

SUPPORTING SERVICE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

A BEST PRACTICE GUIDE



LIVE ON 

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ABOUT THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion is at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community through thick and thin – ensuring that their unique contribution is never forgotten. We were created as a unifying force for the military charity sector at the end of the First World War, and still remain one of the UK's largest membership organisations. The Legion is the largest welfare provider in the Armed Forces charity sector, helping veterans young and old transition into civilian life. We help with employment, financial issues, respite and recovery, through to lifelong care and independent living. In 2015/16, we responded to over a million requests for help – more than ever before.

For further information, please visit: www.britishlegion.org.uk

For support, call our helpline on 0808 802 8080. We're open 8am-8pm, 7 days a week.



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FOREWORD



The Royal British Legion is at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community through thick and thin – ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten. That community is not

limited only to those who wear or once wore a uniform. Armed Forces personnel make tremendous sacrifices to serve their country – but so too do their families. The spouses, partners and children of serving personnel face many challenges due to the unique nature of Service life and the disadvantages they face must not go unnoticed and unaddressed. Today, the vast majority of serving personnel, veterans and their families go on to lead fulfilling lives and make a positive contribution to our local communities but, for some, additional support may be required and the Legion is here to fight for that support.

One crucial aspect of this support is ensuring the children of serving Armed Forces personnel have access to help they may need due to the unique pressures they may be facing. Having a parent away from home on deployment, often in

dangerous situations and for long periods of time, can have a tremendous impact on a child's wellbeing and we must do what we can for them should they need us. Service life can take a huge emotional toll and may leave a child and family feeling isolated and in need of support. We are aware that many Service children are still disadvantaged in their access to and experiences through education as a result of a parent serving in the Armed Forces, and we hope the following guide can help show what can be done to address these disadvantages and improve the lives of these children.

Since the Armed Forces Covenant was enshrined in legislation in 2011 and reinforced by local community pledges up and down the country, significant progress has been achieved in addressing disadvantage and providing special treatment where appropriate. However,

there is always more we can do to ensure we are making a tangible difference to the lives of our local Armed Forces community and the Legion will continue to work in partnership with local government and other partners to ensure this happens.

I hope the following pages will be a welcome resource for schools, local authorities and families themselves, and that the advice contained in this guide will be acted upon. We look forward to working with local government, schools and other partners to further improve the lives of the Armed Forces community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Byrne'.

Charles Byrne
Director General, The Royal British Legion

INTRODUCTION

This guide is for all who have an interest in improving the provision of education to Service children in state-maintained schools. It contains information and guidance for education providers; be they local authorities running admissions procedures, or schools themselves educating Service children every day, including the growing number of free schools and academies. All local authorities in England with responsibility for education have Service pupils registered on the school census, so this is an issue of relevance to all, not just those areas with a large military presence. There is also information for parents of Service children, explaining what they should expect and where to find extra guidance should they need it.

The purpose of this guide is to:

- Highlight the issues of most concern to Service pupils.
- Explain what help already exists and the current responsibilities of government and education providers.
- Provide examples of best practice from across England.

The Legion is not alone in seeking to improve the quality of life for Service children, and already works with other charities – such as MKC Heroes and Reading Force who both feature in this guide – other organisations, the Families Federations, and government to address it. This guide will point those in need of help to the best solution for their problem.

In 2011 the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant were enshrined in legislation as a result of campaigning by The Royal British Legion. Since then, national and local governments, and over 1,500 businesses, charities, and other organisations, have now committed to ensuring that the key principles are upheld:

- Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and
- Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

Today, every local authority in Great Britain and a number in Northern Ireland have made a public pledge to uphold and implement these Covenant principles. Having campaigned to ensure that the Covenant was enshrined in legislation, the

Legion has since been at the forefront of seeking its effective implementation. As part of this work, we have produced this new guide on how to better help the children of serving Armed Forces personnel gain access to and advance through their education.

ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF SERVICE CHILDREN IN THE UK



Estimates from Ofsted report *Children in Service Families*, 2011, page 9



CHAPTER ONE

ADMISSIONS

Finding and securing a school place for a Service child comes with unique challenges that non-Service families do not routinely face. For Service families, navigating the school admissions process should be no different to that experienced by their civilian counterparts if it is done at the same time as every other family. However, Service families often find themselves struggling with the process because they are forced to move house and school outside the standard admissions timetable. Service life can require a high degree of mobility for families, and parents who serve will find themselves being moved around the country, and indeed the world, on a timetable over which they have little say.

When a school move must take place in the middle of an academic year and when places have already been allocated to all other non-Service pupils, a separate admissions process must be used. This is known as 'in-year admissions' and Service families have reported difficulties in navigating their way through this process.

Information on standard school admission is available here:

www.gov.uk/schools-admissions

Why in-year admissions are difficult for Service families:

1. In many parts of the country places at some schools are in high demand, regardless of whether you have applied in line with the standard admission timetable or in-year.
2. When a Service family is searching for a school place in-year, it can be difficult to find schools with available places to accommodate more pupils. When these schools reject in-year admission from Service children this forces the family to look further afield for a school place.

What are the current rules on school admissions?

In England, school admissions are governed by the 2014 School Admission Code. Available here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code. This code now includes specific policies which apply to the admission of Service children in-year. Extracts are included overleaf.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE

1.9

It is for admission authorities to formulate their admission arrangements, but they must not:

f) give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial or educational status of parents applying. The exceptions to this are children of staff at the school and those eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium and the service premium who may be prioritised in the arrangements in accordance with paragraphs 1.39 – 1.39B.

1.39A

Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium and also children eligible for the service premium. Admission authorities should clearly define in the arrangements the categories of eligible premium recipients to be prioritised.

1.39B

Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium or the service premium who:

a) are in a nursery class which is part of the school; or

b) attend a nursery that is established and run by the school. The nursery must be named in the admission arrangements and its selection must be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

2.15

Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

f) children of UK Service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;

2.18

For families of Service personnel with a confirmed posting to their area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in that area, admission authorities must:

a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria. This must include accepting a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a Service child. Admission authorities must not refuse a Service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area, or reserve blocks of places for these children;

b) ensure that arrangements in their area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for Service children. Arrangements must be appropriate for the area and be described in the local authority's composite prospectus.

What this might mean for you:

- When allocating places to oversubscribed schools, admission authorities may give priority to Service children eligible for the Service Pupil Premium.
- Service children may be given priority on any waiting lists for oversubscribed schools, if the admission authority chooses to do so.
- Admissions authorities must accept a unit address as proof of address for the purposes of applying for a school place in advance of the move taking place. This is useful if a family knows they are moving but does not yet have a new home address.
- Service children admitted in-year are 'excepted pupils' for infant (Reception to Year Two) class size limits, currently set at 30, which means an admission authority may offer a place, even if the class size limit will be breached.

For Service children joining a school in-year, the admission code offers some welcome assistance to address the challenges often faced. However, there are some limits to its usefulness. For example, the fact infant class size limits do not apply to Service children still cannot help a Service family if there is physically insufficient room for more pupils to join that specific class. It should also be noted that the admissions code does not give Service children any automatic right to a place in their preferred school. If schools are full then they are entitled to turn away Service children. Local authority admission services are bound to offer a place for a child, but it does not have to be their preferred choice. If a parent feels that there are additional extenuating circumstances, then they may appeal the admission authority's decision to an independent appeal panel.



Further information:

The School Admissions Code is available here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code

The School Admissions Appeals Code is available here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code

Further assistance for Service families:

Professional support and guidance is available to parents with admission queries from the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), part of the Ministry of Defence's Directorate Children and Young People (DCYP). The CEAS provide valuable information on school admissions and many other education related matters and maintain a telephone and online helpline for parents of Service children with queries.

Website here: www.gov.uk/guidance/childrens-education-advisory-service

This includes a moving schools pack available here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/moving-school-packs

Help is also available from the three Service Families Federations. They help many families with queries relating to schools and can help talk through the process and provide advice.

