



Department
for Education



Ministry
of Defence

Service Pupils in Schools

Non-statutory guidance

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Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education and the Ministry of Defence. It has been produced to help state-funded schools and local authorities in England to understand and address the needs of Service pupils in schools¹ (reception to year 11).

The guidance is non-statutory, but also includes statutory information on the Armed Forces Covenant and the School Admissions Code. The word **should** is used when something is non-statutory and the words **must** or **required** are used to indicate a statutory duty.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed before April 2026.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- School leaders, school staff, trust leaders, trust boards and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies, and non-maintained special schools in England
- Local authorities in England

Main points

This guidance outlines the support schools and local authorities should provide to Service pupils to assist with their education and wellbeing. Service pupils are those pupils with a parent(s) or carer(s) serving in the armed forces. They generally experience higher mobility than non-Service pupils, often moving schools several times. Moving more frequently can result in Service families needing the support of local authorities and schools to help manage these transitions effectively, to avoid negatively affecting a pupil's long term educational outcomes and wellbeing.

Service pupils are more likely to experience family separation, as their serving parent(s) can be deployed to remote or dangerous locations. This can affect pupils' emotional wellbeing and they may require additional support at school during these periods.

¹ Maintained schools, academies, non-maintained special schools

1. Background

There are approximately 78,000² recorded current and former Service pupils in state funded schools in England – though this number is likely to be an under-estimate as it is voluntary for parents to tell schools if they are a member of the armed forces. Service pupils are geographically spread throughout England and in nearly every local authority. While the total number of Service pupils is relatively large, most schools have fewer than five Service pupils. This makes it especially important to understand their particular needs.

It should be noted that the Department for Education’s definition of Service pupils exists principally for the purpose of allocating Service pupil premium funding to schools (see section 2 below). The Government has a wider definition of who should be regarded as a “Service child” in the context of the Armed Forces Covenant³. In practical terms, this means that when schools are planning their provision, they should consider all pupils who are part of the Armed Forces Community (rather than only those who are included within the DfE school census definition).

Understanding the challenges that Service pupils can face in education

Evidence from a number of studies highlights particular challenges that Service pupils can encounter in education as a consequence of their parent’s decision to serve their country. These studies include the independent review of support for Service families that was led by Andrew Selous (then MP for South West Bedfordshire) and resulted in the “Living In Our Shoes” report in 2020⁴; and also the research project carried out by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner in 2018, the findings of which are summarised in the “Kin and Country” report⁵.

² Figure (from autumn 2023) includes those pupils registered on the school census as currently having Service child status, and also those who are eligible for the Service pupil premium through having been recorded as a Service child in any school census within the last 6 years (known as Ever 6) or through being in receipt of a pension through the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or War Pension Scheme.

³ In relation to the Armed Forces Covenant, the “Armed Forces Community” is deemed to include: relevant family members of those who are serving in the regular forces and reserve forces; serving in the British overseas territory forces and who are subject to Service law; and former members of any of His Majesty’s forces who are ordinarily resident in the UK. Under this definition, the term “Service children” refers to children (including adopted children) under the age of 18 who are children of Service members or their partners, and any other children under the age of 18 that are otherwise the responsibility of Service members or their partners.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-in-our-shoes-understanding-the-needs-of-uk-armed-forces-families>

⁵ <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/kin-and-country-growing-up-as-an-armed-forces-child/>

Service pupil mobility

Compared to their peers, Service pupils as a group are highly mobile and will often move schools several times during their educational career. These moves are more likely to take place outside of normal admissions rounds, at short notice and to involve locations outside England or the UK.

