

Service Children's Champions Newsletter

September 2026



Welcome to our monthly newsletter!

In these newsletters we will share information about upcoming events, local news and support available for Service children and their families.

Contents

1. Welcome to the new academic year!
2. Online CPD session with Dr Lucy Robinson on 14th September focusing on separation support - sign up now
3. Festival of Friends Project 2026/27 - Join Now before 25th September
4. SCiP Alliance Listening Tour Event
5. Blurb for parent newsletters about our role and contact
6. Resource Toolkit for schools - new updated version
7. Service Children's Community Choir



Welcome back!

We hope that you had a lovely summer break and are rested and ready for the Autumn Term!

As the new academic year begins, many schools will be welcoming new service pupils into their communities. The support you provide from the very start can make a significant difference to their experience and sense of belonging.

While it is important to warmly welcome new pupils, ongoing support for existing service pupils is equally vital at the start of a new year. Regular check-ins and taking the time to get to know your service children can help them feel secure, understood and empowered to thrive.

A reminder that we are here to support you. You can contact us with any questions or concerns relating to service children, whether you're seeking support for an individual pupil or looking to strengthen provision for your wider cohort. We can help you access appropriate resources and connect with other schools to share best practice. Whatever your needs, we're here to help.

We also offer support directly to parents and families via a separate email address for them to contact us regarding their child's education. We would be grateful if you could continue share this with your Armed Forces families, see the blurb for your newsletters on page 7.

Contact for schools:

Hannah Dent: hdent@hillingdon.gov.uk
Bernard Boyle: bboyle@hillingdon.gov.uk

Contact for parents and families:

Servicechildren@Hillingdon.gov.uk

Free online CPD session with Dr Lucy Robinson

Monday 14th September 2026

1:30pm - 2:15pm

Service-related separation support

You are invited to attend a free online CPD session with Dr Lucy Robinson focusing on ways to support service pupils experiencing separation due to parental deployment and mobility.

This is the third bitesize CPD session run by Dr Lucy, who is a postdoctorate fellow at Cardiff University and conducted doctoral research exploring how military life shapes service children's identity and school experiences. She was also a service child herself. You don't need to have attended the other sessions to attend this one, all are welcome.

Sign up to attend here:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/zNGWBpkXND>

Join the Festival of Friends Project 2026/27

We are delighted to invite schools to be part of the Hillingdon, Berkshire and Surrey Festival of Friends collaborative project.

This exciting project is free to join and offers a fantastic opportunity for schools to strengthen their support for children from Armed Forces families while contributing to wider school improvement.

We are delighted to be taking part alongside schools from across Berkshire and Surrey, working in partnership with Brunel University.

Open to all schools with service pupils, including those with only a small number on roll, the project will provide access to professional learning and peer collaboration. Throughout the project there will be opportunities to network across the region and a chance for service children to have their voices heard at a pupil voice event. One of the highlights of the project will be a special Festival of Friends celebration event in Summer 2027, bringing together participating schools and service children from across the region.

Please see the separately attached letter and acceptance form for more information about how to sign up for the project.

Please email the completed acceptance form to Matt Blyton (mattblytoneducation@outlook.com) before Friday 25th September.

Want to find out more?

Project Lead Matt Blyton will be running a choice of 2 short webinars on Thursday 10th September to provide further information and answer questions.

11:00 - 11:30 - session 1

15:30 - 16:00 - session 2

Links for the sessions are on the separately attached letter.





Listening Tour

It's not too late to sign up to attend the SCiP Alliance Impact Centre Listening Tour.

Wednesday 30th September 13:00-15:00
at
The Hive RAF Northolt

It is an opportunity to share your perspectives on what works for Service children as part of a national conversation. The SCiP Alliance Impact Centre wants to hear from those working with Service children about effective support across home, education, community, and wellbeing settings, particularly how evidence is accessed, used, and shared. These insights will shape future training, resources, and guidance,

[Register your Interest here](#)

Free Event - <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/1UqyhEfx72>

If you are unable to attend the in-person event, you can also submit your thoughts in line with the listening tour structure here:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/903HRrCff7>

DO YOU WORK WITH CHILDREN FROM ARMED FORCES FAMILIES?

YOUTH/SOCIAL/COMMUNITY WORK
SCHOOLS • NHS • SPORTS CLUBS
LOCAL AUTHORITIES
ACTIVITY CENTRES

Tell us what works!



IMPACT CENTRE LISTENING TOUR

FINAL DATES

14/09/2026	ONLINE
16/09/2026	HOOK
17/09/2026	WINDSOR
21/09/2026	HIGH WYCOMBE
25/09/2026	MANCHESTER
30/09/2026	RUISLIP

02/10/2026	LONDON
08/10/2026	CYPRUS
12/10/2026	DURRINGTON
14/10/2026	SALISBURY
15/10/2026	BRECON
04/11/2026	GOSPORT

FIND OUT MORE & BOOK AT
scipalliance.org/events



CAN'T MAKE IT?
Other ways to tell us
what you think here

Blurb for Parent Newsletters

Below is a blurb that can be added to your parent newsletters to provide information about our roles and contact details for parents to speak with us directly.

Service Children's Champions

Hillingdon Council has two dedicated Stronger Schools Officers for Service Children within the Access to Education Team. They support and advocate for children and young people from Armed Forces families and work with schools across the borough to ensure they receive appropriate and consistent support.

The officers help schools understand and respond to the unique experiences of service children, particularly during periods of mobility, parental deployment, family separation, and transition between schools.

If you are part of an Armed Forces family and would like advice, information, or support regarding your child's education, please contact the Stronger Schools Officers at Servicechildren@hillington.gov.uk

Resource Toolkit for Schools

We have updated our resource toolkit with some new resources and made the linked resources easier to access.