Army Families Federation: www.aff.org.uk

Naval Families Federation: www.nff.org.uk

RAF Families Federation: www.raf-ff.org.uk

Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND)

If your child has SEN or SEND, the Ministry of Defence advises you to contact the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) and register your child.

Contact details can be found on the website:

www.gov.uk/guidance/childrens-education-advisory-service

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

North Yorkshire County Council:

Home to Catterick Garrison, the largest British Army garrison in the world, and several other military establishments. The Council handles large numbers of admissions from Service children and manages them very efficiently. Admissions staff are well trained in handling Service children school admissions and deal with them well. In advance of a big move of pupils from British military bases in Germany, a team of Council staff went to Germany to help families prepare, covering school improvement, admissions, SEND and local Headteachers.

Hampshire County Council:

Have set as a key objective in their Civilian Military Partnership action plan improving awareness of the correct admission policy for Service children among Council staff, schools and parents. They plan to produce a video for distribution and to start sampling and measuring the experience of Service families in the county who go through the admissions process and comparing their experiences to the wider population.

Staffordshire County Council:

The Council coordinated a visit of local headteachers and key local authority personnel to Germany to assist in the planning and dissemination of information to families due to relocate to Stafford. A school admissions guide was specifically produced for the families, advising of the process for making school applications, and was fully coordinated by the County Council to ensure that those families affected were assured of their school places before arriving in the County town.

CHAPTER TWO

SERVICE CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

The lives of Service children may be more stressful than those of their civilian peers. The high mobility and frequent house and school moves that can come with a military career can be destabilising for all the family, especially the children. Not all Service children find it difficult and there are positives that come with the lifestyle, but regular moves can make it difficult to settle in school, to make new friends, and to have access to a consistent curriculum.

Of far greater impact, however, is the effect on a child of the deployment of a parent. Whether on an operational tour, training, or postings abroad. It is in these times that anxiety peaks and a heavy emotional toll can be placed upon Service children. Prolonged periods of separation from a parent is an upsetting experience in itself, but add to that the knowledge that a parent may be in harms way while on deployment, and the emotional strain on Service children during such times can be severe.

A 2011 Ofsted study, called *Children in Service Families* (www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-in-service-families), into the quality of education provision for Service children contains extensive evidence of the disruption to the social and emotional wellbeing of Service children. The report

noted that almost all the Service children interviewed said they did not like their regular moves between schools, were upset by school moves, and that it disrupted their friendships. The study also found that some schools reported a visible deterioration in the behaviour of Service children when a parent was deployed, as the anxiety and stress took hold.

Action is already being taken across the country to reduce the negative impact of Service life on the emotional wellbeing of children and to reduce the disadvantages they face. Local authorities and schools can learn how to mitigate the effects of these strains on Service pupils' wellbeing from the examples included overleaf.

Further assistance for Service families:
The Directorate Children and Young People: DCYP have produced a guide, *Families On The Move*, which provides advice on how to deal with the transition period of moving and minimise the impact on children as much as possible. It contains a helpful checklist of actions to take and contact details of the CEAS helpline. This can be obtained by contacting DCYP.

Further information available on this website:
www.gov.uk/government/groups/directorate-children-and-young-people



BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

MKC Heroes:

Military Kids Club (MKC) Heroes is an international pupil voice initiative formed to support Service and veterans' children and young people. The group started in 2010 in Plymouth as HMS Heroes to enable the children of serving personnel and veterans going through similar challenges to come together and support each other. Following a name change to reflect the tri-service nature of the group in 2016, MKC Heroes continues to grow and provide a voice to explain to others the unique challenges that children face in being part of a military family. There are currently over 9,000 members of MKC Heroes spread across over 140 schools located all over the world. When Service pupils face severe challenges, MKC Heroes provides a safe space to talk with friends who understand what it means to be a Service pupil and can provide the support that Service pupils need, when it is most needed. Social isolation is often encountered by a new pupil transferring to a new school in a completely different part of the country. MKC Heroes overcomes this negative experience by providing a group of friends instantly with similar backgrounds.

The website provides further information: www.mkcheroes.co.uk

Reading Force:

Reading Force is a tri-service shared reading charity which gives books and scrapbooks to families. It offers its service to all Forces families in all circumstances, at home or away, and is especially useful when a parent is away from home due to deployment or training as a way of staying close to an absent parent, and to keep in touch with grandparents and extended family living far away. Families can request their free books and special scrapbooks via the Reading Force website, and children of all ages, from birth to 18, are encouraged to take part in this fun activity. Taking part is free for all Regular Forces, Reserves and ex-Services children.

The website provides full information on how to take part: www.readingforce.org.uk

North Yorkshire County Council:

This local authority has gone to great lengths to improve the wellbeing of Service pupils in their schools. The Council's Children & Young People's Service takes a proactive role to reduce, as much as possible, the potential negative impact of a transient lifestyle and in closing any gaps in terms of educational achievement with their civilian peers. The Council recognises that Service pupils face unique challenges posed by frequent moves, changes in home, school and friends, long periods of separation from loved ones and that because of this at times some pupils require additional support. To deliver this, the Council employs two part-time Service Pupil Champions, both military spouses and parents, who work alongside schools and Local Authority colleagues to support Service children and their families.

Veritas Primary Academy, Staffordshire:

This primary school in Stafford was built in anticipation of a large number of new pupils moving into the area as part of the relocation of Service families from Germany. In advance of the move, teachers from the Academy went to Germany to meet the pupils and learn about how life as a Service child would affect their education in Stafford. To ease the transition for the school's youngest pupils, they deliberately put their pupils into smaller classes so that they could be given more support in the crucial first year after moving from Germany. At one stage a Year One class had only twelve pupils in it.

One of the school's co-opted governors is the Welfare Officer at the nearby Beacon Barracks, where many of the pupils' parents are based. This allows the school to keep in regular contact with the barracks and be warned in advance about any significant events or unit moves that may affect the wellbeing of the school's Service pupils.

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Buckinghamshire County Council:

There is a large Royal Air Force (RAF) presence in Buckinghamshire, however the Council has found that mobility of Service families has reduced recently as the RAF does not conduct large scale unit moves that the Army, for example, would. This has reduced problems associated with frequent mobility but the Council still takes efforts to ensure the wellbeing of Service children. The Council's School Liaison Officers provide a link with schools and partnership working enables problem solving and the sharing of good practice.

The Council's Family Information Service has a section on its webpage dedicated to supporting Serving families who are posted to the RAF bases in the county, which includes information to help pupils settle in new schools.

The website can be found here: www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/parent.page?parentchannel=8

The Council has teamed up with RAF Halton and RAF High Wycombe to deliver *Girls on a Mission*, a six week motivational training course for girls aged 16-24 which aims to increase their physical and emotional wellbeing.

The website provides full information on how to take part: www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/advice.page?id=0c2fTArVObE

Hampshire County Council:

Are striving to bring together all schools in the county into a new network that specifically looks to share good practice and improve education outcomes for Service children. The Council noticed that some schools were doing great work to improve the wellbeing of Service children, but that this work should be shared and emulated by other schools. By pulling all schools together in twelve District Networks the County Council hopes that all schools will learn from each other and help look after the wellbeing of Service children.



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CHAPTER THREE

FUNDING SUPPORT

The Service Pupil Premium:

Since 2011, the Department for Education has provided extra funds to schools with Service pupils in the form of the Service Pupil Premium (SPP). This pays directly to the school £300 each year per Service pupil to help fund the provision of measures to reduce the disadvantages Service children face, and to provide the crucial additional pastoral support that these children may need as a result of their frequent mobility or during periods when a parent is deployed. The funds can be claimed by all state maintained schools, including academies and free schools.

In order to receive the SPP, schools must record the number of eligible pupils on the January schools census. This makes it very important for schools to ask if new pupils are Service children and for parents to tell schools that their child is an eligible pupil. To be eligible, the pupil must be registered as the child of a serving member of the Armed Forces at any point from Reception through to Year 11; this only needs to be done once and the SPP will stay with the child until they finish Year 11 or move school. The SPP can also be claimed for children who had a parent die in Service if the pupil receives a compensation payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme.

