



Supporting Children from Armed Forces Families Toolkit for Schools: 2026

This toolkit is designed to support all schools in Hillingdon to access advice and support for Service children so that they can thrive in school and are supported in overcoming any Service-related challenges they may face.



Government Guidance for Schools



General support services for military and defence personnel and their families.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/support-services-for-military-and-defence-personnel-and-their-families>

Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

They provide advice, support and guidance regarding the educational wellbeing of the children and young people belonging to families in all 3 services and eligible MOD civilians who are based overseas.

To seek support from CEAS in relation to a child/young person's additional needs, they would advise Service Personnel to complete a consent form to allow them to maintain a record of interaction. If a child has undergone statutory assessment of their needs and/or is receiving a bespoke package of support they would recommend that it is in the best interest of the child/young person to be identified to CEAS.

To formally notify CEAS that your child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Service Personnel must complete a CEAS support application form and return it to CEAS.

For further support and guidance visit the website.

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

Information and forms relating to the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) and Defence Children's Services.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcyp-forms-and-information-sheets/ceas-information-6-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcyp-forms-and-information-sheets>



Education in the UK for Service Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-in-the-uk-for-service-children>

Education Overseas for Service Children

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-overseas-for-service-children>

Education Advisory Team UK

The Education Advisory Team (EAT) UK, provide professional information, advice and guidance regarding the education of Service Children in the UK. It forms part of the Defence Children Services (DCS).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/defence-children-services-dcs>

£ Service Pupil Premium (SPP) £

Service personnel with children in state schools in England in reception to year 11 should notify schools of their children's service status to ensure they are recorded prior to the next autumn census (first Thursday in October) to qualify for SPP, which is currently **£350 per service child per year**.

Eligible schools receive this funding mainly so that they can offer **pastoral support** during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment on service children. Schools should not combine SPP with PP funding: the spending of each premium should be accounted for separately, but schools can be allocated both SPP and PP for the same child if they are eligible for both.

Pupils are eligible for SPP if they meet one of the following criteria:

- 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 6 years (see below the 'DfE's ever 6 service child measure')
- one of their parents died while serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme
- one of their parents is in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know>

Further SPP Guidance materials

Examples of best practice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-examples-of-best-practice>

Armed Families Federation guidance

<https://aff.org.uk/advice/education-childcare/service-pupil-premium/>

Little Troopers information sheet

<https://www.littletroopers.net/shop/school-info-sheet-service-pupil-premium/>



Wraparound Childcare

In recognition of the issues that some service families face when accessing wraparound childcare, the Secretary of State for Defence launched the Wraparound Childcare (WAC) scheme.

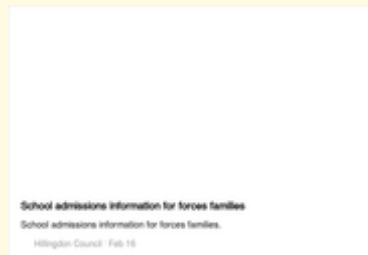
Eligible Service personnel (Tri-Service) can register for up to 20 hours a week per child during term time only (39 weeks per year) of wraparound childcare funding for 4 to 11-year-old children (4 to 16 years if in receipt of certain disability benefits) attending before and after school childcare in the UK or eligible overseas locations.

Read the full eligibility criteria here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childcare-for-service-children>

This document also summarises other Government childcare benefits available including Primary School Aged Childcare Overseas (PSACO) Allowance and Tax-Free Childcare.

School Admissions

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/admissions-forces>



Potential sources of funding

The Armed Forces Education Trust

<https://armedforceseducation.org>



The Armed Forces Education Trust is a charity working for children and young adults whose education has been compromised or put at risk as a result of parents' past or current service in our Armed Forces. The grants help to make a difference to young lives, helping improve their educational opportunities or supporting special skills or talents.

They offer collective grants and individual grants. Success Stories can be viewed on their website.



The Alexander Duckham Memorial Trust

<https://www.rafbf.org/the-alexander-duckham-memorial-schools-trust>

The Alexander Duckham Memorial Trust makes grants to people in financial need who have/had a child-parent relationship with a member/former member of the RAF.



Royal British Legion Grants



<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/how-we-help/financial-support/grants/women-grants>

The Royal British Legion (RBL) offers grants through The Children's Welfare Scheme and The President's Award Scheme. The Children's Welfare Scheme can award grants for current and former service personnel and their partners towards the cost of essential items required by their dependent children in times of need or financial hardship. The President's Award Scheme was set up by the RBL Women's Section to assist those in financial need with costs linked to educational needs. The Scheme can provide two different types of financial support: Educational Grants and Educational Scholarship – University Accommodation Costs.

Educational Support from Organisations and Charities

Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance



<https://www.scipalliance.org>

The Service Children's Progression Alliance (SCiP Alliance) is a partnership of organisations focused on improving outcomes for children from Armed Forces families. It is hosted by the University of Winchester and supported by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

They bring together practitioners, researchers, policymakers and funders to build a stronger evidence-base, better policy, and enhanced support for Service children's education and progression, placing their voices at the heart of all they do.

The SCiP Alliance have created an online resource database which collates videos, guidance, toolkits, templates and more from Alliance partners.

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

They have also produced The Thriving Lives Toolkit - a free evidence based framework of seven principles, which allows schools to reflect on their practice, develop and implement a support structure to best allow Service children to thrive.

<https://www.scipalliance.org/thriving-lives-toolkit>





Service Children in State Schools (SCISS)

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

Service Children In State Schools (SCISS) is a network of state-maintained schools in England that have any number of Service children on roll.

SCISS is led by a National Executive Advisory Committee (NEAC) comprising of headteachers, local authority officers, the Armed Forces Families Federations, Service Children Progression Alliance (SCiP), DfE and the MOD. They have produced informative factsheets and resources aimed to help school leaders including those who might be new to supporting Service children.

Little Troopers

<https://www.littletroopers.net>



Little Troopers is a charity supporting all children with one or both parents serving in the British Armed Forces.

Little Troopers ensures British Armed Forces children and their families have access to child-focused support, providing fundamental resources and initiatives for families to use at home. The charity also has a dedicated Little Troopers At School programme which is packed with practical resources to help teachers support children and young people in both primary and secondary schools including Little Troopers Club packs, online workshops, lesson plans, SQUAD Podcast for military teenagers and more.

The majority of the Little Troopers resources are available for free.



Never Such Innocence

<https://www.neversuchinnocence.com>

A charity that aims to give children and young people across the world a voice on conflict. The charity offers opportunities to reflect on conflict throughout history and today through poetry, art, speech and song. It provides free, online resources, runs an annual competition and can provide workshops in schools with skilled practitioners.

Reading Force

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



The charity's shared reading initiative encourages families to read, talk, and scrapbook about a book, improving communication and enriching relationships with books and each other, one page at a time. Reading Force complements your pastoral support perfectly. All you need to do is allocate one person to become a Reading Force Ambassador and register with the charity to order your free materials. Armed Forces families can also access support directly from Reading Force.



RAF Association Storybook Wings

» [The work of the RAF Association](#)

The Royal Air Forces Association Storybook Wings is a service where RAF parents and grandparents can record a bedtime story to be edited for their child to listen to when the serving parent is away from home. If you are serving in the RAF and would like to record your own Storybook Wings story contact storybookwings@rafa.org.uk or get in touch with your station HIVE.

<https://rafa.org.uk/our-impact/making-a-difference/revolting-rhymes-bring-comfort-to-bradan-storybook-wings/>



RAF Association Doodle Packs

<https://rafa.org.uk/get-support/doodle-packs/>

To help youngsters deal with being separated from their parents, the Royal Air Forces Association provides free Doodle Packs. The Doodle Packs contain a range of fun activities for children to complete and share with their parent before, during and after deployment. These activities include a welcome home poster, fabric pens that can be used to decorate a pillowcase, 'we miss you' card, scrapbooks, reading books, outside activities and more. The activities can be completed in school or a nursery, or at home.