The toolkit collates a large variety of organisations, charities, government information, wellbeing support and moving and transition resources that can be used to support Service children.

For access, please see the separate link on LBH Education Weekly, which will also be sent via email.

If you have any difficulties accessing any of the attached links or resources do let us know.



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Art Therapy for Military Children training course
<https://ide.ict.org.uk/Home/CourseDetail?courseid=1078844&ic-overview>

Advanced Skill Certificate in Building Resilience through Art Therapy for Military Children. This program is online through the London College of Foreign Trade and is designed for mental health professionals, art therapists, and educators working with military families. Gain specialised skills in using art as a therapeutic tool to support children facing unique challenges. Explore creative interventions to promote emotional expression, coping strategies, and healing.

The programme is available in two duration modes:

- 1 month (Fast-track mode) £149
- 2 months (Standard mode) £99

 **London College of Foreign Trade**



Drawing and Talking

Drawing and Talking Therapy training course
<https://drawingandtalking.com>

The Drawing and Talking therapeutic intervention for children, young people and adults. It utilises drawing as a way to help them express and communicate their feelings differently from ordinary verbal language. They provide various full and short training courses in the techniques including 'Foundation to Drawing and Talking Therapy' and 'Healing through Art'. The cost of the courses are dependent on their length.



ELSA
NETWORK

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training

Consider training as ELSAs. They are teaching assistants who have had special training from educational psychologists to support the emotional development of children and young people in school. ELSAs help children and young people learn to understand their emotions and respect the feelings of those around them.

<https://www.elsanetwork.org/about/>
<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/about-elsa-support/>



News Wise

NewsWise offers lesson plans, activities and teacher guidance to engage pupils aged 7-11 with news and develop crucial critical literacy skills. These resources are particularly helpful for talking to children about what is going on in the media related to the Armed Forces.

NewsWise lesson plans and resources are open to all schools, everywhere, for free. Complete a short registration form to access the resources.

<https://theguardianfoundation.org/programmes/newswise/schools/unit-of-work>



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LONDON

Wellbeing Support



Little Troopers Therapy Programme
<https://www.littletroopers.net/little-troopers-therapy-programme/>

Designed uniquely for military life, the programme offers tailored, face-to-face therapy for children who are struggling with challenges directly connected to having a serving parent. It focuses on the distinct pressures military children face, not general mental health concerns unrelated to service. Referrals can be made for individual or group support and there are also therapy videos available.



Kooth
www.kooth.com

Kooth is a free, safe and anonymous online mental-health and wellbeing platform for children and young people aged 10-25. It provides access to qualified counsellors through text-based chat, with support available 12pm-10pm on weekdays and 6pm-10pm on weekends. A self-help tool is available 24/7.



Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund

RAF Benevolent Fund Youth Counselling Service
<https://www.rafbf.org/get-support/emotional-wellbeing/children-and-young-people-counselling>

A specialist counselling service, provided through Relate, is available for children and young people aged 11 to 18 and, on a case by case basis, for those aged 5 to 10. The service offers support on a wide range of wellbeing and mental health issues. The sessions normally take place remotely. They will fund an initial assessment and up to 6 counselling sessions for eligible Children and Young People. To find out more, please call their helpline on **0300 102 1919** or submit a request form on the website.

Hillingdon Thrive



thrive together

Parent/Carer Support and Information - Thrive Hillingdon

The website has been designed to support children, young people, families, and professionals by bringing together clear information, self-help tools, signposting, and a wide range of emotional well-being resources in one accessible place. Its aim is to make it easier for people to understand what support is available and how to access it.



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Moving and Transition Resources

MOD Moving On Pupil Passport
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/783800/ADRO08108-Pupil_Passport_sag.pdf



MOVING ON

Toolkit - Supporting Armed Forces children's transitions between education systems

This toolkit has been developed collaboratively by education practitioners and education policy professionals across the UK specifically to help educators support Armed Forces children's transitions between different education systems.

Using this resource, educators can help children and young people from UK Armed Forces families experience positive transitions and thrive academically, socially and emotionally, wherever they move in the UK or overseas.

Transition

Other transition resources

On the next few pages are different transition and moving on resources, including deployment notes and wellbeing booklets.

These resources were originally created by the Service Children's Champion in North Yorkshire, who Hillingdon works collaboratively with.

Transition Checklists.pdf

Well-being Diary.pdf

On the Move Booklet.pdf





Service Children's Community Choir

Are you interested in or do you know anyone who might be interested in setting up a Service Children's Community Choir?

Founder Angela Campbell (North Yorkshire's Service Children's Champion) is continuing to grow the choir's network.

The Service Children's Community Choir is more than just a choir. It is a community where children from Armed Forces families can connect, belong and thrive through music. They understand the unique experiences of Service life, from frequent moves and school changes to periods of separation from loved ones. Through weekly rehearsals, performances and special projects, they provide a supportive environment where young people can build friendships, grow in confidence, develop musical skills and create lasting memories. What began as a small choir in Catterick Garrison has grown into an award-winning organisation that gives Service children a voice, celebrates their achievements and showcases the strength, resilience and talent of military-connected young people across the UK.

There is now a second group in Gosport, Hampshire and Angela is hoping to expand the choir's impact further.

You can contact us or Angela directly to express your interest.
angela.campbell@northyorks.gov.uk

Welcome To Service Children's Community Choir

Our weekly choir sessions are led by specialist music teachers who understand both the needs of developing young singers and the unique experiences of military children. Each session is structured, supportive, and designed to help every child...

 [servicechildrenscommunitychoir.co.uk](https://twitter.com/servicechildrenscommunitychoir.co.uk)



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THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST