

SSCE Cymru School Toolkit



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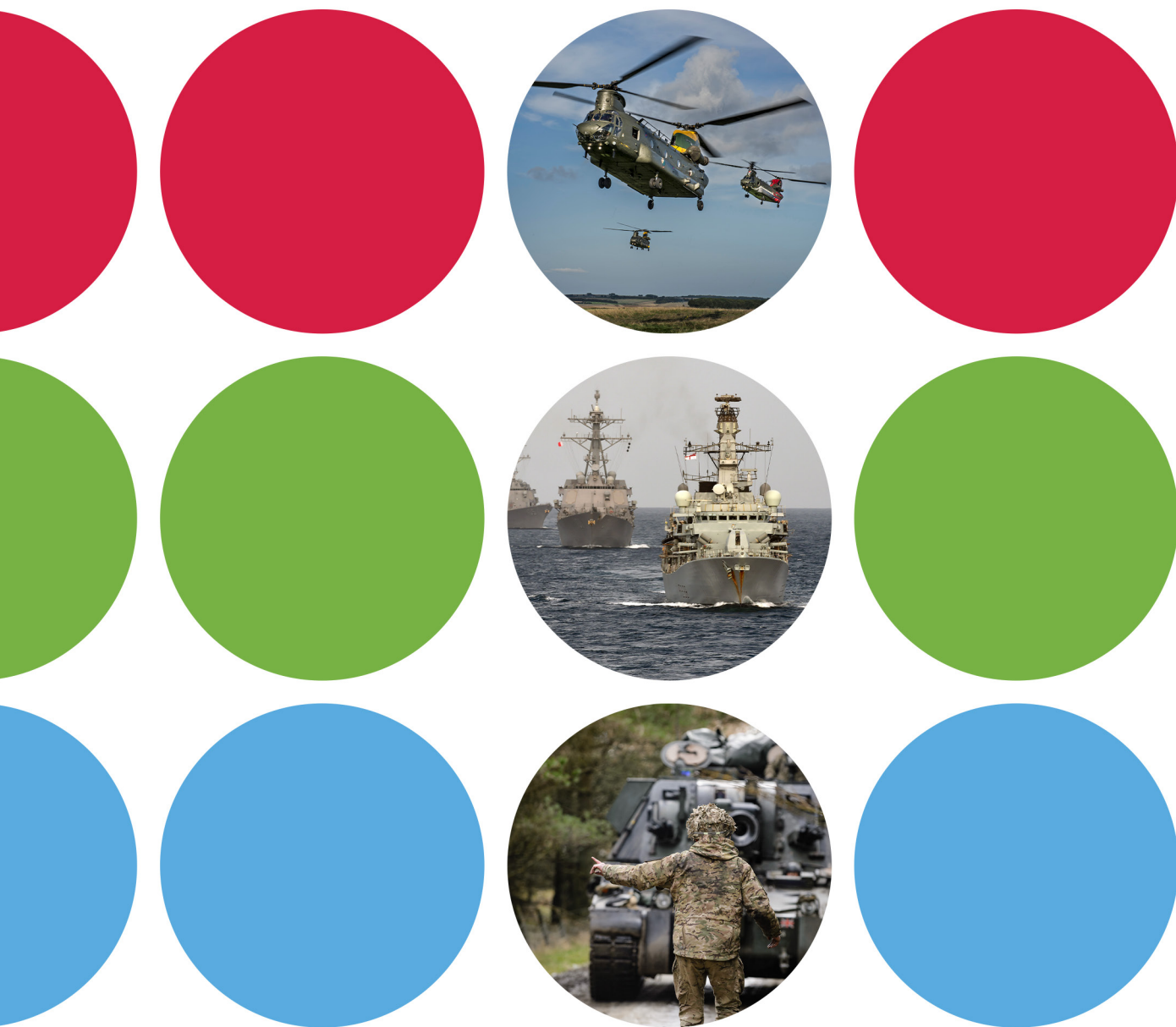
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Armed Forces in Wales



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"3.2 When asked what are the three most significant challenges they face in supporting their Service children, over 31% of schools indicated: Gaining an understanding of the Armed Forces lifestyle."

SSCE Cymru school survey (2019) findings

"Being part of the Army is like being part of a family, an enormous family that spans the length of the UK, parts of Germany and Afghanistan."

Ieuan, Service child

The Armed Forces carry out tasks determined by the British Government, to defend the interests of the UK. These tasks might involve service overseas as part of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or United Nations (UN) force, or on any other multi-national deployment. Members of the Armed Forces work around the world, promoting peace, delivering aid, tackling drug smugglers, providing security and fighting terrorism.

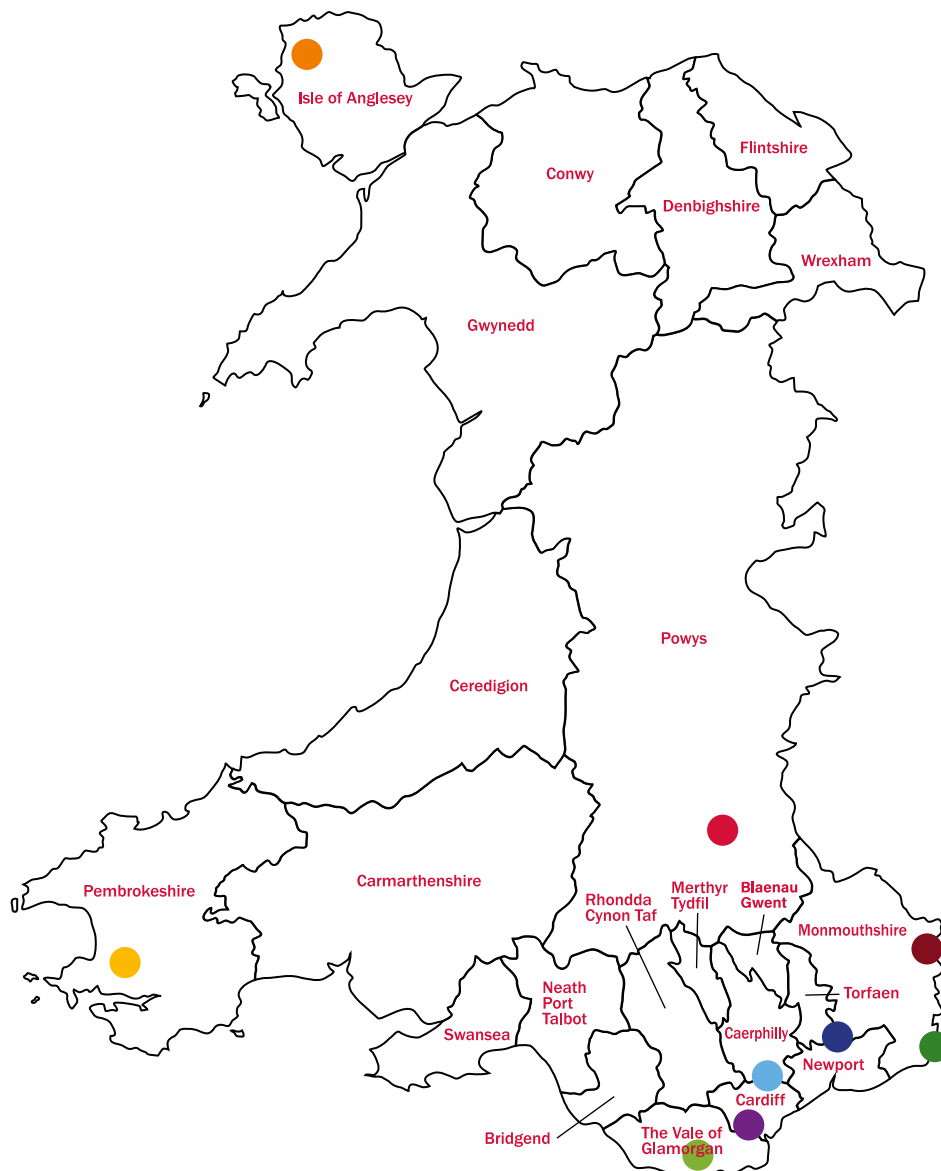


Armed Forces in Wales

Service personnel from all three Services are based at different locations across Wales, and there are also Reservists and veterans/ex-Service personnel.

Armed Forces bases in Wales

●	Headquarters 160th (Welsh) Brigade, Infantry battle school – Brecon	Army
●	14 Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) – Cawdor Barracks, Haverfordwest	Army
●	1st Battalion The Rifles – Beachley Barracks, Chepstow	Army
●	Maindy Barracks, 203 Field Hospital	Army
●	104 Regiment Royal Artillery – Raglan Barracks	Army
●	The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia)	Army
●	RAF Valley	RAF
●	MOD St Athan	RAF
●	HMS Cambria	Navy



Tri-Service community

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

The Armed Forces in Wales are made up of serving personnel from all three Services: the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, British Army and the Royal Air Force (RAF). The predominant Services in Wales are the Army and the RAF owing to the number of bases located here in Wales. There are also a number of Reservist and Cadet locations across Wales.

