



Service Pupil Premium Resource Directory



Introduction

This booklet has been created to support schools across Norfolk develop their understanding of the Armed Forces Covenant, the Armed Forces Community and the Service Pupil Premium (SPP). It pulls together information that is already available for schools and parents into one place.

As a large rural county, it recognises that any state school, academy or free school in Norfolk, can have children of service families in school years Reception to Year 11, but that numbers can differ with some schools being almost exclusively made up of children from service families and others only having very few.

This booklet has been designed with this in mind, providing national guidance as well as useful local information and key support information in relation to our military community.

Foreword

As the Director of Partnerships, Inclusion and Practice at Norfolk County Council I am pleased to share with you this booklet on the application of Service Pupil Premium (SPP).

The booklet has been developed in partnership with a group of local schools who all have experience working with children and young people whose parents either currently serve or have served in His Majesty's Armed Forces. These children and young people are referred to as service children throughout this booklet.

Norfolk has over 1500 service children of school age attending our schools and as our county is now home to the RAF, Navy and Army we can expect more schools to have service children as part of their community. We all value each and every child under our care so this guide has been written to help provide you with the tools you need to support the needs of this cohort.

The group of schools we worked with have supplied good practice guidance based upon their experiences and are available to discuss specific challenges or queries you may be having in your school. We have also included contact information for our two main military Bases – RAF Marham and Robertson Barracks in recognition that military life may not be something that you are familiar with.

I hope that you find this booklet useful in our common goal of supporting all children and young people to achieve their aspirations through education.

**Sarah Jones, Director of Partnerships, Inclusion and Practice,
Norfolk County Council**

Acknowledgements

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Contents

The Armed Forces Covenant, an introduction by Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt, Armed Forces Commissioner for Norfolk	5
Education and the Armed Forces Covenant	6
Service children in Norfolk	7
Family life for children with serving parents	8
About Service Pupil Premium (SPP)	13
Using SPP to support service children	18
Good practice examples in Norfolk and useful contacts	19
Useful information for schools	25



1. The Armed Forces Covenant

an introduction by Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt,
Armed Forces Commissioner for Norfolk.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that no current or former member of the Armed Forces, or their families, should be at a disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.



The Covenant applies to:

- The Royal Navy / Royal Marines
- The Army
- The Royal Air Force
- Reservists
- Families of those who serve, including spouses / partners and children
- Veterans and their families

For schools, this means recognising and understanding the challenges and opportunities that a Service child may experience. This can include things like transferring into your school after being educated outside the UK, living on a Military Base, frequent relocations leading to repeats or gaps in curriculum and long periods of time without one or both parents.

This booklet draws together existing information in a single place to help Norfolk schools support service children in education.

For more information on how the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board is supporting members of the Armed Forces community go to **Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant website** or contact **armedforcescovenant@norfolk.gov.uk**



2. Education and the Armed Forces Covenant

The Department for Education (DfE) supports the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- Providing Service Pupil Premium (SPP) for children being educated in England whose parents currently serve within the Armed Forces, and those children who have been recorded as having Service child status at any point in the last 6 years;
- Allowing primary schools the ability to go over the capped 30 student infant class size to accommodate a Service child moving into the area.

The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) is a Government service providing advice, support and guidance regarding the educational well-being of the children and young people belonging to families in all three Military Services. The CEAS team is comprised of qualified teachers and experienced case advisors who can answer queries on a variety of issues including Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND), admissions and appeals and education allowance. Contact information is contained in section 8 of this booklet.



3. Service Children in Norfolk

District	Primary	Secondary	Total
Breckland	263	263	526
Broadland	66	90	156
Great Yarmouth	25	32	57
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	376	150	526
North Norfolk	38	25	63
Norwich	17	36	53
South Norfolk	95	110	205
Total	880	706	1586

This information shows the number of pupils for which SPP was claimed across Norfolk in 2023.

However, this may only be part of the picture as nationally we know that not all families declare that their child comes from a serving family. The reasons for this can be varied and at times personal, for example, if a family believes the child may feel singled out or where a parent has died during Service but it can also be due to a lack of awareness on behalf of the parent needing to declare.

More information about the eligibility criteria for SPP is contained in section 5 of this booklet.

4. Family life for children with serving parents

When a member of the Armed Forces moves for work, their family often moves with them. Moves can occur across the UK and, in some cases, abroad. Postings can last in each area for a few months or a few years before the Service person moves job (and often location) again.