Although Service pupils' attainment is on average similar to that of non-Service pupils who are not eligible for free school meals, across most headline measures of performance, data consistently shows that levels of high pupil mobility correlate with lower academic attainment: the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2, and GCSE English and mathematics at grades 9-5, is lower among those who have attended multiple schools. This may be a consequence of a lack of continuity in a pupil's studies: for example, young people interviewed as part of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's "Kin and Country" study frequently reported that they had repeated or missed key parts of the curriculum as a result of school moves. High mobility can also lead to significant social disruption, with Service pupils frequently leaving behind friends. Service pupils can also miss out on wider enrichment opportunities, such as taking part in extra-curricular activities, through high mobility. Schools should manage transitions carefully to mitigate the impact of these periods on a pupil's education.

Family separation

Living in a Service family, with a parent employed in the armed forces, has unique challenges. Service pupils will often experience periods of family separation: this can be through the serving parent being on deployment or training, or through 'weekending', where a parent commutes to a military base and is away throughout the week. The serving parent may also deploy at short notice, for an unknown length of time, and may not be able to disclose to where they are deploying.

When a parent is away on deployment, which can be for significant periods of time such as 6-9 months, pupils may experience anxiety about the safety of their parent. This anxiety will be higher if their parent is deployed to a high threat environment, especially where opportunities for communication with their parent are limited. Schools should be alert to parental deployments and to increased media coverage of an area where a parent is deployed as this may increase anxiety among Service pupils. During any period of separation, the pupil may have to take on extra roles of responsibility at home and anecdotal evidence suggests that Service pupils as a group are more likely than average to be young carers.

The Armed Forces Covenant: Legal Duty

The Armed Forces Covenant⁶ is a promise by the nation that the Armed Forces Community should be treated fairly and face no disadvantage when accessing public and commercial services, with special provision made in appropriate cases for those who have sacrificed the most. In November 2022, the Armed Forces Covenant was strengthened for local authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions, proprietors of academies and non-maintained special schools and special post-16 institutions. They **must** now have due regard to the principles of the Covenant when exercising certain functions.

The Ministry of Defence has published statutory guidance about this legal “due regard” duty, which explains how it applies to schools and local authorities – this is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-duty-statutory-guidance>

There is also a toolkit available that contains a range of resources relating to the legal duty – including links to reference documents such as the statutory guidance, access to quick guides that explain the duty more briefly, links to relevant YouTube videos and training resources. The toolkit can be accessed at <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/armed-forces-covenant-duty-toolkit/>

⁶ www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

2. Supporting Service Pupils

Service pupil premium

The Service pupil premium (SPP) was introduced in April 2011 in recognition of the specific challenges that pupils from Service families face and as part of the commitment to delivering the Armed Forces Covenant. SPP funding is allocated to state-funded schools in England if a pupil on roll meets the following two criteria⁷:

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces, including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service - this includes pupils with a parent who is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England
- they have been recorded as a 'Service child' in any school census in the past 6 years⁸

A pupil will also be eligible if:

- one of their parents died while serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

The main purposes of the Service pupil premium are to:

- help mitigate the negative impact of **high mobility** on a Service pupil's education
- enable schools to offer pastoral support to eligible pupils, particularly during times of **family separation** such as deployments

⁷ Pupils who meet the criteria for SPP funding can also be eligible for the disadvantage pupil premium funding, if they are currently in receipt of benefits-based free school meals or have been recorded as eligible in the last 6 years; or the higher rate of pupil premium funding who are or have been looked after by local authorities or other state care. Details are published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

⁸ The Department for Education, in its guidance on the school census at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census>, states that pupils should be recorded in the census as a Service child if they are in reception to year 11 and have a parent(s) – or person(s) exercising parental control – who is serving in regular HM Forces military units; or on full commitment as part of the full-time reserve service; or is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England. (Reserve units are not classed as the regular armed forces and such pupils are not recorded in the school census as Service pupils. However, where a reserve member of the armed forces is acting in a full-time capacity this is classified as regular service.)

Schools should decide how to spend the SPP to best meet the needs of Service pupils. The needs of Service pupils may change over time, with periods of higher need during parental deployment or the transition to a new school.

