

# Supporting Service Children in Education Cymru:

## Guide for Schools 2015



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# Welcome to the SSCECymru Guide for Schools 2015

This guide aims to provide information for schools and local authorities to better understand what life can be like for service children in education in Wales, and act as a resource to help schools support service children overcome any challenges they may face as a result of mobility or deployment. The guide contains information on the Armed Forces in Wales, outlines the potential impacts Service children may face, and provides guidance and case studies on how best to work with Service children and their families.

The resource was produced by SSCECymru with help from schools, parents, Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), Directorate for Children and Young People (DCYP), Welsh Government, local authorities, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

**The information contained in this guide is accurate in May 2015. We recognise that there are many ongoing changes in education and defence across Wales and the UK, and we aim to reflect significant changes in any subsequent versions of the guide.**



# Supporting the Armed Forces Community in Wales



## Armed Forces in Wales

Although defence is not devolved to Wales and remains part of UK government policy, there are arrangements in place to ensure that Welsh Government and local authorities are able to work together with the Ministry of Defence and members of the Armed Forces at all levels in Wales.

## Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant was published by UK government in 2011 and set out an agreement between the 'Armed Forces community, the UK Government and the Nation' as to how the government, local authorities and communities can work with and support members of the Armed Forces and their families.

# Supporting the Armed Forces Community in Wales

## Armed Forces Package of Support

In 2011, the [Welsh Government Package of Support for the Armed Forces Community in Wales](#) was established to ensure that members of the Armed Forces community are not disadvantaged in accessing public services as a result of their service. The package of support was updated in 2013 to include further signposting for the Armed Forces community to a range of public services including education, housing, health, childcare, employment and more.

## Armed Forces Community Covenant

Armed Forces Community Covenants were created as part of the Armed Forces Covenant, the key principles of which were made law in the Armed Forces Act 2011. All 22 local authorities in Wales are signed up to an Armed Forces Community Covenant. Each Community Covenant is designed to meet the needs of the Armed Forces community within that particular local authority. Fulfilling the Covenants' commitments will involve working in partnership with a variety of organisations including Welsh Government, local health boards, housing associations and further and higher education establishments.

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/armed-forces-community-covenants-local-authorities>

# Supporting the Armed Forces Community in Wales

## Armed Forces Community Covenant

Apart from providing the opportunity to honour the UK's Armed Forces, a Community Covenant aims to:

- Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community;
- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community;
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life;
- Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

# All Wales Standing Committee for Service Children in Education

The All Wales Standing Committee for Service Children in Education is a group of head teachers, local authority and Welsh Government representatives, members of the Armed Forces, MOD officials and other third sector organisations who are working together to raise awareness of the needs of Service children in education, and to develop and share good practice to help schools and local authorities meet the needs of Service children in education across Wales.

If you would like more information or to join the committee or the SSCECymru network, please contact [laura.byron@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:laura.byron@wlga.gov.uk)

# Tri-service Community

The Armed Forces community in Wales is made up serving personnel from all three Services: the Army, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy. The predominant Services in Wales are the Army and the RAF owing to the number of their bases located in Wales.





## Army

There are several Army bases and training facilities in Wales, with 160 (Wales) Brigade, based in Brecon, taking the lead for Tri-service engagement across the whole of the country. For more information on the Army in Wales visit:

<http://www.army.mod.uk/structure/28224.aspx>

## Royal Air Force

The RAF has personnel based across Wales, with the largest base, RAF Valley, located on Anglesey. For more information on the RAF activities in Wales visit:

<http://www.raf.mod.uk/crowales/rafinwales/>

<http://www.raf.mod.uk/rafvalley/>

## Royal Navy

There are currently no naval bases in Wales, but there will be some naval personnel stationed with other Armed Forces. For more information on the Navy visit:

<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/welfare/welfare-teams>

# Role of the Ministry of Defence and Education

## Welfare Services and HIVEs

Welfare officers are stationed at all major bases in Wales and have responsibility for supporting the wellbeing of serving personnel and their families where necessary. Welfare services may become involved with Service families to support them on a range of wider issues such as housing and health, which may also have knock-on implications for a Service child and their education. The welfare officers should also be able to provide local information regarding scheduled deployments, and large scheduled moves.

## Army and RAF HIVEs

HIVE information services are available to all members of the Service community, providing information support to the regular forces, TA and reservists, and their families and dependents. The HIVEs are a good way of disseminating information to the Service community locally through their blogs, email lists and social media. You can find contact information in our support and advice section at the end of this guide.

## Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

The Children's Education Advisory Service is a part of the Directorate of Children and Young People and provides information, advice and support for Armed Forces families who have children in education throughout the UK and overseas.