To find out more about our Doodle Packs, please email doodlepack@rafa.org.uk

General Support



**Royal Air Force
Benevolent Fund**

RAF Benevolent Fund

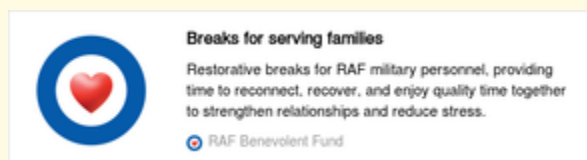
<https://www.rafbf.org>

The RAF Benevolent Fund (RAFBF) are dedicated to supporting not only serving and ex-serving personnel but also the whole of the RAF Family. There are a number of services which provide support to children of those who serve.

Services include the the youth support programme Airplay and Benplay and the Building Stronger Families online portal, which offers tailored support for RAF personnel and their families. They also offer a number of free breaks across the country for serving RAF people thanks to their continued partnership with Parkdean Resorts.

<https://www.rafbf.org/youthsupport>

<https://www.rafbf.org/get-support/family-relationships/online-support-for-families>





Royal British Legion (RBL)

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



The country's largest armed forces charity supports members of the British Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, veterans and their families. The website has information about various types of support such as housing and connecting with the community.

The RBL Remembrance Learning Programme offers a free range of resources for teachers and school children including downloadable resources and in-person and online events which include educational workshops and assemblies.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/teaching-remembrance>



RAF Hive

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/community-support/serving-families/hive-finder/>

The RAF HIVEs Service provides an information and welfare referral service to the Armed Services community, including serving Personnel, their families, veterans, Reservists, and civilians on Station. They can provide support for many things such as relocating, housing, schools and further education.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airman and Families

Association (SSAFA)

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



UK charity providing life-long support to serving men and women and veterans from the British Armed Forces and their families or dependents.



Ministry
of Defence

MOD Families Hub Information Portal

<https://discovermybenefits.mod.gov.uk/families/>

The Families Hub offers useful signposting to all Regular and Reserve personnel and families – from the moment of joining the Forces through to leaving. Discover information, support and guidance on various aspects of Service life as a family including education, health and wellbeing and childcare.



**The
Children's
Society**

The Children's Society - Nexus Project

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/services/nexus>

Nexus is a three-year project funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust. The project aims to improve support, resources and access to services for young carers within armed forces families.

As part of the project, they run a Youth Voice Group and would like to invite young carers aged 8 to 17 in an armed forces family to be a part of our nexus youth voice group. Those who take part will be able to meet other young carers, share their opinions on the issues that affect them, and take part in fun activities and trips away.

They also provide a range of free training courses for professionals working with armed forces families or young carers.



The Forces Children's Trust

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

Forces Children's Trust is a UK charity supporting children whose parents have died or sustained life-changing injuries while serving in the Armed Forces.

Scotty's Little Soldiers

<https://www.scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk>



Scotty's Little Soldiers is a charity dedicated to supporting bereaved military children and young people.



RAF Families Federation

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

The RAF Families Federation exists to make life better for Service personnel and their families, at home and overseas. They provide information on topics such as deployment, employment and training and education and healthcare.



Army Families Federation

<https://aff.org.uk>



The Army Families Federation (AFF) is an independent voice for Service personnel and their families, and a trusted source of advice and guidance.

They work to improve the quality of life for the Army family, wherever you are in the world.

AFF is independent of the Army and offers confidential advice.



Naval Families Federation

www.nff.org.uk

The Naval Families Federation (NFF) exists to give Royal Navy and Royal Marines families a voice. It provides support and guidance on matters affecting the daily lives of Naval Service families, acting as an advocate when appropriate to resolve complex issues.

Forces Children's Education - Scotland

<https://forceschildrenseducation.org.uk>



Forces Children's Education provides tailored support and resources for families and educators to ensure children from Armed Forces families thrive.

They have produced a learning resource, also useful for those living outside Scotland, on Supporting Armed Forces families which includes guidance on the Emotional cycle of separation and loss.