Transition: SPP can be used to support effective transition practices in schools. For example, some schools use SPP to support effective assessment on arrival at their school, including contacting the previous school to obtain more detailed information on a pupil's previous teacher assessments, the curriculum that has been covered or specific needs.

Service pupils also experience social disruption during school moves and may experience friendship struggles or a feeling of not belonging. This can be compounded if a pupil has experienced a high number of school moves and they can sometimes become disengaged from building new relationships with either the school or peers. SPP can be used to help mitigate the disruption of school moves with pastoral support or activities that promote a sense of belonging.

Mangotsfield C of E Primary School, South Gloucestershire

Supports the transition of Service pupils prior to the pupils arriving at the school. This includes sharing a bespoke pack for the pupil, with a photo and message from their new teacher and detailed school information for parents. They are allocated a 'buddy' on arrival at the school and have settling in sessions with the Service family pastoral lead over the first few weeks. Parents are given a phone call home at the end of the first week to communicate how the transition has gone. This ensures that pupils are welcomed and settled into the school quickly and any issues can be identified and addressed. Once the initial transition period is complete, support is ongoing with opportunities for Service families to be brought together for educational experiences and pastoral support at key points in the school year.

Some Service pupils may need more support during transition than others and schools should communicate to the next school if transition is a vulnerable time for the pupil. A school receiving a Service pupil should allocate staff time to assess their needs, so that appropriate support - pastoral and/or academic - can be put in place. Schools are also encouraged to use the common transfer file during the transition process to share important information about Service pupils' needs; further information about this is included later in this guidance.

If a Service pupil is moving schools during a normal admissions round (e.g. starting Reception or moving to Year 7 in a secondary school), they may still benefit from effective transition support such as additional settling-in sessions - especially if they are also new to the area.

Pastoral support: The SPP is primarily designed to provide pastoral support to Service pupils (though it may also be used for academic support if school assessments show this is a high priority for individual pupils). Service pupils may need pastoral support if their parent is deployed or if they are ‘weekending’, where a Service parent is living away during the week. Support needed when a parent is deployed can be different for each pupil and some will prefer to have only a light touch approach, whereas other pupils will need considerable support during this period. Many schools use pastoral leads to provide support during deployments and it is good practice for all staff to be informed of a deployment and for the pupil to have an adult they can seek support from if needed.

Halton Community Combined Primary School, Buckinghamshire

Supports pupils if their parent(s) is deployed by having a weekly session with a family support coordinator, where they can complete activities such as writing ‘blueys’ (aerogramme letters that can be sent free of charge to serving personnel overseas) or making a video call to their parent who is away. They have also found that virtual parents’ evenings are a positive opportunity for parents who are away to connect with the school and stay involved in their child’s education.

Monitoring: A strategy for spending the SPP should include monitoring to ensure that a school can provide support when a Service pupil needs it most – for example, during a period of parental deployment. Schools with large numbers of Service pupils should consider having a Service pupil champion on the staff and/or governing body/board of trustees, who provides oversight of the Service pupils and makes links with Service families and the military community. Annex A provides information on how schools and local authorities can make links with their local military base(s).

Carterton Community College, Oxfordshire

Has a deployment form online, where parents fill in the dates and details of upcoming deployments. This enables staff to know which pupils require additional support. It also runs an online parent forum to facilitate communication with parents of Service pupils. Service pupils are further championed in the school by having Service student ambassadors for each of their four houses. These are older pupils (Key Stage 4) who provide peer support for fellow Service pupils - especially at times of deployment and transition. As part of their role they represent the interests of Service pupils in student leadership fora and have representation on pupil interview panels for all new members of staff.

Schools should make sure they have systems in place to hear the voices of Service pupils and this can be done through existing systems like representation on the school council, or through focus groups.

The SPP is paid to schools alongside the disadvantage-related pupil premium for practical reasons. However, the two forms of funding are distinct and should be treated as such. For the latest SPP rate information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>. Schools are strongly encouraged to consider recording their use of SPP on their pupil premium strategy statement⁹, unless they have reason to believe this will identify individual pupils.

Further ideas on supporting Service pupils and uses of the SPP

The Ministry of Defence and the Army, Naval and RAF Families Federations have identified further examples of how schools can practically support their Service pupils, including through use of the SPP - while noting that a range of factors will affect how schools approach their SPP expenditure, including the phase of education covered, how many Service children attend the school and how mobile Service families are within the geographical location, as well as the particular needs of individual children and young people. Details of these ideas are included in Annex B.

The Service Children’s Progression Alliance *Thriving Lives Toolkit*

The Service Children’s Progression Alliance (SCiP Alliance) receives funding support from the Ministry of Defence, and in collaboration with a number of Uni Connect partnerships and funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, developed the *Thriving Lives Toolkit*. This provides schools with a framework of seven principles through which to reflect on their practice in support of Service pupils, plus associated resources for continuing professional development. These materials are evidence-based and have been thoroughly tested in schools, and can be accessed at <https://thrivinglives.scipalliance.org/>

The seven principles of effective support identified in the Thriving Lives Toolkit are:

Principle	Vision
1. Our approach is clear	Leaders’ understanding and approach ensure resources and policies improve Armed Forces children’s outcomes
2. Wellbeing is supported	Tailored pastoral provision supports Armed Forces children’s mental

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium>

	health and wellbeing
3. Achievement is maximised	Teaching, assessment and support ensure the continuity of Armed Forces children's learning and progression
4. Transition is effective	Systems and support ensure seamless transitions for Armed Forces children arriving at and leaving school
5. Children are heard	Armed Forces children's diverse voices are heard and inform the support they receive
6. Parents are engaged	Strong home-school partnerships help Armed Forces families feel valued as part of the school community
7. Staff are well-informed	Supportive training and networks ensure all staff understand and support each Armed Forces child

The Ministry of Defence Local Authority Partnership

The Ministry of Defence Local Authority Partnership (MODLAP)¹⁰ is a group that comprises the 16 local authorities with the largest numbers of Service families living in their areas. The group has produced a set of non-statutory principles for the transition of Service children with SEND, which can be found on the MODLAP webpage.

Local authority Service Pupil Champion

To support Service pupils, local authorities should consider nominating a member of staff to be a Service Pupil Champion. It is intended that staff in these roles would hold oversight and strategic responsibility for the experiences Service children have when in receipt of children's services in the local authority.

The description of this role in Annex C is intended to provide local authorities with suggestions on some of the key activities and responsibilities this role could hold. It intentionally does not specify the seniority of the post-holder, nor their organisational

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mod-local-authority-partnership-modlap>

position within the local authority. The context of each local authority is different and therefore the design of a solution to meet the below activities may need to vary between local authorities. The role holder should, however, hold a position with the necessary ability to influence local authority policy, strategy and practice. Roles may already exist in local authorities that fulfil part, or all of the key responsibilities described.

The suggested responsibilities have been developed by the Ministry of Defence Local Authority Partnership (MODLAP).

Admissions

The School Admissions Code¹¹ (referred to hereafter as the Code) exists to ensure that places in all state-funded schools are allocated in a fair and transparent manner. The admission authorities for all state-funded mainstream schools are required to comply with the requirements of the Code and related admissions law.

The Code includes provisions intended to ensure that Service families are not disadvantaged when applying for a school place as a result of their mobility:

- Admission authorities have the freedom to give admissions priority to children eligible for the Service pupil premium in their oversubscription criteria (see paragraphs 1.41-1.42 of the Code) and can admit a Service child as an exception to the infant class size limit¹² if they move outside the normal admissions round (see paragraph 2.16 of the Code)
- The Code requires admission authorities to allocate a Service child a school place in advance of the family moving in the area, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Admission authorities must not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area. Admission authorities must use the address at which the child will live when applying their over-subscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Where a parent requests the use of a unit or quartering address as the child's home address, the admission authority must use that (see paragraph 2.21 of the Code). Admission authorities must not reserve blocks of places for these children

¹¹ [School admissions code 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹² The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 limits the size of an infant class to 30 pupils per school teacher. An infant class is one in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year, i.e. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. There are limited prescribed exceptions to this limit.

