www.childrenssailingtrust.org.uk/donate)**



# Thanks to our Supporters & Funders

To our individual donors who contribute significantly towards our fundraising needs each year, we thank you for your unwavering commitment.

To our local supporters, those who help us on the River, who share their facilities with us, and support our funding efforts, to those who swim at Trevassack Lake or have a coffee or lunch at our cafe, we thank you all.

All this support helps us succeed in our mission, to provide accessible learning opportunities through sailing and water-based activities for all.

## A special mention goes to our 2025 sponsors

Watergate Bay Hotel   GuidingLight Investments  
Taylor Money Wealth Management   Shield Services Group, Falmouth

## Our thanks also go to the Trust and Foundations that have supported us significantly during 2025:

The Mercers Company   Tanner Pheonix Trust - CCF  
The Hedley Foundation   Bruce Davis Trust Fund - CCF  
The Kenora Charitable Foundation   Goonhilly Wind Farm Community Fund - CCF  
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