<https://forceschildrenseducation.org.uk/supporting-armed-forces-families>



SSCE Cymru

<https://sscecymru.co.uk>

A Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) programme, initially funded by the MOD's Education Support Fund and funded by Welsh Government from 2019. SSCE Cymru have created a variety of resources to support Service families, schools and Local Authorities.



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.



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



[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.



Art Therapy for Military Children training course

<https://de.lcft.org.uk/Home/CourseDetail?courseId=1078844#lc-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 specialized 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



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.



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.

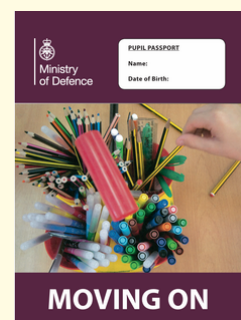
<https://www.elsanetwork.org/about/>

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

Moving and Transition Resources

MOD Moving On Pupil Passport

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/783800/ADR008108-Pupil_Passport_pag.pdf





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](#)

Transition Checklist for Parents

Before the Move


- Notify your child's current school of the posting date
- Contact the new school to introduce your child
- Check local school admission arrangements
- Prepare copies of school reports and key assessments
- Request SEND/health documents if relevant
 - Talk through the move with your child
- Gather photos or information about the new school
- Create a simple moving timeline your child can follow

During the Move

- Keep routines as consistent as possible
- Allow time for rest, play, and emotional expression
 - Visit the new school if possible
- Share any worries or questions with the new school
 - Look for local children's activities or clubs

After Arrival

- Meet your child's teacher or pastoral lead
- Share your child's strengths, interests, and concerns
- Ask about induction arrangements (buddy check-ins, tours)
- Monitor how your child is settling in socially and academically
- Stay connected with their previous friends if they want to
- Celebrate small successes in the new environment
 - Reach out for support if concerns continue



Transition Checklist for Schools

Before the Pupil Arrives

- Gather information from the previous school
- Contact parents/carers to discuss strengths & needs
 - Prepare a welcome pack or school map
 - Identify a buddy/peer supporter
- Brief the class teacher and pastoral staff
- Note any mobility, SEND, or deployment factors

On the First Day


- Provide a warm welcome and tour
- Introduce the buddy and key adults
- Explain routines, breaktimes, lunch, and toilets
 - Share the classroom timetable
 - Check in at the end of the day

During the First Few Weeks

- Schedule regular pastoral check-ins
- Monitor social connections and class engagement
- Ensure the pupil knows where to find help
- Communicate with parents/carers regularly
- Offer opportunities to join clubs or groups
- Review any learning gaps caused by mobility

Ongoing Support

- Maintain awareness of deployments or separation
 - Adjust support if the child's needs change
 - Celebrate achievements and contributions
- Monitor use and impact of Service Pupil Premium
- Ensure staff remain aware of the child's lived experience



[Well-being Diary.pdf](#)



My Happy Book



NAME: _____



[On the Move Booklet.pdf](#)

On the move!

NAME: _____





MONTH

Counting down...

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN

THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO...

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT...

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____





Dear.....

My is in the and they have to go away to for weeks/months.



They are leaving on and will hopefully be back around

When they go away it makes me feel. so to make me feel better you could help me by.....

Thank you for taking good care of me.

From

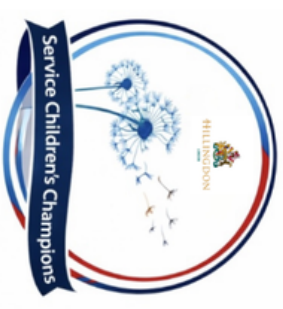
.....



My Mum or Dad is away at the moment...



...on exercise, training,
deployment or weekending.





I AM **BRAVE**

I AM **KIND**

I AM **AMAZING**

I AM **UNIQUE**

I AM **COURAGEOUS**

I AM **PROUD**

I AM A **DANDELION**



My Mood Tracker



Why?

How will you make yourself feel better?





My Overthinking Space...

What's on your mind?

Things out of my control...

Things in my control...



I'm so proud of
you because...