CEAS also runs a helpline for parents from 08.45 -12.30 and 13.30 – 16.00 on Monday to Friday:

Telephone: 01980 618 244 (military: 94 344 8244)

Email: [enquiries@ceas.uk.com](mailto:enquiries@ceas.uk.com)

Fax: 01980 618245 (military: 94 344 8245)

More information can be found on their website:

<https://www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service>

## Gurkha Support Officer

Gurkha Wing Mandalay is a Gurkha unit based in Brecon. There is a Gurkha support officer based there to support engagement with the Nepalese families in the community.

For more information contact: AWS-160X-Brecon-GSW@mod.uk or visit: <http://www.gurkhabde.com/category/mandalay/>

Or for information on the Gurkha community in Wales visit: <http://www.walesgurkhacommunity.co.uk/>

# Liaising with the Armed Forces

## Suggestions for Schools to Liaise with Armed Forces Locally

If you would like to establish better links with the Armed Forces community in your area, you could consider:

- Local base/unit representation on your governing body;
- Negotiating extended schools' provision with local military bases;
- Shared strategies for dealing with the effects of deployment on children of Service personnel and their families with a local unit whose personnel are deployed abroad;
- Shared strategies for dealing with the effects of deployment on children of Service personnel and their families with a local unit whose personnel are deployed abroad;
- Sharing strategies for celebrating the presence of the Service community in your school with local units;
- Working with Service parents, children and communities prior to and in advance of moves to other locations, to minimise the negative effects of mobility
- The Armed Forces' Community Covenant grant may be a source of funds to support initiatives which focus on drawing Service and civilian communities closer together.

# Service Children in Wales



## Who Is a Service Child?

When we talk about Service children, we primarily mean a child who has one or both parents currently serving in the Armed Forces (Army/Royal Air Force/Royal Navy).

The project also recognises that some of the same impacts may still affect children of veterans (people who have left the armed forces within the last 6 years) or children of serving Reservists (who may experience deployment as part of their role).

As a professional working with children and young people, you may come across children from who fall into any of these groups, and who may be affected by the themes discussed in this guide at different points of their school career.

## Children who do not live with serving parent

There are many children who do not reside with the serving parent and therefore will not experience many of the impacts that other Service children might. Depending on relationship with/proximity to the serving parent these children may at times experience some of the same challenges when that parent is deployed or moves far away as a result of their job. Currently these children are not formally recognised as Service children but you may find some information in this guidance helpful when considering this group.



# Service Children in Wales

## How Many Service Children Live in Wales?

As data on Service children in Wales is not currently recorded, it is hard to give an accurate number.

What we do know, based on the most recent census data from 2011, is that there are Service families with children aged 0-16 across all 22 local authorities in Wales.

The 2011 census data indicates a minimum number of 2,486 children in Wales where the HRP (household reference person) indicated that they were in the Armed Forces.

This does not include information where the non-HRP is in the Armed Forces, information on veterans or reservists, or where families with Service children do not live at the same address.

## Admissions and Data Collection

Although there is no formal mechanism at present to log Service children through the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), several schools in Wales, where the numbers of Service children make up a more significant proportion of the school community, have begun informal methods of counting the numbers of Service children in their schools. This has been done through a variety of methods, including improving communication, asking at point of enrolment, information from pupils and appointing key workers to work with Service children and their families.

Some local authorities have started to include a box on school admissions forms to record the numbers of Service children. SSCECymru would encourage all local authorities to adopt this as good practice.

SSCECymru is also working to raise awareness amongst Service families across Wales to encourage them to tell schools if they are from an Armed Forces family.

# Service Children in Wales

**Table from 2011 Census showing no. of children where HRP is in Armed Forces:**

	All	with HRP in Armed Forces
Isle of Anglesey	11,890	185
Gwynedd	20,868	40
Conwy	19,063	96
Denbighshire	17,020	54
Flintshire	28,584	98
Wrexham	25,842	90
Powys	22,761	294
Ceredigion	11,165	-
Pembrokeshire	22,002	223
Carmarthenshire	33,026	109
Swansea	41,322	114
Neath Port Talbot	24,674	59

	All	with HRP in Armed Forces
Bridgend	25,358	88
The Vale of Glamorgan	23,776	365
Cardiff	63,074	137
Rhondda Cynon Taf	44,325	143
Merthyr Tydfil	10,969	-
Caerphilly	34,831	101
Blaenau Gwent	12,474	-
Torfaen	17,204	-
Monmouthshire	16,213	99
Newport	29,400	72
Wales	555,841	2,486
-disclosure control applied		

## **Inclusive education funding for all learners in Wales**

As education is devolved in Wales, there is a different approach to grant funding which is moving away from targeting specific groups and towards ensuring all grants are inclusive of different groups of learners, including Service children. This means that although there is no distinct funding for Service children through a Service Pupil Premium, funding is in place to support all learners to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

## **MOD Education Support Fund**

Schools and local authorities in Wales also have the opportunity to apply for Ministry of Defence funding through the [MOD Education Support Fund](#) for specific projects that will benefit Service children within the school community. SSCE Cymru is working closely with schools, Welsh Government and local authorities to encourage more schools to apply for this funding where there is a need. The Education Support Fund is scheduled to end at the close of the financial year 2017-18.