The Armed Forces provides accommodation for families should they wish to live in it, termed as Service Family Accommodation (SFA). Houses can be located on site where the parent works or within the local area.

The frequent moves experienced by Armed Forces families can present several challenges for school age children, especially if the child is moving around exam time or has Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND). It can be hard emotionally for any child saying good-bye to friends and beginning the process of making new ones again but for a Service child this can happen with more frequency, making it difficult to establish long term friendship groups outside the Armed Forces community and potentially disrupting their education. For families with a child who has SEND, this can also lead to delays in receiving appropriate support if, for example, a move occurs whilst waiting for an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

In June 2020, the MOD commissioned a report to look at how Armed Forces families in the UK cope with military life. The report called, **‘Living in our Shoes’** covered all aspects of family life including what it is like to grow up in the military and the impact of Service life on children and young people.

As part of the report, Head Teachers interviewed were keen to point out that service children are not disadvantaged children and should not be viewed as such, but Teachers believe that because of the impact of military life and its many transitions and relocations, children with a parent in the military are more appropriately described as being ‘vulnerable’. Most concern expressed during the review was about the frequency of school moves and the potential negative consequences of frequent disruptions to education, and about the variable nature of the support offered to service children.

The report included the following quotes:

I've learned about the Romans five times now in history, but maths is a problem because I have missed bits out.

(Teenager, serving family)

My son has had four different schools in three years and, as he went to Scotland in this time he was also in different years and different curriculums.

(Army, non-serving partner)

My son suffers from special needs and cannot deal with moving schools all the time. He needs time to build a relationship with his SEN teachers and helpers.

(RAF Serving partner)

A parent living away from home presents issues for any child including missing the parent and the parent missing out on family events such as birthdays. This can be made harder if the family have been used to living together and can also differ depending upon the age of the child and the frequency / length of the absence. For a Service child the effect of an absent parent due to work may be heightened by the knowledge that their parent could be working in a hostile environment, possibly in another country or with limited ability for contact.

Unlike other professions where both parents may be employed by the same organisation, if both parents serve this can bring added complications to home life. For example, the Army states:

The Army recognises that dual serving parents may face some additional challenges to those where one parent is not serving. While the Army will endeavour to meet geographical and assignment preference, there is a risk it may not be possible for them to be co-located. Each parent should engage with their chain of command and career management staff to determine the best possible outcomes for their family.

In Norfolk, some Armed Forces families will choose to live on or near their parent unit at RAF Marham near Kings Lynn or Robertson Barracks at Swanton Morley but the county is also home to dispersed families who have chosen to purchase or rent their own home in the civilian community. This is often to enable their child to experience less disruption and means that a Service child could attend any school in the county, not just those that are geographically close to a Base.

Some serving parents may have difficulty in engaging with their child's education. Although this is not unique to serving parents, missing parent teacher meetings, school events and key milestones, having limited opportunities to meet with other parents and their child's friends, can be particularly difficult if the family is also living away from the parent unit in a civilian community who cannot relate to military life. There are a number of schemes, such as **Reading Force**, which aim to link the serving parent and their child using books, enabling both to read the same book and then talk about it even if the serving parent is away from home.

Deployment

Deployment is another part of military life family's must face. A deployment can occur nationally or internationally and can be for months at a time. In addition, a serving parent may also need to undertake training prior to deployment which can further extend the period spent away from their family.

I would like to know more about the deployment, so that I could understand what my father was going to be doing.

(Army young person)

Deployments are a strange phenomena [sic]...your partner tells you that they are going away for seven months or whatever... don't be fooled nothing is that simple! What they fail to tell you, they have to be away for the build-up, which involves going away for weeks beforehand, working stupid patterned shifts to prepare aircraft and equipment for going away....they attend umpteen different courses...in the sea training...Then they get pinged to cover someone abroad for three weeks, just because they are... effectively on call and 24 hours' notice for two or three years... Before you know it you haven't seen them much in nearly eighteen months...but it's only a seven month deployment they said!

(RN non-serving partner)

In some situations, while deployed, a parent may have limited contact with their child.

For example, parents serving on submarines, due to the restrictions and sensitivity of their work, will have very little contact with the outside world. Families are permitted to send one-way 'familygrams', which can be sent in once or twice a week, but they can be no longer than 120 words in total, which the serving parent cannot reply to. This lack of contact can cause stress and worry for a child, particularly if the parent is going to a high-risk area.

Further information on what life can be like as part of a Military family can be found in the report **'Living in our shoes – understanding the needs of UK Armed Forces Families'**.

Local support and advice for serving personnel and their families in Norfolk

Serving personnel and family members based in Norfolk can access support via their unit welfare teams. This can include advice for transitioning of families in and out of the area, questions relating to the education of service children in the local area and wider welfare queries.

The Regimental Welfare Officer at Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley can be reached at **QDG-UWO-UWO@MOD.GOV.UK**

The Community Development Officer at RAF Marham can be reached at Community Support Team, MRM-CSF Hive Group (MULTIUSER)
MRM-CSFHiveGroup@mod.gov.uk

Welfare teams are also able to liaise with schools (and community groups) on behalf of their respective military bases.

If you have service children in your school, it is highly recommended you make contact with the relevant military contact and / or Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant at **armedforcescovenant@norfolk.gov.uk**

For examples of how schools in Norfolk are already supporting service children and their families see sections 6 and 7 of this booklet.

National sources of support / information

The service children's Progression Alliance (SCiP) have created several briefing notes on topics including non-operational separation, resilience and Further Education attainment – more information can be found here:

<https://www.scipalliance.org/research/research-briefings>

For further reading, the Naval Families Federation alongside King's Centre for Military Health Research, have investigated the effect of non-operational family separations or 'weekending':

<https://nff.org.uk/non-operational-separations/>



5. About Service Pupil Premium (SPP)

The Service Pupil Premium (SPP) was introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) in April 2011 as part of its commitment to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant and in recognition of the specific challenges Service families face.

For more information about the current rate that Children in England attract as a result of Service Pupil Premium from Reception to Year 11 go to Service Pupil Premium: what you need to know - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Unlike Pupil Premium, eligible schools receive the SPP so that they can offer mainly pastoral support during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact on service children of family mobility or parental deployment. Mobility is when a Service family is posted from one location to another, including overseas and within the UK. Deployment is when a Service person is serving away from home for a period of time. This could be a 6 to 9-month tour of duty, a training course or an exercise which could last for a few weeks

Money is paid to the school in a lump sum for the total number of service children flagged ahead of the Autumn school census deadline. It is **NOT** specifically allocated to an individual child.

It is up to the school and its Governors to decide how the money is spent. Schools are held to account for the spending of this funding through the focus in Ofsted inspections on the progress and attainment of their wider Pupil Premium eligible pupil cohort. However, it is up to the parent to declare to the school if they or their partner serve.

Eligibility Criteria

A child is eligible for SPP if:

- 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).
- they have been registered as a 'Service child' on a school census in the past six years.
- one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme.
- one of their parents is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England.

A child's eligibility needs to be registered in the Autumn Census. SPP cannot be claimed retrospectively, and it cannot be transferred from school to school. Therefore, if a child moves school after the Autumn Census, the SPP will remain with the school that originally claimed it and the school that the child has transferred to will not be able to claim SPP for them until the following year.

A Service family joining a school mid-year may not realise that they need to inform their new school so that they can start claiming SPP as soon as possible.

Service parents need to make the school aware of their status by informing the Head Teacher or school admin staff when their child joins the school. It is important however, that schools are aware that some parents may assume that their child will automatically be flagged as a Service pupil or may assume that this status will be carried forward from their previous school.

The decision to declare Service status to the school is the decision of the parent(s). It is considered that if an individual decides to do this, it is reasonable for the school to ask for identification. The easiest way for the school to confirm military status is to request sight of the Military Identification Card.

DfE's ever 6 service child measure

The premium was extended, such that any pupil in reception to year 11, who has been flagged as a Service child in the last six years, will continue to receive the premium (Ever 6 service child). Please see the [ESFA's pupil premium grant guidance](#) for more information. Ex Service personnel should tell the school if they left the armed forces within the last six years. Under the DfE's ever measure, schools will continue to receive SPP for up to six years for children whose parent(s) left the armed forces, provided the children were recorded as service children in a school census (prior to their parent(s) leaving the forces). The ever measure also applies when Service parents divorce or separate or when a Service parent dies in service.

Step children

Step children of serving personnel are eligible to receive SPP as per the Department for Education (DfE) school census. A child must live with their service parent to be eligible for SPP. A child, where the service parent is the main carer and even if they are not the biological parent, is also eligible. As long as the service person has parental responsibility within the terms of the Children Act 1989 for a child(ren), and satisfies all of the conditions of the PStat 2 category, schools will be able to claim SPP for the child.

Schools can claim for both SPP and PP for the same child. DfE states that 'If a child meets the criteria for both then they are entitled to both. A proportion of Service pupils have been receiving both for some time'.



The MOD report, 'Living in our shoes' report recognises that the bulk of primary school funding is based on the number of pupils calculated from an annual Autumn census in October. This number dictates the funding for the following financial year, with no adjustment for further increases in pupil numbers which can mean that a Service pupil can be without funding for up to 18 months. This is a particular problem for schools with large numbers of service children where mobility is high. It is recognised that on this basis, service children arriving mid-year pose a real funding challenge.

What Service Pupil Premium Should not be used for - SPP should not be used to subsidise routine school activity (trips, music lessons etc). Schools may choose to fund school trips just for service children, to help them enjoy their time at school and build a sense of a wider community and understanding of the role their service parent plays (eg with military specific trips). This is to help them cope with the potential strains of service life.

How SPP is affected if the serving parent dies

A child or young person is still eligible for SPP under the following criteria following the death of a serving parent:

- If the serving parent died whilst serving in the Armed Forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (the scheme covers illness, injury or death caused by Service on or after 6 April 2005 but illness, injury or death not caused by Service is not covered);
- Or if the child is in receipt of the War Pensions Scheme (the scheme covers illness, injury or death caused by Service before 6 April 2005).

If in receipt of either of these compensation schemes, the child or young person will be eligible for SPP up until and including Year 11.

If the child is not in receipt of a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme, they will remain eligible under the 'ever 6 service' measure for a period of up to 6 years or until the end of Year 11, whichever comes first.

Common Transfer File

With effect from September 2018, a Service Child section was added to the Common Transfer File (CTF). This asks additional questions pertinent to service children and their unique challenges. This includes a free text box where schools can include any relevant information, including, but not limited to, strengths, concerns, education gaps, family difficulties. This can be useful in identifying eligibility for SPP particularly in circumstances of a bereavement where a child is moving schools as a result.

Support beyond SPP

Scholarships are available for young people over the age of 16, continuing in full-time education, whose parents died in Service. It is important that schools are aware of this information so that it can inform advice given as part of their career information and guidance.

The Service pupil can apply for help with the costs of further and higher education if all of the following are true:

- one of their parents has died as a result of their Service in the Armed Forces;
- the parent died on or after 1 January 1990;
- the young person is 16 or over and in full-time education;
- the young person or a surviving parent receive bereavement benefits from the Armed Forces Compensation scheme, War Pension scheme or Armed Forces Attributable Benefits scheme.

You cannot apply if you were the foster child of the person who died.

What the scholarship can be used for

The scholarship can pay tuition fees and your maintenance for:

- **a further education course** of up to 3 years;
- your first undergraduate course at a **UK university or other higher education institution (such as a college or art school)** - this can include study abroad if it's part of the course;
- a higher level technical education course at **qualification levels 4, 5 or 6.**

6. Using SPP to support service children

The Army Families Federation has put together a list of ways schools have used the SPP to support their children. Schools should consider these at their own discretion based on the needs of the individual child:

- Learning Support Assistant dedicated to the emotional wellbeing and academic achievement of service children
- Computer equipment for Skype / Teams chat time
- Half-termly social events for parents and children
- Website page for Service families
- Themed visits and outings specifically relevant to service children
- Moving-schools support including 'My passport'
- After school clubs
- Camera equipment for photographs
- Welcome films made by pupils
- Deployment display boards
- Memory boxes for service children moving on
- Homework support groups
- Around the world assembly
- A service children's area within the school, with a bank of computers for scanning schoolwork to email parents who are away and keep them informed

As the Service child cohort for many Norfolk schools is small, a buddy system allowing children to email or write to other service children in their area or across the UK could be a valuable way to help children share experiences and connect with others. If your school is interested in being part of such a scheme please contact armedforcescovenant@norfolk.gov.uk

7. Good practice examples in Norfolk and useful contacts

Swanton Morley VC Primary School

Matt Richards, Head Teacher of Swanton Morley VC Primary School explains how they support service children using SPP:

“Our school is a one form entry primary that is less than a mile away from the Robertson Barracks, home of 1st The Queen’s Dragoon Guard, also known as the QDG. Due to this proximity, around 30% of our pupils are from Service families, although the exact figure does fluctuate, and we have high levels of mobility, sometimes as high as 10% during an academic year.

The primary focus of the way we spend our Service Pupil Premium (SPP) is to focus on our “offer” for Service families. The questions we ask ourselves are:

- What can we do to support transition into the school?
- What ongoing support might pupils and families need?
- What additional capacity will we need to factor in during times of deployment?
- How do we support pupils when transitioning out of the school?
- What are the barriers to families accessing the support we can offer?
- How can we ensure we facilitate Service families engaging with the local community?

Based on our experience of engaging with Service families, we have found that having one primary point of contact for families and the welfare team works well. We use some of our SPP, to employ a Service pupils’ champion. Their role is to liaise with families on arrival, and then provide bespoke support as needed.

We speak directly to the welfare team and to the Service families on a regular basis to manage the level of support needed for specific pupils and families. We also engage with schools that the pupils move to in order to support transition.

We have found that one of the most effective methods of support we can offer is to research new schools that the pupil is moving to with the pupil, so that we get an idea of what the school looks like, who the teachers are etc before they move there. This is something we found that could be overlooked during an unexpected move and it really does help the pupils.

During times of deployment we can help to create memory books with pupils who have a parent away for an extended period, where pupils can record important memories and events that take place during the deployment. We can also help to put small packages together where special items and letters are sent to the deployed parent.

We also use funding to have a bank of uniform and other school resources that Service pupils can access, which is especially helpful for pupils who arrive at short notice. We work with the welfare team to plan events (both at Robertson Barracks and in the village at the school) that all pupils can access with their families, thus developing the sense of belonging and community”.

To get advice on how to support service children from Matt Richards contact: head@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk



Neatherd High School

Neatherd High School Helen Hunton, Pupil Premium Advisor, Neatherd High School explains how they support service children using SPP:

“As soon as a new student is identified as coming from a Service family a questionnaire and letter of introduction are sent out to parents. This enables the school to ascertain what support the child may require and provide parents with the opportunity to raise any concerns, particularly linked to deployment.

I meet half-termly (or more frequently if requested by the student) with every Service child in a one to one informal session. This is so I can get to know the Service child personally, to find out what challenges they face and what the school can do to ease those challenges, particularly concerns service children may have before and during periods of deployment. We run a regular weekly drop-in lunch time session, where service children could bring their friends into an allocated room and have a chat or obtain advice and also take part in games and crafting activities. This has proved extremely popular and is an ideal opportunity for Services Pupil Premium students to meet up in an informal, friendly environment. This is run by the community Support Development Worker from Robertson Barracks. Additionally, we ensure that service children have academic support if needed and we have a pupil premium resource room in which to deliver intervention lessons, however, in general I find that whereas PP students tend to need academic support, SPP students often need pastoral support more, or just someone to listen to their concerns. Often, just a chat and reassurance are the best support I can give to a student from a Service family.

A top tip from me, is to get to know your students personally, let them know you are there if they want a chat, or if they just want to let you know that their parent is going to be deployed so you can talk through how they feel about it. Also, make yourself known to parents, so they have a point of contact if needed, I feel this is very important, so I quickly know about deployment or other issues Services Pupil Premium students face.

To get advice on how to support service children from Helen Hunton contact:
Helen_Hunton@neatherd.org

Cherry Tree Academy Marham Infant And Cherry Tree Academy Marham Junior

Close to RAF Marham are our two academies Cherry Tree Academy Marham Infant and, Cherry Tree Academy Marham Junior. The two academies have been part of the community of RAF Marham since 1955 and 1965 respectively.

Working very closely with personnel at RAF Marham, a tri-service station in West Norfolk, the two academies support children from serving and non-serving personnel. The majority of children in our academies are part of a service family.

The support we put in does not put children from non-service families at a disadvantage, rather, they benefit from an enhanced curriculum and the additional pastoral support that the academies offer.

We understand that service children can dip in and out of vulnerability. All staff are aware of the service children in their classes and are made aware of upcoming deployments.

Pastoral Need

We have a dedicated Pastoral Team on both sites. The team cover all aspects of support, including parent support.

Children

Arrivals

We start our relationship with families and children before they arrive. They are sent an email from their teacher and the principal. As part of their welcome pack children also receive a child friendly booklet explaining about the academy and the day. This helps children to picture themselves in their new schools.