Royal Navy/Royal Marines

HMS Cambria is the Royal Naval Reserve Unit, based in Cardiff. Tawe Division is a satellite unit of HMS Cambria based in Swansea. There will also be some Naval personnel stationed with other Armed Forces, and many Naval Service families living in Wales.

For further information on the Royal Navy, visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk



Royal Air Force (RAF)

There are two stations based in Wales: RAF Valley and MOD St Athan. RAF Valley on Anglesey is home to No. 4 Flying Training School, responsible for training the UK's next generation of world-class fighter pilots. Aircrew are also trained at RAF Valley for mountain and maritime operations throughout the world. RAF Valley is also home to the Mountain Rescue Service, the Armed Forces only high-readiness, all-weather search-and-rescue, aircraft post-crash management asset.

MOD St Athan is a large MOD site in Wales, based in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is where the RAF's non-aircraft, ground engineering technicians are trained. It is home to No. 4 School of Technical Training, which provides continued training to personnel from all three Services and MOD civilian staff. St Athan is also home to the University of Wales Air Squadron.

For further information on the RAF activities in Wales, visit www.raf.mod.uk/ or www.raf.mod.uk/rafvalley/



British Army

Headquarters 160th (Welsh) Brigade, based in Brecon, takes the lead for tri-Service engagement across the whole of Wales. It is the Army's connection to the government and society of Wales, supporting the Union, shaping the recruiting environment and delivering firm base support, and is the tactical HQ for the delivery of UK operations within Wales.

Other bases and training facilities include:

- 14 Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare)
- The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia)
- 3rd Battalion (The Royal Welsh)
- 157 (Welsh) Regiment Royal Logistics Corps (RLC)
- Wales University Officers Training Corps (UOTC)
- 203 Field Hospital
- Infantry Battle School
- 104 Battalion Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME)
- 104 Regiment Royal Artillery
- 1st Battalion The Rifles.

For further information on the Army in Wales, visit www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/formations-divisions-brigades/regional-command/hq-160th-welsh-brigade/



Reservists

There are over 2,200 reservists in Wales. They perform vital roles in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAF). Reservists come from diverse backgrounds. They give up their spare time to train and serve alongside regular personnel in the Armed Forces. They carry out different roles at their respective reserve units, where the minimum annual requirement is just under 30 days a year. In return, reservists receive pay and expenses for evening and weekend training, and equal pay to their regular ranks on deployment.

For further information on the Reservists activities in Wales, visit www.wales-rfca.org/reserves/

Cadets

There are over 5000 Cadets in Wales who enjoy fun with friends at more than 200 unit locations spanning the length and breadth of the country. Cadet organisations combine youth work with military-themed training and community-based activities. They improve the health of Cadets through a variety of outdoor activities and sport. Young people between the ages of 12 and 18 can be a part of the Cadets, depending on the organisation they join.

For further information on the Cadets in Wales, visit www.wales-rfca.org/cadets/

MOD Guard Service

The MOD Guard Service (MGS) provides unarmed guarding services at over 100 sites across the MOD estate in England, Scotland and Wales. The MGS employs around 2,000 operational and support staff (who are all civil servants), managed by its Head Office located at MOD Lyneham in Wiltshire.

For further information on the MGS in Wales, visit www.gov.uk/guidance/mod-guard-service

Armed Forces ranks: Pecking order



	Royal Navy	Royal Marines	Army	Royal Air Force
★★★★★	Admiral	General	General	Air Chief Marshal
★★★★	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Air Marshal
★★★	Rear Admiral	Major General	Major General	Air Vice-Marshal
★★	Commodore	Brigadier	Brigadier	Air Commodore
★	Captain	Colonel	Colonel	Group Captain
	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Wing Commander
	Lieutenant Commander	Major	Major	Squadron Leader
	Lieutenant	Captain	Captain	Flight Lieutenant
	Sub Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Flying Officer
	Midshipman	Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant	Pilot Officer
	Warrant Officer 1	Warrant Officer Class 1	Warrant Officer Class 1	Warrant Officer
	Warrant Officer 2	Warrant Officer Class 2	Warrant Officer Class 2	
	Chief Petty Officer	Colour Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Flight Sergeant
	Petty Officer	Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant
	Leading Hand	Corporal	Corporal	Coporal
		Lance Corporal	Lance Corporal	Senior Aircraftman
	Able Rate	Marine	Private	Aircraftman

Stars are allocated to the most senior ranks across defence.

www.civilservant.org.uk/library/armed_forces_ranks.pdf



Deployment cycles and examples

"It's ok talking over Skype and that but sometimes you just want a hug when Dad is away."

Georgia, Service child

"We have not moved from here for a bit as I have my GCSEs, so he went to Bristol. We went and visited him occasionally and he came back at the weekends, even though it was four hours away."

Harry, Service child

Serving personnel, due to the nature of the role, may be absent from the family home for significant periods of time, either on operational duty or because they have made the decision to give their family stability by commuting on a weekly basis to their place of work.

This presents additional challenges that are not routinely experienced by most civilian families. These can include the amount of time being absent, and patterns of and reasons for absence.

Definitions of types of absence

- **Deployment:** deployed Service personnel can include an individual or group of people and deployment can be from one night up to nine months or longer, sometimes without contact with home. They may be deployed on active service in the UK, abroad or at sea.
- **Training:** serving personnel can be deployed on Armed Forces training courses, which can last anything from a week to nine months.
- **Exercises:** serving personnel can be deployed to undertake activities to learn new skills and strategies linked to their role. This can vary in length and place and can be as an individual or a group.

As with Service mobility, planning deployments to allow families and personnel to prepare is preferred and is always the aim, but sometimes, in accordance with the needs of the Service, deployments can happen very quickly (less than 24 hours) and without any warning. Some Service personnel may also move individually to a new posting.

Different Services move differently

- **Royal Navy/Royal Marines:** personnel are likely to live in one place for longer periods as they tend to prioritise family stability, but they may move their family with each change of assignment.
- **Royal Air Force (RAF):** personnel tend to move individually as their careers progress or to meet the needs of the Service.
- **Army:** personnel tend to move in groups (regiments/battalions/squadrons).

Some Service personnel may also move individually to a new posting. 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.

Armed Forces terms/glossary

Differences definitions (by Service)

Royal Navy (RN)/ Royal Marines (RM)	British Army	RAF	Definition
Ships, Units or Establishments	Garrison	Station	Name given to an MOD community, including Armed Forces buildings and facilities
Assignment/ Appointment	Posting	Assignment	Personnel are sent to another Armed Forces location to serve with that unit
Deployment/Patrol (submarine)	Deployment	Deployment	Periods when Service Personnel are away on operational Service without their families.
RM: Rear Party, Surface Ships and Submarines: on-crew/off-crew, Fleet Air Arm: Squadron Staff	Rear Ops (Operation)	Rear Party	Small body of personnel left on duty at home Armed Forces establishment (home base) whilst the main body of personnel are sent away on operational tour
Divisional Officer	Unit Welfare Officer	Officer Commanding Personnel Management Squadron (OC PMS) and Warrant Officer Personnel Management Squadron (WO PMS)	A nominated officer who looks after the welfare of the Service personnel

General Service definitions

Exercise	When Service personnel go away for a week or more for training
Pre-deployment	The phase of preparation for departure
Deployment	To go away on an operational deployment without their families
Mobility	Moving/relocating based on operational needs
Accompanied Posting	Personnel are assigned to another unit and take their spouse/partner and family with them to that new location
Un-Accompanied Posting	Service personnel goes to another unit location alone, whilst leaving their spouse/partner and family settled in home location
Rest and Recovery (R&R)	Leave is given to personnel during their deployment/operational tour to allow for rest and recuperation

Post-Operational Tour Leave (POTL)	Leave is given to personnel on their return from an operational tour to allow for rest and recuperation
Veteran	Anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's (HM) Armed Forces: (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined Armed Forces operations.
Service Leaver	Is in transition out of the Armed Forces
Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC)	The MOD organisational structure that provides a focal point for casualty administration and notification and requests for compassionate travel (for those personnel serving overseas) in respect of members of the British Armed Forces
Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)	MOD department responsible for the provision of all infrastructures on Armed Forces bases and for the provision of accommodation for Service families (see SFA)
Service Family Accommodations (SFA)/ Patch/ Quarters/Behind the wire	MOD provided housing for Service personnel and their families, which may be located within an Armed Forces unit or embedded in the local community
Civvie/Civilians	Non-Service personnel
Mess	An area where Service personnel socialise, eat and sometimes live
MOD90	Military Identification (ID) card
HIVE/Naval Service Family & People Support Information Officer	A Civil Service-provided information and signposting service for the Armed Forces community. Used by the Service community as a first point of contact for all enquiries regarding accommodation, schools, local provision and information regarding next posting location

“
I would like to know more about where my parent is and what they are doing.
”



Service family experiences

"It's not a bad life. Other people say, 'You move around every few years, you never have fixed friends.' In my eyes you have hundreds of friends in different places. You get to go overseas. I'm moving to Cyprus. It's gorgeous there. I get to meet different people and do different things."

Chloe, Service child

Families posted without their unit

Some families make the decision not to move with the Service personnel and remain in the family home. The Service personnel will then relocate to their unit or base during the week. They may see each other at weekends or at other points throughout the year. The family remaining in Wales are a Service family. This may be referred to as "weekending" in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines or "dispersed" in the RAF.

Dual serving families

It is not uncommon for both parents to be serving, sometimes in the same force. There can on rare occasions be times when they are both deployed on operation, exercise or training. They may rely on extended family to help with childcare arrangements. Service personnel are encouraged to have a care plan in place for their dependents.

Single-parent families

Serving single-parent families will also have to deal with the challenge of the parent deploying on operation, exercise or training. They may rely on extended family to support them whilst away.

Veterans/ex-Service personnel

Many ex-Service personnel have chosen to settle in Wales after leaving the Armed Forces. Service personnel transition out of the Armed Forces for a number of reasons. Just because a veteran/ex-Service personnel is no longer serving in the Armed Forces, this does not mean that they and their family are no longer impacted by the experiences of when they were serving. For this reason, SSCE Cymru's definition (along with others) encompasses children of veterans/ex-Service personnel for up to six years after transitioning out of the Armed Forces.

Some former Service personnel in the UK do not define themselves as "veterans".

All ex-Service personnel are entitled to a Veterans ID card (www.gov.uk/government/news/new-veterans-id-cards-rolled-out-to-service-leavers) to mark their service in the Armed Forces.



Welfare services



Welfare officers are stationed at all major Army bases in Wales and have responsibility for supporting the wellbeing of Service 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. Welfare officers should also be able to provide local information regarding scheduled deployments and large scheduled moves.

HIVES

HIVE information services are available to all members of the Service community, providing information support to members of the Regular forces, Reservists and their families and dependents. An extensive range of information is available, focusing on relocation information, local area information, education, accommodation, employment and training opportunities, childcare and travel.

The HIVEs are a good way of disseminating information to the Service community locally, through their blogs, email lists and social media.

Personnel Support

Personnel Support staff provide accessible, independent, confidential and professional specialist welfare services to Service personnel and their families with any personal or family difficulty, thereby strengthening and enhancing the resilience and resourcefulness in the Armed Forces community.

Support may be provided in such areas as tackling domestic abuse, child and adult safeguarding, bereavement, relationship difficulties, stress and anxiety management, emotional wellbeing and signposting.

Community Support

"We have always known we are a school near the base St Athan, and the links have been non-existent, and we have made a real effort over the past years to enhance provision and see how we can develop those community links."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School

The purpose of the Community Support team/Community Development officers is to support resilience within the community by creating a range of fun, positive and safe experiences for children, young people, families and Service personnel.

Doing things together and for each other is important for the community. This provision is likely to include community centres, youth centres and community projects as well as activities for children and young people during some school holidays. Community Support also connects with a number of agencies and organisations within the local area to access services and provide a better understanding of the Armed Forces.

Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

The covenant focuses on helping members of the Armed Forces community experience neither advantage nor disadvantage due to their service and therefore have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen.

For further information on the Armed Forces Covenant, visit www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/support-and-advice/

Local authorities

Local authorities in Wales are committed to addressing and responding to the needs of the Armed Forces community. All 22 local authorities in Wales have pledged their commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Each community's covenant is designed to meet the needs of the Armed Forces community within that particular local authority. Fulfilling the covenant's commitments will involve working in partnership with key stakeholders, including the Welsh Government, local health boards, housing associations, schools and further and higher education establishments.

Each authority has an Armed Forces Champion, which is a role undertaken by an elected member. The purpose of this role is to promote and champion the interests of the Armed Forces community within the local authority; to act as a single point of contact; and to engage with the Armed Forces community locally to identify key issues of concern.



“ I was supported by an LSA in school and my Nan.

Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officers

There is a network of Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officers (AFLOs) across Wales whose role is to enable consistent delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant across Wales. These are currently funded by the Welsh Government. This includes strengthening communication to and from those who have served in our Armed Forces and their families, across Wales and implementing training for front-line local authority staff so they can support the needs of the local Service personnel, veterans/ex-Service personnel and their families.

For contact details for the AFLOs see the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#).



Support and resources

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.




SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to school engagement with the Armed Forces include:

Checklist: School actions and activities

Template: School website – Armed Forces Covenant Commitments

Presentation: Armed Forces and experiences of Service children

Poster: Armed Forces community in the school

Template: Parent/carer questionnaire.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).



SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to engaging with the Armed Forces include:

- **Ysgol Y Tywyn (Isle of Anglesey) – Service children learning Welsh**
- **Brecon High School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges**
- **Community Development Officer (RAF Valley, Isle of Anglesey) – Service children activities and youth provision**
- **Llantwit Major High School (Vale of Glamorgan) – Effective use of funding to support Service children**
- **Prendergast Primary School (Pembrokeshire) – Supporting Service children school transition.**



SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)



Service children's experiences



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"Germany was a really good time for me! I came back in Year five... I remember so much, the Christmas markets and stuff, always snowing, having snowball fights with the German kids across the road."

Harry, Service child

Definition of a Service child

The SSCE Cymru definition of a Service child is:

A person whose parent, or primary carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life.

The definition of a Service child varies between different organisations, but is always consistently focused on supporting children of Service personnel.



Being a Service child

"Article 29: Your right to become the best that you can be."

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

"The good things I like: you get around and get to see different places... the other good thing is making different friends and experiencing getting to know other people."

Shana, Service child

Service personnel from all three Services are based at different locations across Wales, and there are also Reservists and veterans/ex-Service personnel.

Service children can bring a diverse range of strengths and experiences to a school community and will have a variety of learning experiences from previous schools to share. They may have experiences of living in other countries, learning new languages and experiencing different cultures. Service children bring new dynamics to communities. They may have experienced travelling around the world as well as having talents and skills including dancing, art, sport, languages and drama.

To see videos of Service children speaking about their experiences, visit [Films on Service children's experiences](#).

Challenges/barriers for Service children

"When I start a new school, I do get nervous. I give the teacher some advice: put yourself in their shoes. That is what I do to see how they feel."

Mia, Service child

Being part of a Service family can be an extremely rewarding and beneficial experience, but aspects of the Armed Forces lifestyle can have challenges that impact on a child's education. These challenges can include:

- Frequent school and home move
- Separation from Service parent(s)
- Changes to family dynamics – recurring for different reasons
- Managing emotions
- Learning to deal with positive and negative emotions
- Delayed support for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) due to requirements not being identified
- Difficulties in making commitments to relationships with peers, adults and school
- Support for mental health and wellbeing
- Living a long distance from extended family/grandparents who could provide support
- Making new friends and moving on from previous ones
- Keeping in contact with family/friends from a distance
- Settling and joining in new activities
- Staff in school not understanding the needs and possible challenges that a Service child may face.

Whilst every child's individual circumstances can affect their life in and out of school in different ways, 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, mobility and transition.



Impact of deployment

Definition of deployment: periods when Service personnel are sent on operational service, either overseas or within the UK. A “tour” relates to the period of duty wherever a Service person is sent. This may be a tour at a defined Armed Forces establishment (a posting), an operational tour overseas or an extended period of training at an alternative location.

“You can’t stop yourself thinking about it. You can’t just say, ‘No, I’m not thinking about it,’ because he is your dad. It’s hard to do that. I’ve grown up toing and froing from places and him not being at home all the time. I’m sort of used to it and I still miss him as much.”

Georgia, Service child

“When my dad went away when I was young, I used to get sad and smell his clothes. When I got older, I got used to it. When he came back it was a happy time and we used to have good food.”

Ashim, Service child

“During deployment, we were Skyping once and we were getting rocketed at the time and these alarms were going off and I had to pretend it was a fire alarm. It really gets into his head and he mentions it years later.”

RAF Officer and parent of Service child

“3.1 When asked what are the three most significant challenges Service children face in education, the three top answers from primary schools were: The emotional impact of separation, The emotional impact when parent/s return from deployment/training, Emotional impact during deployment.”