Information is available from the Ministry of Defence here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium

What should the SPP be used for?

The Ministry of Defence states that: "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."

The funds should therefore be used for projects such as counselling for pupils with parents on deployment, improving methods of communication with parents deployed abroad, the creation of clubs like MKC Heroes, or paying for the hiring of additional staff when pupils join a new school or when parents are deployed. The SPP is not intended to be used to subsidise routine school activity.

There are some examples of SPP use, some of which are listed overleaf, and the DCYP has provided a selection of good uses of the SPP in their own guide, available here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium. It is also important for school governors to be creative in thinking of the most effective way to use the funds, and to include representatives from the local Service community in making that decision.



BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Veritas Primary Academy, Staffordshire:

This school was built specifically to accommodate a large number of Service pupils moving to Stafford from Germany and as such a significant proportion of the pupils are Service children. The school used the SPP to pay for additional staff to ensure that the children were well supported when they first moved from Germany to Stafford and were settling into not just a new school, but a whole new lifestyle. Two years on from the big move the staff funded by SPP continues to provide additional support to the Service pupils and to new pupils still moving to the area as more Service families are posted to the local barracks.

Buckinghamshire County Council:

The Council has taken great efforts to ensure that awareness of the Service Pupil Premium is high among parents, teachers and school governors. They use school bulletins, the Council website and social media to spread the word. This is to increase the registration of Service pupils on the school census and ensure that no pupils miss out on this extra funding.

The Council School Liaison Officers continue to share successful policy and practice of the Service Pupil Premium between schools and bring head teachers together to devise approaches to shared challenges that Service pupils face.

Although the Service Pupil Premium is only eligible for pupils from Reception Year to Year 11, the Council provides, from its own budget, extra funding for children in Early Years before Reception. This provides welcome extra funds for Early Years providers with Service children.

Education Support Fund:

The Education Support Fund (ESF) is a Ministry of Defence fund that assists publicly funded schools, academies and free schools throughout the UK in mitigating the effects of mobility or deployment on their Service communities, both Regular and Reserve. Since 2011, the fund has provided £6 million per year to projects in schools across the UK. Since its creation the fund has been time-limited and 2017/2018 was intended to be the last year that applications could be made for funding. As is shown below, the Legion has seen some excellent examples of use of the ESF and would therefore welcome the continuation of this fund.

ESF EXAMPLES

North Yorkshire:

The Council's two Service Pupils' Champions who support Service families in schools and act as a bridge between schools, the Armed Forces and the Council, are funded by the ESF.

Veritas Primary Academy, Staffordshire:

When this new school opened to accommodate the moving of families from Germany to Stafford, the school's playground equipment was funded by a grant from the ESF. The excellent facilities have helped to ease the move which was a huge lifestyle change to the pupils and their parents.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION PRESIDENT'S AWARD SCHEME

The President's Award Scheme can provide educational grants and scholarships to the children of serving and ex-Service non-commissioned ranks up to university age.

- One-off grants of up to £500 are available to help pay for course fees, public transport costs, text books, course equipment, specialist clothing and more.
- Alongside the grants, scholarships are available for applicants who are going to university and aged 21 or under. A continuation application is required each year and is accepted up to age 23. Up to £1,500 per year can be awarded to Service children going to university to study for their first undergraduate degree; usually awards are made to help with accommodation costs.
- The awards are decided by committee who will look at the individual circumstances of each applicant. The Committee meets tri-annually in January, July, and September.



"I cannot thank the President's Award Scheme enough for choosing to invest in my education; the money has allowed me to concentrate on the academic rigour of my course and to enjoy the sport and social aspects of university life without worrying about financial difficulty."

Daniel McLoughlin,
President's Award Scheme Beneficiary

Full information on the awards and application process can be found here:
www.rblws.org.uk/how-we-help/president-s-award-scheme





CHAPTER FOUR

SERVICE CHILDREN IN STATE SCHOOLS NETWORK

Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) is an affiliation of thousands of state-maintained schools and academies in England which have Service children on their roll. The group is supported by the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), which is part of the Ministry of Defence's Directorate of Children & Young People (DCYP).

The SCISS National Executive Advisory Committee acts as an advisory group to Government, to identify good practice in the provision of education for Service children and to propose solutions to those issues and concerns held by schools in England which may result in educational disadvantage. SCISS holds a number of highly informative conferences each year which share good practice, explore recent developments

in the education and welfare of Service children, and seek to address emerging problems encountered by participants.

Any state maintained school with Service children on the roll can be part of the SCISS network, participate in the conferences and receive regular information sharing good practice and highlight important issues.

Schools wishing to contact SCISS to be added to its database should contact CEAS through: enquiries@ceas.uk.com or the CEAS Helpline on 01980 618244.

Further information about SCISS can be found in the SCISS Handbook here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook



CONCLUSION

SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO TAKE

Schools:

- Ensure that staff learn about Service life and the unique challenges that Service children face. This can be achieved by building good relationships with local Armed Forces units and having regular conversations with Service families. Encourage a parent from a Service family to join the school board as a governor, creating a clear and formal connection between the school and the Armed Forces community.
- Provide additional support to Service children when needed. Use funding from the SPP and ideas of good practice from this guide to address the challenges faced by Service pupils.
- Connect with other schools that have Service children on the roll and share ideas, policy and practice to help improve their emotional and social wellbeing. The Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) network is ideal for achieving this.
- Make it standard practice to ask the parents of all new pupils moving to the school if the child is from a Service family, especially if they have admitted a child in-year. This will allow the school to claim the SPP.
- Be thoughtful and creative in the use of SPP. Connect with other schools nearby and discuss good ideas to effectively use the funds. Ask the parents of Service children to be involved in deciding how to use the funding, and provide details to parents on how the money is spent.
- Set up an MKC Heroes club in your school. Contact the organisation through their website and they will send out everything needed to get started.

Local authorities:

- Train staff on correct admission procedures for in-year admissions of Service pupils and raise awareness of the difficulties faced by Service families among schools in the area. Monitor the experience of Service families going through the process and make improvements where needed.
- Plan far in advance for expected moves of Service pupils from other parts of the country or abroad. Good links with the Armed Forces community through a Covenant board or Civilian Military Partnership will facilitate a good flow of information.

- Make sure that local military units, schools and the local authority have a good relationship and a means to communicate regularly to update each other on upcoming moves of units or families.
- Monitor the experience of Service children in schools as part of education policy and ongoing commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant. Produce action plans to address any problems that arise and review the progress and effectiveness of those actions.
- Provide information about support for Service families through the local authority website and through schools themselves. Include information about the SPP, where to access help and advice, and how to access initiatives started to help Service children.
- Encourage collaboration between schools and the Armed Forces community to bring like minded pupils together and develop programmes to help their wellbeing. Consider building a local network of schools with Service pupils on the roll.
- Inform schools about the SPP. Facilitate collaboration between schools and the Armed Forces community to find effective ways to spend the funds and help Service children.
- Provide support to schools who want to establish an MKC Heroes club.

Service families:

- Help is available to parents with admission queries from the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) part of the Ministry of Defence's Directorate of Children and Young People (DCYP). The CEAS provide valuable information on school admissions and maintain a telephone and online helpline for parents of Service children with queries.
- Support is available from the three Service Families Federations. They help many families with queries relating to schools and can talk through the process and provide advice.
- Tell a new school that your child is from a Service family so the school can claim the £300 SPP from the Department of Education. Offer some ideas of what to spend the funding on to help your child, and ask the school how it makes use of current funding.
- Look at The Royal British Legion Women's Section President's Award Scheme if your child needs some help with costs to study in school or college or go to university.

Government:

- The Legion has seen some excellent examples of use of the Education Support Fund and as such we hope the Ministry of Defence will enable the continued funding of efforts to reduce the negative effects of Service life on school children.

FURTHER READING AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Reading Force: www.readingforce.org.uk
- School Admissions Code 2014:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code
 - The School Admissions Appeals Code:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code
- SCISS Handbook here:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook
- The Service Children's Progression Alliance: www.scipalliance.org



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