Deployments

We make the most of technology and keep in touch with deployed parents, sending them the weekly class newsletter at the end of the week, and notice of what their child will be learning during the week.

We encourage children to share pictures of their work and we send it directly to the absent parent. We find that this can quickly settle even the most upset child quickly and continue with their day.

We welcome parents on deployment via online meetings where possible. Children are encouraged to build Welcome Home boxes. These boxes are filled with pictures, pieces of work, paintings that are collected throughout the deployment to be opened when the parent returns home.

We have found that these very small engagements with deployed families helps settle children and allows the parent to remain engaged with their child's learning.

The Pastoral Team offer a regular deployment group that gives children the opportunity to talk to others who have family away from home.

Engagement with the parent who remains is also very important as they are often apart from family. This may involve a cup of tea or a catch up at the school gates. It can be as much, or as little, as families would like.

Departures

Supporting children as they leave us is as important as their arrival. We look at the school that they are going to and give children time to discuss how they feel, the positives and any anxiousness.

Curriculum & Learning

We build flexibility into our curriculum so that children who have already completed a topic may learn a different aspect of it, rather than repeating previous learning.

Children who come from different education systems as supported to ensure that gaps in learning required by the English system are readily filled.

Community

We have a close bond with the station and supporting services and, with parental agreement, we will share information. As a result of this, we can plan and deliver support for our families holistically.

We recognise that it is important for our children to feel part of a community irrespective of how long they are with us for. We have strong bonds with both the military and local communities that offer support and opportunities for the children at each academy.

Funding

By far this is the most challenging aspect of our provision, numbers of pupils fluctuate greatly throughout the year and the impact of LAG funding will often result in the number of children on site may not be funded. There are also incidences in which, after setting class numbers and matching the number of teaching staff required, we grow without notice. E.g. In Autumn 2023 a sudden influx of children into Year 5 necessitated splitting the class and employing another teacher that was not budgeted for.

To get advice on how to support service children from Michaela Webb, CEO & Executive Principal at Cherry Tree Academy, Marham contact: principal@cherrytreeacademy.norfolk.sch.uk



8. Useful information for schools

The following link provides further in-depth information on the SPP including the eligibility criteria in relation to divorced parents or step-parents and information on what happens when a child moves school after the school census date:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-spp-information-sheet>

More information for teachers and school staff on supporting service children and understanding their needs can be found on the service children in State Schools Alliance (SCISS) website.

<https://www.sciss.org.uk/>

The Pupil Information Profile supports a child's learning by identifying their current and future learning needs. This information is intended to be passed across to the new school when the child moves.

In addition, since September 2018 the Common Transfer File (CTF) has included a specific section that schools can use to exchange information about service children's particular needs (e.g. any concerns they have about the child's responses to moving school, deployment, parental separation).

Department for Education guidance on the CTF is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-transfer-file-19-specification>

Further information around how the CTF supports better transfer of information about service children between schools can be found at:

<https://www.raf-ff.org.uk/news/the-common-transfer-file-for-service-children-moving-from-one-school-to-another/>

The Royal British Legion has also developed a Guide for Schools.

Information can be found at:

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/campaigns-policy-and-research/best-practice-guides/support-for-service-children>

The service children's Progression Alliance (SCiP) is a partnership of organisations focused on improving outcomes for children from Military families. SCiP is funded by the Ministry of Defence. Find out more at:

<https://www.scipalliance.org>

SCiP has a number of resources for schools including research briefings around moving schools and non- operational separation (weekending), which a number of Service families within Norfolk may be experiencing:

Research indicates that Armed Forces children are less likely to attend University than their peers. Find out more at the link below:

<https://www.scipalliance.org/research/research-briefings>

Therefore, it is important to promote service children's further education and aspirations as far as possible.

SCiP offers guidance to support a child and their school when writing their University application and many university outreach teams also offer free activities such as campus-visits and in-school workshops to inspire and encourage young people who are less likely to progress to Higher Education. Outreach staff will also be able to help with information about UCAS and student finance applications.

The Year of the Service Child Voice culminated in a report entitled '**Listening to Learn**' which prioritised the voice of the Service child and helped confirm that this is at the heart of the SCiP Alliance's partnership approach.

<https://www.scipalliance.org/research/listening-to-learn-the-voices-of-service-children>

The SCiP Alliance have developed CPD resources for schools alongside case studies depicting how schools have supported their service children.

<https://www.scipalliance.org/cpd>

The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) provides advice, support and guidance regarding the educational well-being of the children and young people belonging to families in all three Military Services. More information is available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/the-childrens-education-advisory-service-ceas>

MOD support fund for schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-support-fund-for-schools-with-service-children-grant-application-pack>

Forces Additional needs and Disability Forum (FANDF):

<https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/disability-support/additional-needs-and-disability-support>

Family Federations

Families and schools can seek advice and information from the relevant Service Families Federation:

- Naval Families Federation nff.org.uk/ 023 9265 4374
- Army Families Federation aff.org.uk/ 01264 382324
- Royal Air Force Families Federation raf-ff.org.uk/ 01780 781650

Military Charities

Parents and schools can also access support from charities such as:

- The Royal British Legion www.britishlegion.org.uk/ 0808 802 8080
- SSAFA www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/military-families 0800 731 4880
- Veterans' Gateway www.veteransgateway.org.uk/ 0808 802 1212
- Reading Force (reading scrapbooks to be shared with parent overseas to promote communication) - www.readingforce.org.uk/
- Naval Families Federation support with Education - www.nff.org.uk/education/
- Army Families Federation support with Education and Childcare - www.aff.org.uk/advice/education-childcare/
- Little Troopers (variety of support from trips for separated families to education packs and support for schools) - www.littletroopers.net/
- Scotty's Little Soldiers (supporting bereaved service children) - www.scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk/

Other useful pages include:

www.raf-ff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/funding-support-raf-children-in-schools.pdf

www.raf-ff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/UK-school-year-comparison-table-2020-plus-devolved-state-edu-comparison-table.pdf

www.sscecymru.co.uk/

forceschildrenseducation.org.uk/

www.raf-ff.org.uk/education/charitable-support-for-children-and-young-people/

9. Example Letter

The following is an example of what Dereham Neatherd High School is doing to support its Service pupils. Other schools may wish to adapt this for their own use.

Dear xxxx

You may not be aware, but your child has been registered as a Service Pupil Premium student (SPP), which means they have, or had, a parent(s) or carer in the Armed Forces.

This is important as the Government, and our school in general, recognise how special Forces families are, and here at xxxx school we have several provisions in place specifically to support you and your child/children.

Our Forces children are an integral part of both the Armed Forces and our school community and they can receive help and support with whatever they, and you, may need. This may be in terms of academic support and stability when parents are deployed, an understanding ear when they need it most, or simply to support you by letting you know how your child is coping at school and what we are doing to help.

My name is xxxx and I am one of the members of staff that work in 'xxxx', the department that supports all Pupil Premium students. I am also an ex-Forces child who feels passionately about the special lifestyle that Forces children and their families live, and with the school, I will make every effort to ensure that your child/children feel settled and included. I know that there are specific times when Forces children may require further support, be it when parents are deployed, on their return or when there are other stressful events happening such as relocations and transition to civilian life.

To help me help your child and determine what support they may need, please can you complete and return the short questionnaire below to...

Thank you for your support and please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Regards
xxxxxx

Accompanying parental questionnaire

1. Which member(s) of the family is currently a serving member of the Armed Forces? Are there any veterans in your household?
2. Which branch of the Armed Forces has the above served in or is serving in?
3. How often is the person(s) above deployed away from home? Please include any detachments even if they are in the U.K.
4. How long on average is the person(s) named above deployed for?
5. Would you be happy to inform us when a parent is deployed so that we can offer extra support to your child?
6. In general, how does your child/children generally cope when the person(s) named above are deployed? (Any information you can give will help me to support your child/children)
7. What do you feel I could provide that would specifically help your child/children?

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this important questionnaire. I will now use it to inform my support of your child/children.



Example questions asked of the pupil

Background

Which parent is/was in the Forces?
What Forces are they/were they serving in?
Where are they currently based?

Homework

Do you usually struggle with homework?
Do you usually struggle with classwork?
Does this change when your parent is deployed?
What would make things easier to deal with:
Homework?
Classwork?

Support group

How do you feel about meeting other forces students?
Would a Forces Support Group be useful?

Meetings

Would you find it useful to talk to a named member of staff about concerns when your parent is deployed?

Frequency

How often would you like to meet/talk to a member of staff about any concerns?

Exit Card

Would an exit card be useful to help with the first few days when your parent is deployed?

Ideas

What support do you think the school should offer you?

Well-being

How would you RAG rate your emotional well-being?
Reasons for that RAG rate?