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

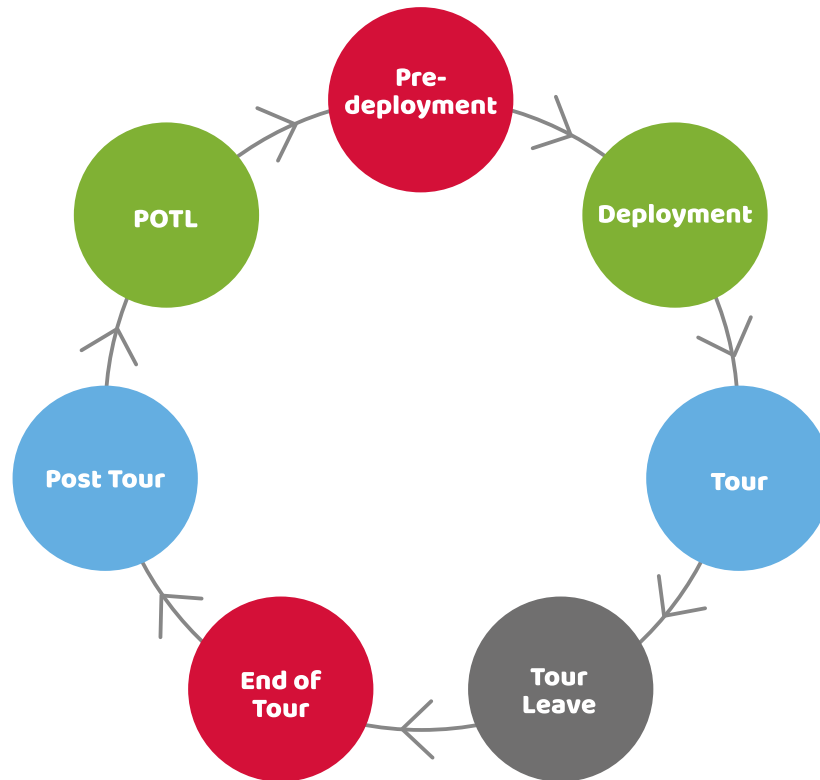
“3.1 85% have experienced parents being deployed and during discussions about their experiences, 62% made negative comments about their emotions (sad, angry) and 50% made negative comments about missing the deployed parent.”

[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)

“3.2 When asked what helped them to deal with their emotions/feelings while their parent/s was/were deployed, 42% talked about support from friends or buddies, 39% talked about communicating with deployed parent.”

[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)

The deployment cycle of a parent going away on active duty will involve areas of this diagram. This will be the same for every Service but the length of time and experiences in each area can vary.



Pre-deployment: the phase of preparation for departure and separation. This may last a few weeks or months, depending on the length of notice given. Families will choose to deal with this in different ways, with some children being very aware of the upcoming deployment, and others being unaware.

Deployment: preparing to deploy affects families in different ways. Some children take it in their stride. Most children and adults are likely to feel sadness.

Tour: the length of time the serving family member is away on their deployment. Service children are likely to experience a mix of emotions during this time. Changes in behaviour can be an indicator of how they deal with these feelings in a variety of ways. It is likely that one or both parents being deployed will mean a change to the family/home dynamic, with roles and responsibilities being shifted.

Tour leave: Service personnel deployed for longer than four months will get some time off during their time away. This can add further reunion and separation issues for children and might also attract requests for term-time absence.

End of tour: the return from deployment is often a long-awaited, exciting time of further change and can be challenging and stressful. Everyone in the family may have dealt with the separation in different ways. It is natural for those anticipating homecoming to have mixed emotions.

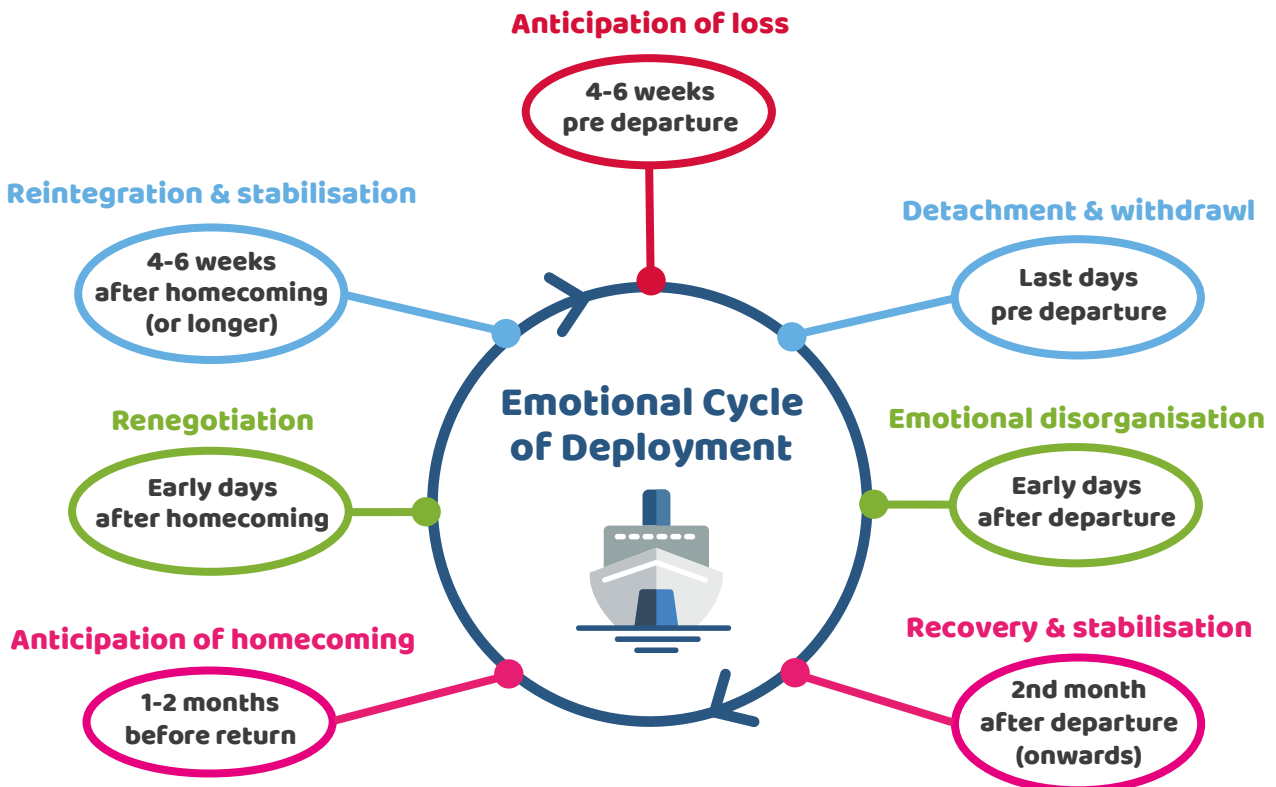
Post-tour: reunion is more than just a single event; it is a process of readjustment, and like all processes it may take some time. Another change in the family dynamics can cause confusion. The Service personnel returning from deployment may have been affected in a negative way, which could therefore impact the rest of the family.

Post-Operational Tour Leave (POTL): normally a period of Rest and Recovery (R&R) is granted to each serving member who has been deployed, although this depends on the length of the tour and the Armed Forces requirements. It is not uncommon for Service families to request term-time absence for their children during this time.

Deployment cycles

- [Royal Navy: Operations](#)
- [British Army: Operations and deployments](#)
- [RAF: Deployment](#)

The emotional cycle of deployment



For more information, visit:

- [Royal Navy and Royal Marines Parental Absence Resource](#)
- [Making sense of the emotional cycle of deployment](#)

“ *I worry what might happen to my Dad, is he in danger of being killed?*

Challenges/barriers for Service children relating to deployment

Pre-deployment

- Emotionally challenging – managing different feelings/behaviour
- Adjusting to parent(s) leaving
- Anticipating emotions – stress and worry
- Influences of social media and the news
- Planning communication with deployed parent(s)
- Confusion.

During deployment

- Emotionally challenging – managing different feelings/behaviour
- Uncertainty
- Confusion
- Separation – sense of loss
- Changes to family unit and care structure and routine
- If both parents are deployed – temporary guardians and possible relocation
- Unsettled family routine – being cared for by lone parent or carer whilst parent(s) are away
- Stress and worry
- Influences of social media and the news
- Communication with deployed parent(s)
- Missing important events
- Lack of father/mother figure or both
- Assuming greater responsibility in household whilst parent(s) are away
- Dealing with the emotional impact on other family members.

Post-deployment

- Emotionally challenging – managing different feelings/behaviour
- Adjusting to parent(s) returning
- Changes to family unit and care structure and routine
- Mental health and wellbeing issues of returning Service parent(s)
- Possible bereavement or injury of parent(s)
- Re-establishing relationships.



“ It's hard getting used to moving, I don't like packing all the time. ”



Impact of mobility

Definition of mobility: moving/relocating based on operational needs.

"I was born in Germany August 2010, 2011 Dad went to Canada, 2012 he went to Afghanistan, 2014 Falklands, 2016 back to Canada, 2016 August then we moved to Bulford, 2017 we moved to Brecon."

Lydia, Service child

"I was in Episkopi School in Cyprus. It was very enjoyable! When my dad told me three or four weeks before we had to leave, it was very disappointing because I had the best time of my life there, I knew there was nothing I could do so I just got on with it."

Ryan, Service child

"I've been to seven different schools. I've not stayed put in one school long enough. I think it is a big impact because you've just got to find time to make friends and settle in. It's pretty hard but because you've done it lots you get used to it."

Shana, Service child

"2.1 77% have moved to a new house and during discussions about their experiences, 51% made negative comments about leaving friends/family, while 31% made positive comments about meeting new people/making friends."

[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)

"2.2 37% have lived abroad and during discussions about their experiences, 28% made positive comments and 7% made negative comments about the physical environment (weather, animals etc)."

[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)

"2.4 When asked what activities helped them when moving school, 41% talked about buddy/peer support and 30% talked about visiting the new school and meeting new teachers."