## **Inclusive education funding for all learners in Wales – why is there no Service Pupil Premium?**

Community Covenant grants are another way that schools can work with the wider Armed Forces community to access funding for a range of initiatives.

The Community Covenant grant scheme was established to support the Community Covenant and to fund local projects that bring together the civilian and Armed Forces communities. A list of local authority Community Covenant contacts and work happening locally can be found here:

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/armed-forces-community-covenants-local-authorities>

For more information on the scheme visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-community-covenant-grant-scheme/armed-forces-community-covenant-grant-scheme>

**In February 2015 the Defence Minister announced a permanent fund of £10 million per year for Community Covenant projects. With further details to be announced.**

# Factors Affecting Service Children in Education

Whilst every child's individual circumstances can affect their life in and out of school differently, there are some common factors in the cases of Service children that can have a range of positive and negative impacts at different times in their school careers. These can be linked to deployment and mobility.

## Mobility

### **The ability to move or be moved freely and easily**

Armed Forces personnel can be required to move to different locations (postings) many times throughout their career. The MOD encourages the families of serving Armed Forces personnel to move together, where possible. These moves can be both planned or occur at short notice, but ultimately can have significant implications for Service children who may change schools many times during their school career.





# Factors Affecting Service Children in Education

## Different Services Move Differently:

**Army** personnel tend to move in groups (regiments/battalions/squadrons)

**RAF** personnel tend to move individually as their careers progress or to meet the needs of the Service

**Navy** (including Royal Marines) are likely to live in one place for longer periods but do move to work with personnel from the Army or RAF.

There are sometimes large-scale movements of personnel, where many people will move at the same time.

This is usually due to the closure of a base or change in defence infrastructure.

As the UK Government continues to roll out changes to how the Armed Forces operate in Britain, there will be some changes to Service mobility.

The biggest likely change in Wales is the closure of Brawdy Barracks in Haverfordwest (scheduled for 2018), which will see Service personnel relocated to other parts of the country but primarily St Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan. This will potentially see an influx of families into the Vale of Glamorgan, particularly around the St Athan and Llantwit Major areas.

The other major change is in relation to the role of 160 (Wales) Brigade, which has adopted a new role as an easily deployable unit, and which may affect the way in which troops are deployed in future.

# Effects of Mobility

Moving from one place to another and from one school to another can be challenging for any child. Many Service children often experience multiple moves across their school career. This frequent mobility can cause additional challenges for Service children, their families and the schools and local authorities supporting those moves.

Possible Problems for Mobile Service Children	Possible Benefits for Mobile Service Children
• A sense of loss after moves	• Resilience
• Extrovert or introvert behaviour, (especially when parents are on active Service)	• Ability to adapt to change
• Insecurity	• The ability to socialise and make friends quickly
• A dependence on adults and/or other children of Service personnel (including siblings)	• Independence/confidence
• Difficulty in identifying special educational needs	• A wide range of experiences including different cultures, languages and travel
• Language difficulties (for children who have been learning in languages other than English)	
• Difficulties in making commitments to relationships with peers, adults, and schools as a whole – the danger of disaffection	
• Gaps in learning	
• Complications with public examinations and courses	
• Poor school transfer of information leading, for example, to lack of challenge	
• Emotional and social developmental difficulties	
• Lack of continuity between SEN provision	

# For Schools and Local Authorities

There are many potential challenges for schools and local authorities to consider regarding the movement of Service children in and out of an area. Similar to other more mobile populations, such as gypsy traveller children or asylum seekers, the ability to plan ahead and develop effective systems for communication and managing information is key. This is further complicated when planning for larger scale moves of children in/out of an area in cases of re-basing or movements of whole regiments.

Schools	Local Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring pupil information is transferred quickly and effectively between old/new schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for school places</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing the transition from different approaches to the curriculum and assessment in different UK countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the smooth transition of children in and out of local authorities for children with statements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing SEN/ALN needs quickly and providing resources to meet these needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring communication between MOD, local authorities and schools</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting children's pastoral needs effectively and recognising that many of them may have only one parent at home for long periods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing ways of collecting data on Service children</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of mobility on the availability of material resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working to raise awareness of the Community Covenant and its commitment to supporting Service families within the local authority</li> </ul>

Schools	Local Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The administrative costs of a highly mobile school population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working to promote the Armed Forces Community Covenant grant and the MOD Education Support Fund across schools in the area</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing curricular discontinuity and learning gaps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing the viability of small schools both because of the changing geographical profile of the military in the UK and because of changes to or delays in the planned movements of groups of Service personnel</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term-time holidays</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective liaison with the military community</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing parental/pupil attitudes to Welsh language provision</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increased likelihood of children of Service personnel engaging in a variety of risky behaviours and having behavioural, social or emotional difficulties</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of Day School Allowance (North Wales) on class spaces post-reception age (when pupils leave to attend private school)</li> </ul>	

# For Families

When a mobile Service family is preparing for a new move, they will potentially be considering a whole range of factors regarding their children's future education. This can be an extremely stressful time for families, particularly when considering moves with older children studying for GCSEs and other examinations. These can include:

- Choosing a school/obtaining useful information/making school visits;
- Admissions to schools/admissions appeals;
- The transfer of useful information to new schools;
- Additional learning needs and continuation of any specialised provision;
- Term-time holidays;
- Considering boarding option or North Wales Day School Allowance;
- The differences between areas: quality of accommodation/life, standards of education, accessibility of schools, access to extended family support, attitudes of schools towards children of Service personnel and communities;
- Unrealistic expectations regarding school standards and/or support in moving from one area to another;
- Notice of postings/availability of advance information about accommodation addresses;
- Deciding whether to move together as a family or meeting the children's educational needs i.e. staying on to complete examinations;
- Managing children's educational needs alongside the many other considerations when moving home/job/county etc.



# Mitigating the Impacts of Mobility

Depending on the age and needs of a Service child, supporting them to be actively engaged in the process of moving will help make the transition to a new school easier. Much of this will depend on the family's approach to moving, but the school still plays a vital part in supporting the child through the process.

- Moving schools packs: CEAS have developed moving school packs for children to help them prepare for moving schools. They are available online and via HIVEs across Wales:  
[www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service](http://www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service)
- If possible, support children to be active in their school choice and transition including supporting communication with a new school or supporting visits to a new school
- Adopt a buddy system/peer-to-peer support to help the new pupils settle into the school community
- School to school contact: once a school is aware of a child's move and details of the new school are known, make contact with the school to begin transferring information and support the understanding of a child's needs as quickly as possible

# Deployment



The movement of troops or equipment to a place or position for military action

Deployment of troops can be a routine part of life for many Armed Forces families, and will continue to be a reality despite the return of personnel from Afghanistan and Iraq, as Britain's defence forces continue to serve all over the world. As with Service mobility, planning deployments to allow families and personnel to prepare is preferred, but sometimes deployments can happen very quickly without any warning.

If you would like understand more about the deployment process the MOD has produced a guide for Armed Forces families available here: [Families Deployment Guide.pdf](#)

# Deployment

## Possible Effects of Deployment:

- Emotionally challenging
- Stress and worry
- Challenging behaviour at home and school
- Adjusting to parents departure and return
- Being cared for by a lone parent or carer whilst parent(s) are deployed
- Dealing with bereavement

## Mitigating the Impacts of Deployment

Children who have a parent or parents deploying for active Service will have a range of reactions and ways of coping based on their own needs and circumstances. Factors such as SEN or other educational needs, previous experiences of deployment and mobility, current family relationships and level of support/proximity to extended family can all play a significant part in how a child copes.

## Awareness and Communication

Awareness and communication are key in ensuring that children can get the right level of support they need within the school environment. Knowing if a child has a parent(s) deploying for active Service will allow you to brief staff and make any arrangements necessary to ensure a child's education is disrupted as little as possible.

## Communication with Military Bases

If your school is near a military base, you may already have good communication with members of staff in the welfare team who can inform you of planned deployments and the nature and duration of the deployment. If your school is further away from a base or you have only recently discovered you have Service children on your roll, then you may wish to join the SSCECymru Network, or make contact directly with bases to develop those links.

## Planning: Deployment and Return of Parent(s)

Some children may require extra support before or after a parent(s) is deployed or returns home. If you are aware of an upcoming deployment, you can plan ways in which to ensure a Service child has the support they need such as:

- Thinking about ways in which to keep school life as 'normal' as possible to ensure stability and that learning can continue;
- Ensuring that Service children know there is a trusted staff member if they need to talk to someone;
- Communicating to teachers and other staff regarding deployments to ensure school remains a safe, sensitive and understanding environment;
- Developing other activities as necessary that could support a child or young person (some schools across the UK have set up 'bluey clubs' and homework clubs and offer help with letter writing and confidence skills).



## Communicating with deployed parent(s)

The MOD has improved its ability to enable communication between deployed personnel and their families. Schools should discuss with parents and unit welfare staff how they can support such communication and, if appropriate, participate in it.

## Family Support

Families will deal with deployment in their own ways, but some may benefit from more support from the school community than others, particularly if they do not live on or near a base. The involvement of parents in schools has always provided opportunities for strong home-school links to be developed and for parents to support each other. Some schools have developed their own Armed Forces parents' groups to discuss issues that are relevant to Armed Forces children and to encourage better communication.

## Safeguarding

During periods of deployment where one or both parents may be away, some children may become more vulnerable to safeguarding risks. If you become concerned about a child, you should follow the relevant procedures and work with other agencies if necessary to ensure they are protected. Welsh Government guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe' (2015) is available here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/keeping-learners-safe/?lang=en>

## Multi-agency Approach

If you are aware of other local statutory services working with a family, you should inform them of any deployments to ensure that any emerging needs for the children or the whole family can be met effectively.

## Clear Term-time Holiday Policy

When Service personnel return from deployments, they are usually given periods of leave to spend time with their families, rest and recover. These periods of leave are dictated by their deployments and will often occur in term time. If your school doesn't already have a term-time absence policy that includes circumstances for Service children and their families, you may wish to consider:

- Ensuring where possible that consideration is given to Service families who may not be able to take holidays together at other times during the school year;
- Encouraging Service families to tell the school when they plan to take their children out of school during term time for a holiday or other reasons relating to Armed Forces deployment.
- Head teachers do have a discretionary power to authorise leave for a family holiday during term time where parents seek permission. Save in exceptional circumstances, no more than 10 days' leave should be granted for this purpose. A head teacher should consider the time of year of the proposed trip, length and purpose of the holiday, impact on continuity of learning, circumstances of the family and the wishes of parents as well as the overall attendance pattern of the child

## Independent Counselling Services

In Wales counselling is a universal provision for 11 to 18 year olds and year 6 pupils, which they can access if they are upset, worried, confused or afraid. Within schools, counselling complements the different approaches already in place to support the health, emotional and social needs of pupils.

## Pupil Information Transfer

All schools will have a process in place to ensure that when a child leaves or joins a school, information about their needs and attainment will be transferred with them. For Service children who may have moved to several different schools already in their school career, or who are likely to move in future, the importance of this information transfer is vital.

The Directorate for Children and Young People (DCYP) has developed a Pupil Information Profile template for schools to help with transferring information as efficiently and effectively as possible between schools. You can find it here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-information-profile-for-military-service-children>

Or see Appendix A at the end of the guide.

# Welsh Language

When an Armed Forces child is starting school in Wales for the first time, taking time to explain the Welsh language system and how it works within your school to parents will be really beneficial to them and their children.

Families that have never lived in Wales before can often have concerns about their children becoming disadvantaged or falling behind because of their lack of Welsh language skills. This is particularly true when older children move into Wales and parents are worried about the impact on their examination options and results. By explaining how the Welsh language is taught in your school and how new learners are supported will help reassure families who have recently moved Wales.

# Special Education Needs

Assessing Service children for additional learning needs and providing a continuity of provision can be made much harder by frequent mobility. Ensuring that schools and local authorities transfer relevant information as quickly as possible is key to achieving this, but there are other factors that can be challenging for schools and frustrating for families.

## **Assessing and Monitoring Need**

Different assessment policies, thresholds and approaches between schools/local authorities, slow transfer of information and the time it can take for needs to become apparent are all factors that can get in the way of providing appropriate SEN support. Understanding a mobile Service child's previous educational history and SEN provision as well as managing expectations of parents whilst assessments are carried out/new provision is put in place is vital.

## **Decision-making and Resources**

Different assessment policies, thresholds and approaches between schools/local authorities, slow transfer of information and the time it can take for needs to become apparent are all factors that can get in the way of providing appropriate SEN support. Understanding a mobile Service child's previous educational history and SEN provision as well as managing expectations of parents whilst assessments are carried out/new provision is put in place is vital.

## **Communication**

Ensuring that you can communicate clearly, honestly and compassionately with families regarding their children's SEN is a vital part of building and maintaining trust. Sometimes, anxieties can lead to misunderstandings which can undermine mutual trust. For mobile Service families moving between different countries, local authorities and schools, the opportunities for breakdowns in communication and trust are much greater. It is important that schools and local authorities understand the educational and other contexts from which mobile Service children have come if they are to develop successful relationships with children of Service personnel and their families.

## Registration with CEAS

Schools are asked to encourage Service families to register with CEAS any of their children with SEN if those children are at School Action Plus or beyond. The purpose of registration is to enable CEAS to offer information, advice and support to Service families with any issue relating to their children's needs from initial concerns about their children's progress in school right through to support with appeals and tribunals.

### **SSCECymru Guide for Parents**

In conjunction with SSCECymru's Guide for Schools 2015, we have also produced a resource for Armed Forces parents to provide information and advice regarding the education system in Wales. The guide can be accessed here: [www.SSCECymru.co.uk](http://www.SSCECymru.co.uk)



# CASE STUDY 1

## Mount Street Infants School & Nursery, Brecon, Powys

### Improving Language and Numeracy Skills & Integrating Communities

School size: 166

Service children on roll: 47

Percentage Service children: 28.3%

Mount Street Infant School and Nursery in Brecon is based within the heart of the Armed Forces community in Brecon. The school has traditionally had a high percentage of Service children within the school community and experiences frequent term-time mobility. Brecon is also unique in Wales for its growing Nepalese community who are living and settling in Wales as part of the Gurkha regiment.

### Improving Numeracy and Language Skills

The school identified that the Nepalese children joining the school were struggling with their numerical literacy and words/concepts that were not used in Nepalese (e.g. fewer/greater than). Following the 2011 NFER mathematics and reading progress tests for Year 1 and 2, the school analysed the scores between the Nepalese Armed Forces children and the other pupils in the year and found that there was a 15-point discrepancy. On that basis, the school decided to employ two Nepalese Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) from the community to support the Service children to work on language skills and help with explanation of mathematical language. The following year, with interventions, the 2012 test scores showed a great improvement with, on average, the Year 1 and 2 score for Nepalese children dropping to just a 6-point difference on the standardised scores.

In 2014, following the departure of the LSAs from Nepal, the school hired one British LSA with an Armed Forces background and one Nepalese LSA from an Armed Forces background to continue to develop the work of supporting all MOD children within the school setting.

# CASE STUDY 1

## Inclusive School Community

The school embraces its multicultural identity by ensuring that children from all backgrounds are able to learn from and share their experiences:

- As well as celebrating Christmas, Mount Street also celebrates Chinese New Year and 'Dashain' a big Nepalese celebration. In school, the children take part in dancing, tasting Nepalese food and making cards and decorations;
- Creating a special place in the school for a 'Mandir' (Hindu temple/shrine) where Nepalese children can pray and leave offerings;
- The school has hosted a Ladies' Evening for all mums in the school to come and try Nepalese food, try on traditional Nepalese dress and learn Nepalese phrases.

# CASE STUDY 2

## Prendergast Community Primary School Haverfordwest

**School size:** 527

**Service Children on roll:** 81

**Approx** 15% Service Children

### **Managing Mobility: Developing induction and exit processes**

Prendergast Community Primary School is a large school in comparison to others in the area. Its position in the town is unique, close to both the local hospital and the Cashfield estate that was purpose built to house members of the Armed Forces working at Brawdy (Cawdor Barracks). As a result, the school houses a large number of families whose parents are based at the hospital, and also a significant number of Armed Forces families.



### **Appointing a Key Worker:**

Prendergast appointed an MOD Keyworker to join their Innovation and Change Team, known by the acronym S.T.E.P.S. (Steps Towards Excellence at Prendergast School). This keyworker is the first point of call for Service children and their families. Alongside this the school offers Armed Forces families a drop in clinic, a parent and toddler group and have employed a learning support assistant from a military family based in the nursery setting. The school promotes an open-door approach to encourage families to engage with the school.

The S.T.E.P.S Team co-ordinate and oversee groups of learners and their progress at the school. All children receive baseline assessments to track their learning during their school life with Prendergast. The MOD Keyworker works with Armed Forces children to assess whether the new child needs any further intervention or support, or to highlight a More Able or Talented learner. One of the baseline assessments is the “PASS” (Pupils Attitude to Self and School) Survey. This allows the Keyworker to identify any issues in the child’s attitude to themselves, to others and to school in order to provide the relevant support. This may include Nurture, Wellbeing or Vocational activities such as Engineering, Hair and Beauty, fishing, Bushcraft etc.



# CASE STUDY 2

## Induction and Exit process:

The school identified that due to the higher mobility of Armed Forces families moving in and out of the area it needed to strengthen the school induction and exit processes. Staff from Prendergast visited Mary's CofE School in Credenhill, Herefordshire to identify good practice and to use this information to further enhance their support mechanisms. They observed how data was collected, collated and used to ensure the children from a Service background did not suffer in their learning compared to other pupils. They also looked at how using whole-school events could ensure that all members of the school community have a deepened understanding of the multi-faceted lives that Service families lead.

The process in Prendergast starts with a letter welcoming the children to the school. The children are given a starter pack to become familiar with how the school looks and some of the areas they are will be working in. On arrival at school the children take a tour and are assigned a buddy to support them in the first days of their new school.