- The Code requires publicly funded boarding schools to give second highest priority for boarding places to children of UK Service personnel who qualify for Ministry of Defence financial assistance with the cost of boarding fees (see paragraph 1.44 of the Code)
- The Code requires that the arrangements in the area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for Service children and be described in the local authority's composite prospectus

Admission authorities should endeavour to process applications from Service families as far in advance of the family moving into the area as possible.

If an admission authority is unable to offer the child a school place, the parents must be informed of their right to appeal and how they can do this. Advice for parents and guardians on school admission appeals can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places/advice-for-parents-and-guardians-on-school-admission-appeals>. Where an admission authority has a waiting list in operation, it may wish to ask parents whether they would like their child to be added to the list. It would also be helpful for the school to advise the family to approach their local authority, who must, on request, provide information on places still available in all schools within its area and how applications can be made.

Attendance

As with all pupils, the decision on whether to authorise term-time absence for Service pupils sits solely with the head teacher of the school. While the educational needs of the Service pupil will always be a critical factor in determining whether term-time absence should be granted, the impacts of wider family life on Service pupils should also be considered.

Common transfer file

The common transfer file (CTF) is used to transfer pupil data when a pupil transfers from one school to another. CTFs provide valuable information about new pupils which can be automatically uploaded into school management information systems. Schools maintained by the local authority must use the CTF when transferring pupils and academies are also strongly encouraged to use the CTF.

CTFs are particularly important for Service pupils, as these pupils will move schools more frequently than average. The CTF includes a specific section on Service pupils, through which schools are able to record any concerns that they have about an individual pupil's response to moving school, to parental deployment and to parental separation (plus anything else deemed important for the pupil's new school to know). This information

should be used by the pupil's new school to help with integration, but should not be passed on to other schools subsequently attended by the pupil. Schools should consider the pupil's needs afresh before completing the CTF if they subsequently move to another school.

It is expected that schools will use these fields within the CTF when transmitting data to other schools in England. Where a Service pupil is moving to another school outside England, it is for individual schools to determine how best to share information with the pupil's new school – while taking the necessary steps to ensure that personal sensitive information about the pupil is handled securely.

Higher education applications

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) application form that prospective students use when applying for higher education courses now includes a Service child and a veteran 'flag'. Introduced in May 2022 following collaboration between UCAS, the MOD and the SCiP Alliance, this development allows applicants to indicate that they are from a UK Armed Forces family – and also enables universities and colleges to offer more bespoke advice and support to Service children and veterans who are applying for a place.

Further details can be found on the UCAS website:

Student pages: <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/individual-needs/students-uk-armed-forces-background>

Teacher and Adviser toolkit: <https://www.ucas.com/advisers/toolkits/adviser-toolkit-supporting-students-individual-needs/supporting-children-uk-armed-forces-families-service-children>

Bereavement

The Government recognises that Service children who experience the death of a loved one when that person was serving in the Armed Forces may have specific pastoral support needs. Schools are ideally positioned to provide the understanding environment a child needs when faced with such a loss, through providing elements of stability and support.

Whilst the MOD provides support for families through a variety of means, such as the Defence Bereaved Families Group and the 'Purple Pack', educational settings may wish to be aware of the Armed Forces Bereavement Scholarship Scheme

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-armed-forces-bereavement-scholarship-scheme>) which is aimed at students progressing into post-16 education.

Annex A- How to make contact with a military base

As a first step, schools are advised to check with their local authority as to whether there is an armed forces lead who can put the school in contact with the local unit/garrison. If this is not the case:

For the Royal Navy and Royal Marines:-

Queries about finding a local contact should be addressed in the first instance to Royal Navy Family & People Support (RN FPS) at navypeople-psrnfpsHQ@mod.gov.uk. The RN FPS Headquarters Team will respond as appropriate, depending on the nature of the request.

Schools can also contact the Naval Families Federation directly for advice, at contactus@nff.org.uk

For the RAF:-

Queries about the school's local station and who to contact should be addressed to air-people-pfspt-comdev-mlbx@mod.gov.uk. A Community Development professional will respond and link the school with the most appropriate point of contact for its specific needs. This may be a Community Development Officer or Regional Community Development Advisor: both are Youth and Community professionals employed as civil servants and are responsible for amongst other things, youth work, and engagement with local education stakeholders. The school may also be provided with details for the RAF Early Years Specialist Advisor or the HIVE Information Officer. Schools can also seek advice from the Education and Childcare Policy Advisor at the RAF Families Federation – enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk

For the Army

For the Army, schools can contact the military/civilian liaison officer (MCL) located with the local Brigade or Regional Point of Command (RPOC). Local Unit Welfare Officers provide direct contact with the local families' welfare team or if a school is unable to identify a direct link into a local army footprint then they can contact the Army Families Federation at contact@aff.org.uk.

Annex B – Further ideas on supporting Service pupils and uses of the SPP

Resources

Schools may choose to spend the SPP on purchasing and/or developing education resources and using these to support Service pupils. Specific ideas could include:

- Reviewing materials already available (free or at cost) that support Service pupils. These can be accessed through the MOD, Family Federations and a variety of military charities
- Adopting the SCiP Alliance ‘Thriving Lives Toolkit’ as a self-review tool to understand how the school supports its Service pupils – and ensuring adequate staff resources and time are allocated to achieve this
- Purchasing books and materials that reflect Service pupils’ lives and can then be used to support a child when the serving person in their family is away
- Exploring the creative use of maps – allowing staff and children to see where serving parents are in the world
- Ensuring the availability of fiction and non-fiction books in school libraries that address parental absence and other challenges – for example, the Naval Families Federation’s [Experiencing Parental Absence Resource](#)
- Pooling SPP funding with other schools in the same locality with small numbers of Service pupils on roll, in order to fund collectively resources that which could be shared between schools (including staff, such as teaching assistants trained to provide emotional literacy assistance to pupils)
- Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) have a selection of resources and fact sheets on their website that schools may also find useful (<https://www.sciss.org.uk/>)

Continuous Professional Development & Quality Assurance

- Providing time for a dedicated member of staff within the school to provide updates/awareness training for all members of staff; be responsible for maintaining self-review of the “*Thriving Lives*” Toolkit
- Funding staff attendance at conferences and seminars that are focused on the experiences of Service pupils

- Funding external quality assurance activity to review how the school supports its Service pupils

Targeted Support

- Preserving staff time for identifying Service pupils and setting up effective home-school partnerships that take into consideration the individual circumstances of the child. This includes the family structure, the location, and planned deployments and weekending
- Providing additional mentoring support (e.g. from teaching assistants who are trained in providing emotional literacy and wellbeing support). This could include specific work around the emotional cycle of deployment and weekending transitions, where appropriate
- Ensuring that carefully managed transitions are at the heart of supporting Service pupils. This includes the assessment of educational needs/gaps, understanding the impact of previous parental absences, deployment and mobility, and likely future changes
- Putting in place 'catch up' sessions where educational gaps have been identified, caused by the mobility of the Service family. For example, this may include supporting those pupils who move schools during Key Stage 4 and encounter changes in the curriculum offer and associated examination boards
- Appointing an Armed Forces champion who can support both staff and pupils where appropriate
- Creating a physical and/or digital induction pack to provide transition support for children before entering their new school. This could involve creative online solutions, such as the development of 360-degree virtual school tours
- Providing team building activities to support a positive class dynamic; assisting incoming and existing pupils in getting to know each other
- Purchasing additional educational psychology hours to support the development of school environments that promote integration, and which respond appropriately to learning needs impacted by transition
- Providing access to extra-curricular activities for those Service pupils who may have missed out on experiences due to the previous absence of a serving parent
- Funding revision resources, including packages available online, especially where a pupil's pattern of mobility means there are gaps in their curriculum knowledge

Information Sharing

- Sharing suitable information and other materials in the staffroom, to help ensure that all staff understand military life and how it might impact upon Service pupils
- Sharing effective practice with local/feeder schools across the cluster
- Conducting a review of school data, specifically focusing on Service pupils' outcomes. Data can relate to both academic achievement and wellbeing, and be used to baseline a pupil's position and to measure their progress in these two areas

Additional ideas

Many schools have developed and implemented creative approaches to supporting their Service families and finding opportunities to increase levels of engagement. Schools may wish to consider:

- Appointing a governor with special responsibility for Service pupils – some schools have appointed parent governors who are current members of the Armed Forces
- Identifying whether any Service pupils on roll are young carers, and whether they transition in and out of this role during periods of parental mobility/deployment
- Ensuring that they are aware of what additional information regarding Service pupils can be added to the common transfer file (CTF), to help support a successful transition process between schools. (Further information about the CTF is in the main body of this guidance.)
- Inviting a Service parent into school to talk to the children and staff about their role and what it involves. Some schools run 'Parents in uniform' projects, which bring in anyone who wears a uniform for their job (including those in the military) to discuss their role
- Considering the needs of those Service children who may join the school from an area of the world where the school curriculum differs markedly from the English National Curriculum. Over 5,000 Service pupils are presently being educated overseas and the families rotate regularly in and out of the UK
- Purchasing materials responding to any needs that may arise when supporting the diverse nature of the modern armed forces. This can include training for staff and language support both for children and families
- Reminding Service families they can access educational advice and guidance from the MOD's Education Advisory Team (RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk)
- Recognising the potential effects of world events on Service pupils

- Identifying ways of creating effective home-school partnerships with deployed or weekendending parents

Annex C - Local Authority Service Pupil Champion Role Description

Key responsibilities of the role

- To act as the authority's strategic lead for children from armed forces families, focusing on maintaining an overview of Children's Services activities for armed forces children in their early years up until the conclusion of their secondary phase schooling
- To coordinate activities of the authority that support armed forces children to achieve positive outcomes and destinations
- To coordinate the delivery and implementation of a Children's Services-wide strategic plan for armed forces children, which influences and informs the policies and practices of local schools
- To champion and advocate for the needs of armed forces children, ensuring all relevant local authority teams and services have sufficient understanding of the needs and context of local armed forces children in their area
- To work with local academies and free schools to ensure a consistency of offer for armed forces children
- To gather, collate and report on relevant cross-discipline data that tracks the outcomes of armed forces children within the local authority area, ensuring that the reporting of progress and outcomes data has exposure to the appropriate level of strategic and political scrutiny
- To engage with regional and national networks of other local authority Service Child Champions, to share knowledge and contribute to a deepening national evidence base of how local authority services can get it right for armed forces children
- To be the main point of contact between local military commands and the local authority, ensuring the local authority is able to plan proactively for deployments affecting local armed forces families and for major military mobility requiring the strategic management of transition
- To work collegiately with families from the local Armed Forces Community to establish and deliver upon a Services child promise/charter/local offer

Annex D - Other support

Army Families Federation - <https://aff.org.uk>

Naval Families Federation - <https://nff.org.uk>

RAF Families Federation - <https://www.raf-ff.org.uk>

Service Children's Progression Alliance (SCiP Alliance) - <https://www.scipalliance.org>

Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) - <https://www.sciss.org.uk>



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