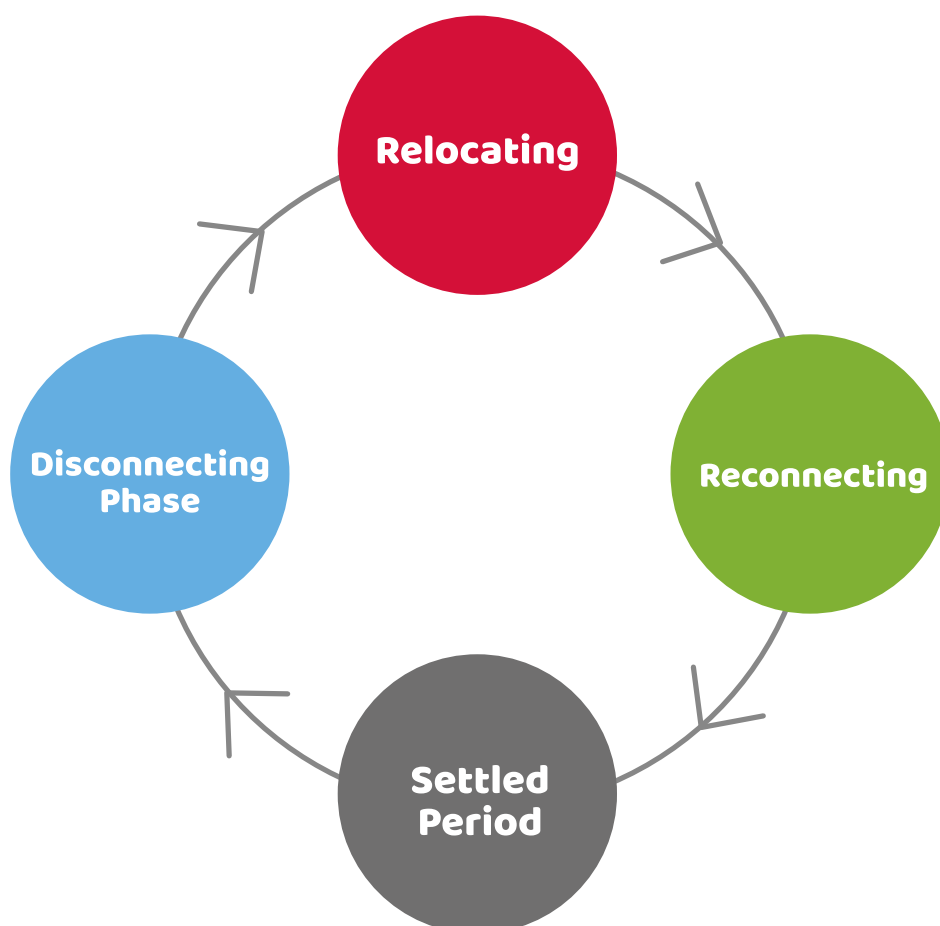
[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)



Mobility experiences

Service personnel can be required to move to different locations (postings) many times throughout their career. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) encourages the families of serving Armed Forces personnel to move together, where possible. These moves can be 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.

All Service families may experience a number of moves during the serving personnel's career. Some families will move within the UK and possibly overseas.



Settled period: when a family have been in a place for a while, they usually feel settled, secure and involved. They know the area, have friends and take part in activities locally. They may feel like they belong to the local community. As soon as they hear they are posted they will begin a process of disconnecting from their current location.

Disconnecting phase: this is usually characterised by spending more time and energy thinking about where one is going than where is at present.

Relocating: transition takes place between Armed Forces units upon assignment. The time of the actual move may feel like chaos as almost everything in a family's life changes. Normal routines are disrupted, and this can feel very unsettling.

Reconnecting: when arriving at a new location, Service families will be busy meeting new people and settling into the new community. Service families can feel a mix of positive and negative emotions.

Challenges/barriers for Service children relating to mobility

Before moving

- Coping with positive and negative emotions
- Securing a place at new school
- Difficulty in making commitments to relationships with peers, adults and school
- Disengaging with current school work/activities.

During move

- Coping with positive and negative emotions
- A sense of loss at leaving family/friends/familiar environment and surroundings
- Lack of information exchange between school – school history, educational needs, attainment level
- Feeling insecure
- Dependence on other adults/siblings or other Service children.

After moving

- Coping with positive and negative emotions
- Different cultures/languages (in and out of education) when moving to a different country
- Settling into new surroundings and community
- Settling into a new school – understanding school polices, meeting new people
- Repeating content of the curriculum
- Gaps in learning
- Different curriculums, examinations and assessments
- Lack of continuity with education, especially for those children with ALN – getting appropriate support immediately on transition as needed
- Support for mental health and wellbeing
- Feeling integrated into new school
- Bullying – stigma of being viewed as different “Service child”
- Relocation out of Service accommodation – veterans/ex-Service personnel or Service families opting to live away from unit.



“ I don't get to bring my dogs with me when we move. ”



Impact of transition

Definition of transition: period of time at which a move is made from civilian life to Armed Forces life and vice versa.

“He signed off last week, so he will be done by the end of this year. He’s done 24 years. I find that better because he will be around a lot. He likes watching us playing rugby, so he will get to see us more.”

Lewis, Service child

“Our transition across the cluster is very strong and we ensure the pupils can move smoothly across the cluster ... We focus on social transition, and [it] is really important for the MOD students who sit within us [that] we are prepared and have information about the pupils.”

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School

Transition experiences

Service personnel will all inevitably return to civilian life, whether at the end of their formal engagement or prematurely due to family obligations, health reasons or unforeseen circumstances. Leaving the Service and returning to civilian society can be stressful. Cultural differences may require some personal adjustment.

The MOD encourages early planning for transition, in order to support the Service personnel and their family in the best possible way. JSP100 is the new tri-service holistic transition policy which when implemented will include the involvement of families, through-career planning and preparation for transition. The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) provides the resettlement support on behalf of the MOD to Service leavers at the end of an Armed Forces career. CTP provides resettlement support, career advice and training opportunities to all ranks based on entitlement.

Many families are choosing to settle in Wales. This could be due to their family/friends and support networks being available to them, or a result of a positive experience/time living in Wales during a posting.

Challenges/barriers for Service children relating to transition

Before transition

- Coping with positive and negative emotions
- Securing a place at new (potentially final) school
- A sense of loss at leaving family/friends/familiar environment and surroundings
- Difficulty in making commitments to relationships with peers, adults and school
- Disengaging with current school work/activities
- Anticipating impact of changes.

After transition

- Emotionally challenging – managing different feelings/behaviour
- Changes to family unit and care structure and routine
- Mental health and wellbeing issues of returning Service parent(s)
- Possible bereavement or injury of parent(s)
- Re-establishing relationships
- Loss of identity – for any member of the Service family.

Challenges/barriers schools face in supporting Service children

"4.1 When asked what are the three most beneficial types of support the school offer to their Service children, the top answers from primary and secondary schools included: Tailored pastoral support, Dedicated member of staff to support Service children, Peer to peer support/mentoring."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

"We have an exit pack that people are welcome to have a look at and it helps children to think about the next steps they are going to take and how they can be supported."

MOD Keyworker, Prendergast Community School

"The Armed Forces are traditionally mobile and with that the family has to be mobile too. The Service child through their short periods at schools could move from school to school on a very regular basis and this could have an impact on the child. They can become anxious and their performance can dip – not every child, but it can happen."

Unit Welfare Officer, Army Welfare Services

Family

- Understanding the experiences of Service families
- Parent engagement – particularly when moving-on date is known
- Additional administration time to support transfer of information on Service child between schools
- Additional support time to support family/child during school move (in or out)
- Language and culture
- Sharing of previous family history and information – being aware they are a Service family
- Loss of social networks – building new ones
- Integration into new school environment and community
- Supporting emotional wellbeing needs of a Service child and Service family
- Supporting Service child during possible family break up (divorce/separation) – possible financial implications and/or further school moves.

Learning readiness

- Induction support and programme
- Mental health and wellbeing support where needed

- Overcome emotional needs/difficulties to enable them to be ready to learn
- Difficulty in identifying ALN – due to mobility and potential short period that the Service child is at a school
- Reacting swiftly to support new arrivals
- Ensuring staff are aware of Service child's possible needs and support required
- Term-time absence – being flexible with leave due to deployment and other circumstances
- Transition of previous documents and education history.

Progress and attainment

- Awareness of previous curriculum(s) – in order to support potential gaps in learning or repeating curriculum content
- Identifying gaps in learning/curriculum needs/extension in learning
- Supporting impact of behavioral challenges
- Transition of previous documents and education history – particularly when moving between countries
- Ensuring staff embrace the skills and talents of Service children and the experiences they bring with them to the school
- Supporting Service children learning Welsh for the first time.

Support and resources

See the [Education in Wales](#) section of this toolkit for information on the curriculum in Wales, comparisons between other curriculums, ALN information and much more.