Following this initial settling in period, the children complete a 'passport.' This has been adapted from 'The Passport', developed by Robert Beadel (Buckinghamshire Educational Psychology Service) and Charlotte Bradshaw (Buckinghamshire Transfer Support Team). The Prendergast Passport links the resource to the schools unique set of Values. Each pupil that joins the school undertakes an induction, supported by their class LSA.

When a pupil is leaving the school they complete an exit pack to help with the successful transfer of information and to support the child in the moving process, this includes where possible a supporting visit to the new school. The process also supports friends of the child who are 'left behind' who may experience upset or potential disruption when a classmate moves away.

Due to the success of the induction and exit processes with MOD children the school has now expanded it to include all new children entering the school.



# CASE STUDY 3

## **Llantwit Major High School, Llantwit Major, Vale of Glamorgan**

School size: 900

Service children on roll: 82

Percentage: 9%

### **Working in Partnership & Building Potential**

Llantwit Major High School is the main secondary school for the St Athan base in the Vale of Glamorgan. Due to the mixture of Army and RAF personnel based at St Athan, the school works with pupils who have experienced significant mobility and deployment and have worked successfully over several years to build up a range of support mechanisms for Service children. Llantwit are unique in that they have a cluster arrangement with local primary schools, so information sharing and support is coordinated across primary and secondary education.

# CASE STUDY 3

## Working in Partnership

In 2012, Llantwit Major High School recognised that, despite their proximity to the St Athan base, they had very little communication with the base itself and were not aware of which children attending school were from an Armed Forces background. Together with some of the feeder primary schools in the cluster who also have a close proximity to the base, they appointed a partnership coordinator who works across the comprehensive and partner feeder primary schools to manage the delivery of support for Armed Forces children. The role of the Partnership Coordinator includes:

- Establishing, managing and collating the data on the numbers of Armed Forces pupils in the school;
- Managing the information transfer for Armed Forces children in and out of the school and monitoring the progress of Armed Forces children;

Running a regular Armed Forces Parents' Group so parents can come and discuss any issues, engage with the school and members of Army welfare, and improve provision;

- Providing a point of contact between all cluster schools and the St Athan welfare staff to share information and improve communication.



# CASE STUDY 3

## **Building Potential:**

### **Confidence and Skills**

Llantwit Major High School has been working with the MPCT (Military Prep College) based in Cardiff to provide additional support for pupils by providing mentoring and by developing leadership, team building, thinking, and communication skills. The programme is inclusive of children from Armed Forces and civilian backgrounds, but focuses on the most able and talented, those underachieving, and those who may require additional behavioral support or confidence building. There is also a specific after-school programme for Armed Forces children run by MPCT.

### **Homework Clubs and Catch-up Support**

At the end of every half-term, the project coordinator will analyse performance data for Armed Forces pupils. Where pupils are not meeting their target levels in all subjects, a variety of support is offered through homework clubs, catch-up support, and mentoring.

### **Communication**

The school operates a buddy system for new Service children in school and encourages participation in lunchtime and after-school activities. The school has also started an Armed Forces notice board to keep pupils aware of any activities or relevant news and where they can post items for other Armed Forces children. The partnership officer also acts as a trusted point of contact for forces children in the school if they have any issues that they wish to discuss.

## For Children and Young People

### MEIC Cymru

Need information? Want advice? MEIC Cymru is a Wales-based, free advice and advocacy service. MEIC can provide advice whatever the situation:

<http://meiccymru.org/>

### Military Kids Connect

An online forum for Armed Forces kids from across the world, with useful information, advice, games and more:

<http://militarykidsconnect.dcoe.mil/>

### Children's Commissioner for Wales

Human rights support and advice for children and young people:

<http://www.childcomwales.org.uk/>

## Education

### Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

Information and support for Service families and eligible MOD civilians on all aspects of the education of their children in the UK and overseas:

<https://www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service>

### ELSA Support

Emotional literacy support website with online resources for teachers and support staff:

<http://www.elsa-support.co.uk/emotional-support-for-the-children-of-the-armed-forces/>

### Esytyn

Schools inspectorate for Wales:

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/>

### Royal Caledonian Educational Trust

Working to promote awareness of needs of Service children in Scotland:

<http://www.rcet.org.uk/>

## Education

### Supporting Service Children in State Schools

Network of state schools in England providing support and advice regarding Service children which produced a handbook for schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook-2013>

### Welsh Government Guidance on Education

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/?lang=en>

### Wales School Admissions Code 2013

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/admissions-and-appeals-code/?lang=en>

## Education

### SEN Code of Practice for Wales

<http://learning.wales.gov.uk/docs/learningwales/publications/131016-sen-code-of-practice-for-wales-en.pdf>

For more information on education and lifelong learning in Wales, visit the Welsh Local Government Association's website:

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/lifelong-learning-culture-information>

### HMS Heroes

A peer mentoring initiative for Service children based in Plymouth:

<http://www.plymouthcurriculum.swgfl.org.uk/hmsheroes/about-us/>

## HIVES

HIVES are information centres available to all members of the Service community. They serve both married and single personnel, together with their families, dependents and civilians employed by the Services:

<http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23440.aspx>

### HIVE RAF VALLEY

<http://www.raf.mod.uk/rafvalley/stationfacilities/hive.cfm>

### HIVE CHEPSTOW & INNSWORTH

<http://chepstowhive.blogspot.co.uk/>

### HIVE ST ATHAN

<http://www.stathanhive.blogspot.co.uk/>

## Ministry of Defence – Support Services

A list of support services and advice for Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families on the UK government website:

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

### Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen Families Association (SSAFA)

Offering support and advice to serving and former Armed Forces personnel and their families:

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

### Army Families Federation (AFF)

Supporting army families:

<http://www.aff.org.uk/>

### Royal Air Force Families Federation (RAFFF)

Supporting RAF families:

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

### Naval Families Federation (NFF)

Supporting Royal Navy and Royal Marines families:

<http://www.nff.org.uk/>

## Ministry of Defence – Support Services

### Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion helps the whole Armed Forces community through welfare, comradeship and representation as well as being the Nation's custodian of Remembrance:

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/can-we-help>

### Veterans UK

Provides support and advice for Armed Forces veterans and their families

<http://www.veterans-uk.info/index.htm>

### Samaritans

A confidential support line for anyone who needs someone to talk to or help and advice:

<http://www.samaritans.org/>

## Armed Forces Community Covenant

The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their area and promote understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.

### Armed Forces Community Covenants in Wales

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-covenants-in-wales>

### Armed Forces Package of Support Wales

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/communities/safety/armedforces/packagesupport/?lang=en>

# Appendix A: Pupil information Profile

## Pupil Information Profile (Service Children)

The Pupil Information Profile contains core information that supports a young person's future learning as s/he moves to a new school. It also signposts the receiving school to any further additional, significant information about the young person. Make sure to enable Content using the button below the ribbon before using PIP. To enable Macros on older versions of Microsoft word please following the instructions at the following link: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/290949>

<b>A Personal details</b>		UPN: England/Wales	N Ireland:	SCN: Scotland
Surname:		First name(s):		
Gender: <Please Select>		Date of birth:		Year Group:
Siblings (Number & Ages): <Number> <Ages>		Attendance: Cause for Concern? <Please Select> If Yes, why?		
Language spoken at home:		Ethnicity: <Please Select>		Religion: <Please Select>
Previous schools attended with dates (1-Current school):		4.		
1.		5.		
2.		6.		
3.		7.		
<b>B Persons with parental responsibility:</b>				Army/RN/RM/RAF/Reserve Forces (Unit if known)
Name:		Address:		Relation to learner
<b>ALERT</b> Key contact		<b>C Brief description of any significant health/medical/care issues</b>		
Name:				
Number:				
<b>D Key Document(s)</b>				
<b>E Agency Involvement- Current/Recent/Significant Past:</b>		LA Agency	Service Agency	Contact Name:
		<Please Select>	<Please Select>	
		<Please Select>	<Please Select>	
		<Please Select>	<Please Select>	
<b>F Health &amp; Wellbeing Profile:</b>				
How has the learner reacted to moving school in the past/now, parental deployment and/or other significant events?				

# Appendix A: Pupil information Profile

<b>? G Learning Profile:</b> (Always/Mostly/Sometimes)		<b>Achievements/Out-of-School interests</b>	
Motivated and enthusiastic to learn	<<Please Select>>		
Works co-operatively with others	<<Please Select>>		
Understands thoughts & feelings of others	<<Please Select>>		
Exercises self-control	<<Please Select>>		
Organises own learning	<<Please Select>>		
Solves problems and takes decisions	<<Please Select>>		
<b>? H Parental Partnership in Supporting Learning</b>		<b>? J Learner Voice</b>	
<b>? K Identified Learning Needs:</b>		<b>? L Interventions and their impact - Current/Recent/Significant Past:</b>	
<b>? M Assessment information: Current performance - against national age-related expectations</b>		Well Above/Above/At/Below/Well Below	<b>? N Key Strengths &amp; Development Needs</b>
Reading	<<Please Select>>		
Writing	<<Please Select>>		
Mathematics	<<Please Select>>		
<b>? P Assessment Information: Most recent teacher assessments/Most recent statutory assessment results and/or Standardised test scores</b>			
<b>? Q Assessment Information: Next Learning Steps</b>		<b>Current rate of progress (Better than/Expected/Less than)</b>	
Reading		<<Please Select>>	
Writing		<<Please Select>>	
Mathematics		<<Please Select>>	
Date:	Completed by:	Role in school:	