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including



SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to understanding Service children's experiences include:

- Checklist: School actions and activities
- Template: School website – Armed Forces Covenant commitments
- Template: School website – Service children information
- Template: Letter to parents
- Template: School welcome pack
- Checklist: Transition in and out of school
- Examples questions: To ask a new Service child
- Presentation: Armed Forces and experiences of Service children
- Poster: Armed Forces community in the school
- Template: Promoting youth provision
- Guidance: Service children pupil voice
- Template: Parent/carer questionnaire
- Advice: Recommended resources
- Template: Moving school booklet (for Service children)
- Template: Service children school transfer information.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).

SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to understanding Service children's experiences include:

- Brecon High School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges
- Priory CIW Primary School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges
- Ysgol Plascrug (Ceredigion) – Tailored pastoral support for Service children
- YEP Service Children's Champion (Rhondda Cynon Taf) – Positive impact of youth provision
- Mount Street Infants School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges
- Prendergast Primary School (Pembrokeshire) – Supporting Service children school transition.

SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)



“ There is more countryside in Wales.

“ I like Welsh cakes.



Education in Wales



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Education

"Our national mission is to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and confidence."

[Kirsty Williams AM, Welsh Government Minister for Education](#)

"I've been to seven different schools. I've not stayed put in one school long enough. I think it is a big impact because you've just got to find time to make friends and settle in. It's pretty hard but because you've done it lots you get used to it."

Shana, Service child

"There are vastly differing needs ... it might be that an MOD student is a more able pupil and because they have moved many times, they might not have been stretched. Similarly they may have had Special Educational Needs difficulties and these needs may have been missed because they have moved schools."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School



The Welsh curriculum wants children to enjoy learning and develop skills, knowledge and emotional resilience. By the age of 16, they should be confident, ethical individuals who play an active part in their community and society. They should be prepared to thrive in the new world of work.

All schools play a key role in promoting a commitment to an education for all, and this can be achieved through a whole-school approach that includes:

- Recognition of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- High-quality learning and teaching experiences
- A clear ethos and vision for all learners
- Embedding this ethos across the school community
- Ensuring everyone is aware of their role and responsibilities
- Working in partnership with external agencies and organisations
- School planning and decision-making
- Commitment through policies and practice
- Respectful relationships between teachers and learners
- Reflection and self-evaluation arrangements
- A professional learning offer and a commitment to staff wellbeing
- Pupil voice and school council opportunities
- School environment practices.

School policies that may support this practice could include:

- Curriculum
- Teaching and learning
- Assessment
- Behaviour and anti-bullying
- Safeguarding and child protection.

All children, including Service children, may experience difficulties at some point in their life. Service children have challenges that a Service lifestyle brings, including their mobility and the effects of parent deployment and separation. Every child is an individual and manages situations in different ways.

Further information on Service children's and families' lifestyles and their experiences and challenges can be found in the [Armed Forces in Wales](#) and [Service children's experiences](#) sections of this toolkit.

**“
My new school was
a small school, which
I preferred as it's
easier to get to know
people.**



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

“Article 28: Your right to learn and go to school. Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children’s dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.”

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

“Article 29: Your right to become the best that you can be. Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.”

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

Education settings in Wales work hard to enable children to realise their rights, and schools should make the link between their work and the rights of the child explicit when they are establishing a clear framework and rationale for their work. The UNCRC provides a strong foundation of values for a school community, which are recognised in international law. Policy and legislation on children in Wales is underpinned by the UNCRC. A “Children’s Rights Approach” is consistent with these duties and will help educational settings meet their statutory duties.

The principles of a Children’s Rights Approach are:

- Embedding children’s rights
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Empowering children
- Participation
- Accountability.

Schools in Wales should place the UNCRC at the core of every child’s experience of education and at the core of school planning, teaching, decision-making, policies and practice.

For further information, visit www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/

Cymru Well Wales: Adverse childhood experiences

“Article 19: You should not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe.”

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences that occur before the age of 18 and are remembered throughout adulthood. These experiences can have a negative impact on a child’s experiences in education. ACEs range from suffering verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, alcohol abuse, parental separation or drug abuse is present.

Evidence shows children who experience stressful and poor-quality childhoods are more likely to develop health-harming and anti-social behaviours, more likely to perform poorly in school, more likely to be involved in crime and ultimately less likely to be a productive member of society.

Cymru Well Wales has committed to addressing ACEs and their impact in Wales by; making all public services in Wales able to respond effectively to prevent and mitigate the harms from ACEs, and by building protective factors and resilience in the population to cope with ACEs that cannot be prevented.

For further information, visit www.wales.nhs.uk

Education in Wales

"4.6 70.5% of schools indicated they would be interested in working collaboratively with other schools to support their Service children."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

New curriculum for Wales (2022)

The curriculum in Wales is currently defined by Part 7 of the Education Act 2002. The phased introduction of the new curriculum will take place over the next few years, with all schools following the new curriculum by 2022. It will apply to all Key Stages – from 3 to 16 years old.

The curriculum includes all the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of the four purposes of the curriculum, which are to develop children and young people as:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Curriculum for Wales 2022 is designed to help all learners realise these four purposes. Each purpose is more than a headline; it is also described in terms of key characteristics. In their entirety they should underpin all teaching and learning in Wales.

For further information, visit www.gov.wales/

Estyn

The purpose of [Estyn](#) is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales.

"Children of Service families" are included under section 1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups in the [Guidance handbook for the inspection of local government education services](#). This helps to raise awareness of Service children in schools and local authorities; and encourages schools to monitor their progress and outcomes of this particular group of learners.





Education comparison

"New schools ... I would say, 'Think of it as an experience.' You can't do wrong, you can't do bad knowing more people. It's not the end of the world moving away from people – it's a new beginning. I know people all over the world because I just went, 'Cool, hi, what's your name?'"

Ieuan, Service child

Ministry of Defence (MOD) Schools

MOD Schools are part of the [Directorate Children and Young People \(DCYP\)](#). They provide education to the dependent children of Service personnel and MOD entitled civilians, entitled contractors and fee payers. MOD Schools are predominantly overseas, with one school in Scotland that follows the Scottish curriculum and qualification framework. The diverse locations of MOD Schools and the dedication of their staff ensure pupils engage in a rich and fulfilling curriculum whilst overseas. MOD Schools mirror the English education system, including Ofsted inspections, assessments and examinations. Some of these locations are Brunei and Cyprus.

All children 0-18 require educational clearance prior to overseas postings. This includes postings to MOD Schools and Non-MOD School areas. Schools will be asked by DCYP to complete an Education Overseas Supportability (EOS) Form for any Service children that are due to move abroad as part of their parents posting. Without an EOS the posting will not be able to proceed and may result in the family being separated from the serving person for a period of time.

Differences in curriculums

	Wales	England	Scotland
Foundation phase	<p>Moving to new statutory curriculum by 2022</p> <p>hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/a-guide-to-curriculum-for-wales-2022/</p>	<p>There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in Early Years settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and language • Physical development • Personal, social and emotional development. • Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. <p>The specific areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the world • Expressive arts and design. <p>www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf</p>	<p>There are eight curriculum areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive arts • Health and wellbeing • Languages (including English, Gaidhlig, Gaelic learners and modern languages) • Mathematics • Religious and moral education • Sciences • Social studies • Technologies. <p>Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are recognised as being particularly important.</p> <p>www.gov.scot/publications/early-years-framework/pages/1/</p>

Foundation Phase (Wales)/Key Stage 1	As above	<p>Compulsory National Curriculum subjects at primary school are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Mathematics • Science • Design and Technology • History • Geography • Art and Design • Music • Physical Education (PE), including swimming • Computing. <p>Schools must provide Religious Education (RE) but parents can ask for their children to be taken out of the whole lesson or part of it. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) will become statutory in all schools from September 2020.</p> <p>Schools often also teach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) • Citizenship • Modern foreign languages. <p>assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335186/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_English_220714.pdf</p>	<p>As above.</p> <p>Follow this link for more information: www.education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/curriculum-areas</p>
Key Stage 2	As above	<p>Same as Key Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient or modern foreign languages (at Key Stage 2). 	As above
Key Stage 3 and 4	<p>Curriculum for Wales 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 7 statutory from 2022 • Phasing in across over year groups from 2023. <p>hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/a-guide-to-curriculum-for-wales-2022/</p>	<p>Core subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Mathematics • Science. <p>Foundation subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art and Design • Citizenship • Computing • Design and Technology • Languages • Geography • History • Music • PE. <p>All schools are also required to teach RE at all Key Stages and provide sex and relationship education.</p> <p>assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381754/SECONDARY_national_curriculum.pdf</p>	<p>Up to age 14 – as above.</p> <p>The Senior Phase curriculum, from S4 to S6 (from around ages 15 to 18), follows a young person's broad general education, building firmly on the experiences and outcomes they will have experienced and achieved to the end of S3.</p> <p>It enables them to extend and deepen their learning and continue to develop skills for learning, life and work, through qualifications and through a range of opportunities for personal development (for example, work experience or volunteering).</p>

Differences in school year groups

Age in school year		Wales	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland
		Curriculum for Wales 2022	National Curriculum	Northern Ireland Curriculum	Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)
4-5	Foundation Phase	Reception	Reception Foundation Stage	P1	Nursery/Early Level
5-6		Year 1	Year 1 Key Stage 1	P2	P1 (Early Level)
6-7		Year 2	Year 2 Key Stage 1	P3	P2 (First Level)
7-8	Key Stage 2	Year 3	Year 3 Key Stage 2	P4	P3 (First Level)
8-9		Year 4	Year 4 Key Stage 2	P5	P4 (First Level)
9-10		Year 5	Year 5 Key Stage 2	P6	P5 (Second Level)
10-11		Year 6	Year 6 Key Stage 2	P7	P6 (Second Level)
					P7 (Second Level)
Secondary +					
11-12	Key Stage 3	Year 7	Year 7 Key Stage 3	P8	S1 (Third/Fourth Level)
12-13		Year 8	Year 8 Key Stage 3	P9	S2 (Third/Fourth Level)
13-14		Year 9	Year 9 Key Stage 3	P10	S3 (Third/Fourth Level)
14-15	Key Stage 4	Year 10	Year 10 Key Stage 4	P11	S4 (Senior Phase) Pupils are able to leave in this year, from the age of 15 and a half
15-16		Year 11	Year 11 Key Stage 4	P12	
A-Levels and SCE Highers – not compulsory					
16-17	Post-16	Year 12	Year 12	P13	S5 (Senior Phase)
17-18		Year 13	Year 13	P14	S6 (Senior Phase)



Welsh language in schools

"When I first came here, I was nervous about Welsh and I didn't know what to say."

Prasna, Service child

"We look at their gaps and provide bespoke interventions."

MOD Keyworker, Prendergast Community School

"4.1 During discussions about their experiences of living in Wales, 16% made negative comments and 8% made positive comments about learning Welsh. The Service children at the Welsh-medium school that took part in the discussion groups didn't make positive or negative comments about learning Welsh."

[Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#)

"The Welsh language is one of the treasures of Wales. It is part of what defines us as people and as a nation. Our ambition as Welsh Government is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using Welsh reach a million by 2050. This is certainly a challenging ambition, but a challenge we believe is worthwhile and necessary if we are to secure the vitality of the language for future generations."

[Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister, and Alun Davies AM, former Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language](#)

"Learners for whom English or Welsh is an additional language (EAL/WAL) have different challenges in relation to language and literacy acquisition. EAL/WAL learners may be accessing English/Welsh for the first time and will, therefore, require additional focused support to help them acquire appropriate literacy skills. Material should be provided that is appropriate to their ability, previous education and experience, and which extends their language development. The year-by-year nature of the expectation statements allows schools and settings to ensure that they are incorporating the appropriate skills into their curriculum delivery."

Project Manager, SSCE Cymru

"3.2 When asked what are the three most significant challenges they face in supporting their Service children, over 25% of secondary schools indicated: Supporting Service children learning Welsh for the first time."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

The Welsh Government is committed to meeting the educational needs of all children and young people in Wales so they can reach their full potential. The study of Welsh or Welsh Second Language is a statutory element of the National Curriculum for Wales, for all learners to the age of 16. For learners at Key Stage 4, Welsh or Welsh Second Language is part of each individual's learning pathway.

Research shows that speaking more than one language can boost a child in many ways.

Being bilingual could:

- Make it easier to learn other languages, and introduce children to different cultures and traditions
- Have a positive effect on the brain
- Be a distinct advantage when looking for work, integrating into the local community and supporting the local economy.

Disapplying Service children for Welsh exams

“Article 3: Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child.”

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Although study of Welsh or Welsh Second Language is compulsory to the end of Key Stage 4, there is no requirement on schools to enter a learner for a particular qualification. That is for individual schools to decide, taking into account the best interests of learners. Irrespective of whether or not an examination is undertaken, schools must ensure that learners have access to the whole curriculum programme of study for whichever course is being followed. This is a mandatory requirement.

Only in very rare circumstances might there be a need for temporary disapplication of learners from any part of the National Curriculum. The decision to disapply a pupil from part of the National Curriculum can only be made by a headteacher, reviewing the need to disapply on an individual basis and taking all factors into consideration.

For learners working significantly below the expected levels at any Key Stage, schools should use the needs of the learner as a starting point and adapt the programmes of study accordingly. Sufficient flexibility exists within the curriculum to meet the needs of learners without the need for disapplication. In exceptional cases, individual learners may be disapplied, usually on a temporary basis, but group or large-scale disapplication's should not be used.

For further information relating to disapplication and the circumstances in which this can be applied, see “Temporary disapplication” in Appendix E (page 20) of the [Statutory assessment arrangements for the Foundation Phase and end of Key Stages 2 and 3](#).

“
*I use the worry jar
and put my worries in
it.*”



Term-time absence policy

When Service personnel return from deployment, they are usually given periods of leave to spend time with their families, called Rest and Recovery (R&R). These periods of leave are dictated by their deployments and will often occur in term-time.

Headteachers do have a discretionary power to authorise leave for a family holiday during term-time where parents seek permission.

If a school does not already have a term-time absence policy that includes circumstances for Service children and their families, they 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 commitments.

A headteacher should take into account the time of year of the proposed trip, length and purpose of the holiday, impact on continuity of learning, circumstances of the family and wishes of parents as well as the overall attendance pattern of the child.

Some schools have developed systems where Service personnel provide a letter from their unit with confirmation of their need to be absent. The headteacher would not authorise term-time absence without confirmation.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 received Royal Assent in January 2018. The Act is accompanied by the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code.

The new ALN system will commence, on a phased basis, from September 2021. The new Code and regulations will be laid before the National Assembly for approval in 2020.

The Draft Mandatory Code December 2018

The ALN Code will become statutory guidance for education providers and settings in Wales, including schools and further education institutes and also key partners in health and social services. Local-authority-funded, non-maintained providers of nursery education will also be required to have regard to relevant guidance in the ALN Code. Key sections of it include:

- **Chapter 5** – Duty to keep additional learning provision under review: local authorities will have to consider the particular needs of any Service communities within their boundaries when providing or planning Additional Learning Provision (ALP) for Service children and young people with ALN.
- **Chapter 23** – Children and young people in specific circumstances: this centres around “Children and young people of Service Personnel”.

Directorate Children and Young People (DCYP)

The [Children's Education Advisory Service \(CEAS\)](#) within the DCYP provides advice and guidance to Service parents, education establishments and local authorities on education issues relating to Service children and young people, including in respect of ALN.

As the resources available overseas are different from those in the UK, MOD services complete an MOD Assessment of Supportability Overseas for all Service children with complex needs before an overseas posting is agreed.

Children and young people whose parent(s) are Service personnel may face difficulties that are unique to the nature of their parents employment. These needs may arise from:

- Service-induced mobility – Service personnel may relocate more often than the rest of the population and, sometimes, at short notice. Such transitions need to be well managed to avoid Service children with ALN experiencing delays in having their needs identified and met.
- The fact that the deployment of serving parents to operational arenas, whilst not necessarily constituting ALN, may result in a Service child or young person experiencing anxiety, dips in educational performance and/or emotional difficulties. Children and young people may also be affected similarly by siblings' deployment.

Local authorities should take account of the particular needs of any Service communities within their boundaries when providing or planning ALP for Service children and young people with ALN (see Chapter 5 of the ALN Code for further guidance on keeping ALP under review).

In respect of Service children and young people, the school, further education institute or local authority responsible for deciding upon ALN and preparing and/or maintaining an Individual Development Plan (IDP) should:

- Consider any relevant Service-related issues, such as Service-induced mobility
- Consider seeking advice from the CEAS, and use all relevant evidence in respect of the child or young person – including any EHC plans (England), statements (Northern Ireland), Coordinated Support Plans (Scotland) and the Service Children's Assessment of Need (SCAN) completed for them by MOD Schools – when making decisions about ALN, preparing or maintaining an IDP and making ALP for the child or young person.

“ Being with people who also understood how I am feeling helps.”



gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-transformation-programme

Registration with Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

Schools are asked to encourage Service families to register with the [CEAS](#) any of their children with ALN if those children are at School Action Plus or beyond. The purpose of registration is to enable the CEAS to offer information, advice and support to Service families with any issue relating to their needs.

For contact details, see the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#).



Support and resources

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.




SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to education in Wales include:

- Checklist: School actions and activities
- Template: School website – Service children information
- Template: School welcome pack
- Checklist: Transition in and out of school
- Example questions: To ask a new Service child
- Guidance: Service children pupil voice
- Template: Parent/carer questionnaire
- Advice: Recommended resources
- Template: Moving school booklet (for Service Children)
- Template: Service children school transfer information.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).



SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to education in Wales include:

- Ysgol Y Tywyn (Isle of Anglesey) – Service children learning Welsh
- HMF Education Support Officer (Newport & Monmouthshire) – Effective use of data to support Service children
- Kymin View Primary School (Monmouthshire) – School collaboration to support Service children
- Llantwit Major High School (Vale of Glamorgan) – Effective use of funding to support Service children
- Mount Street Infants School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges.



SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)

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Service children data and school admissions





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Service children data in Wales

Why collect data on Service children?

"After many years of being near an MOD base, we have found that it has been really useful to be in a position to identify our Service children, and subsequently to be able to collect data about this target group. They have different needs to our other target groups but the data allows us to target support, monitor progress, refine provision and apply for grant funding for better provision across the cluster."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School

"Accurate, robust and consistent data collection is key to understanding the experiences and educational journeys of Service children. It plays a vital role in ensuring equity in access, participation and support through all phases of education. It also helps to work towards a consistent experience for Service children in Wales, be they in Cardiff or Corwen, Llangefni or Llanelli."

Dr Michael Hall, [SCiP Alliance](#)

"To use a popular phrase in the charity sector, 'No numbers without stories, no stories without numbers'. As Armed Forces Families Federations, we hear the stories of Service children, young people and families on a daily basis. These stories help us to understand their 'lived experience' and to identify themes and issues that may need to be addressed. In order to get a rounded picture and to target the key areas, data is needed. Without numbers, it is difficult to analyse and understand the needs of children and young people, and to ensure that effective support and services are commissioned. Gaps, fragmentation and inconsistencies create barriers to change. Service children and young people are often an invisible group (particularly those who are young carers) and they may face additional challenges as a result of their parent(s) service. We need data to help agencies to provide the right support and to ensure that resources are targeted effectively."

[Naval Families Federation, Army Families Federation \(AFF\), RAF Families Federation](#)

"2.1. 35 schools indicated a total of 334 Service children that arrived mid-year during the 2018/19 academic year. 2.2. 19 schools indicated a total of 206 Service children that left mid-year during the 2018/19 academic year. This presents challenges to schools in finding the time and resources to support a new learner."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

"4.5 15% of schools indicated they monitor the academic progress of Service children against non-Service children. This is significantly higher, at 35%, when looking at just the four key local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Vale of Glamorgan)."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

In the [Welsh Government Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report 2019](#), Kirsty Williams AM, Minister for Education, made the commitment to collect data on Service children in Wales. SSCE Cymru and the Directorate Children and Young People (DCYP) are supporting the Welsh Government in implementing this change.

SSCE Cymru data collection activity (2019)

"Over a third of the schools that completed the [SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\)](#) indicate they did not know how many Service children they had enrolled."

SSCE Cymru

SSCE Cymru wrote to all schools in Wales (just over 1,500), providing a template letter to be sent to parents to identify Service children in schools. Over a third of the schools replied to SSCE Cymru, identifying over 2,000 Service children in just under 400 schools.

The SSCE Cymru definition of a Service child is:

A person whose parent, or primary carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life.

For the most up-to-date record of this data, click [here](#).



"I read Harry Potter with my mummy and I can't read with her when she goes away."

Supporting Service children in education Cymru: A study of data and support provision in Wales (2015)

Commissioned by SSCE Cymru and conducted by the Data Unit Wales, this report involved interviews with schools across Wales and found that there was very little data available, identifying a need for more information and guidance to enable schools to collect data and access support.

What the report did identify, based on the most recent census data (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 Household Reference Person (HRP) indicated that they were in the Armed Forces. This does not include information where a non-HRP is in the Armed Forces, information on veterans/ex-Service personnel or Reservists, or where families with Service children do not live at the same address.

For the full data study report click [here](#).

School admissions



Service children in the Welsh Government School Admissions Code

All 22 local authorities in Wales are required to follow the guidance provided in the School Admissions Code which can be accessed [here](#).

There are four places in the code that refer to Service children:

Section of code	On page...	Content	What this means for LA admissions
Catchment areas	16	2.54 "For children of UK Service personnel, admission authorities must treat a family moving to their area as meeting the residency criteria for the relevant school catchment area once proof of the posting has been provided, even if no address is currently established in that area."	LAs must accept school application forms from Service families that do not currently live in the catchment area.

Infant class size limit	27-28	<p>3.48 “Where certain types of children (‘excepted pupils’) cannot be provided with education at the school in another infant class in which the limit is not exceeded without relevant measures being taken which would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources, those children are not to be counted for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the limit of 30 pupils is exceeded. Excepted children are:</p> <p>6. Children of Armed Forces personnel who are admitted outside the normal admission round.”</p>	<p>Children of Armed Forces personnel that are to be admitted to an infant class outside of the normal admissions round (mid-year) are classed as an “excepted pupil”, meaning LAs can exceed the 30-pupil limit.</p>
Children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats)	31	<p>3.66 “Admission authorities must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the needs of the children of these families are taken into account • Allocate a school place in advance, if the applicant would meet the criteria when they move to their destination • Invite a Service representative or representatives of other significant concentrations of Crown Servants to join the admission forum • Accept a Unit postal address for applications from Service personnel in the absence of a new home postal address.” <p>3.67 “Admission authorities must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve places for blocks of these children, or • Refuse a place to such a child because the family does not currently live in the LA area.” 	
Annex D: Admission forums	41	<p>D.10 “The core membership of each forum may ask the LA to appoint anyone it considers appropriate to represent significant interests in the local community. For instance, in areas where there is a significant concentration of Service personnel the forum must invite a UK Service representative and where appropriate, representatives from faith groups not already represented, and minority ethnic groups should be appointed.”</p>	<p>LAs with a significant Armed Forces community should invite a Service representative to join their admissions forum. LAs with a significant Armed Forces community include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isle of Anglesey • Pembrokeshire • Powys • Vale of Glamorgan.

Data transfer of school records

“3.2 When asked what are the three most significant challenges they face in supporting their Service children, over 33% of secondary schools indicated: Gaining information on a Service child from a previous school.”

SSCE Cymru school survey (2019) findings

Without high-quality information about the attainment and progress of the pupil at their previous school, it is very difficult for a receiving school to quickly meet the pupil’s needs and a range of information is needed to ensure continuity. Therefore, SSCE Cymru recommends that schools do what they can to collaborate with other schools in order to improve information transfer and develop corporate protocols and guidance.

The provision in the [Pupil Information Regulations](#) for securely transferring educational records as a pupil changes schools apply to all schools throughout the UK and encompass transfers from maintained schools to academies, free schools and independent schools.

Schools are required to keep and update pupils’ curricular and educational records and ensure that parents can have access to their children’s records. Schools must also transfer a pupil’s educational record as the child changes schools, and the regulations specify the information which must be transferred securely using the Department for Education’s [school-2-school](#) system and common transfer file. This must be done within 15 school days of a pupil ceasing to be registered at the old school.

SSCE Cymru recommends that schools encourage new pupils to bring work from their previous school and use this information to make judgements on early progress and quick assessments to establish baselines and determine learning priorities.

Schools and parents can use the [SSCE Cymru Tools](#) to assist with a smooth transition for Service children.



**“
I like hearing his
stories about his
journeys.”**



Support and resources

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.




SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to Service children data and school admissions include:

- Checklist: School actions and activities
- Template: School website – Service children information
- Template: Letter to parents
- Template: School welcome pack
- Checklist: Transition in and out of school
- Example questions: To ask a new Service child
- Presentation: Armed Forces and experiences of Service children
- Template: Moving school booklet (for Service children)
- Template: Service children school transfer information.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).



SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to Service children data and school admissions include:

- Brecon High School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges
- HMF Education Support Officer (Newport & Monmouthshire) – Effective use of data to support Service children
- Crickhowell High School (Powys) – Supporting Service children mental health and wellbeing needs
- Mount Street Infants School (Powys) – Understanding Service children experiences and challenges
- Priory CIW Primary School (Powys) – Monitoring and tracking Service children.



SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)



Mental health and wellbeing



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Mental health and wellbeing

"7.1 When asked what resources they would find beneficial in helping them to support their Service children, 54% of schools indicated they would like information on mental health and wellbeing support for Service children."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

"Our school places a high priority on wellbeing. As such, our MOD pupils are a key group of students who may at sometimes in their life with us have differing needs that need more individualised provision."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School

"Any parent would agree that if they are away from their child from a long period of time, we need to put things in place to make it easier for the child to adapt and really to get through that particular moment in their life."

Unit Welfare Officer, Army Welfare Services



What is mental health and wellbeing?

"Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

[World Health Organisation](#)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

"Article 6: You have the right to life and to grow up to be healthy."

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

The Children's Rights Approach to education will safeguard the long-term needs of children and young people and will help develop healthy and confident individuals who can learn and thrive. Implementing this approach also provides meaningful opportunities for children and young people to participate as ethical, informed citizens in their communities.

The principles of a Children's Rights Approach are:

- Embedding children's rights
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Empowering children
- Participation
- Accountability.

All schools play a key role in promoting a commitment to positive mental health and wellbeing for their school community, and this can be achieved through a whole school approach. Schools in Wales should place the UNCRC at the core of every child's experience of education and at the core of school planning, teaching, decision-making, policies and practice.

For further information, visit www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/



Interventions and support

"As a school we are able to provide a face that says we focus on wellbeing and we care about every student in our school. We have put in place strategies for Forces families, we have a link person, they know who they can contact, we put out regular contact to our families through our MOD parent forum, our pupils have ambassadors' meetings and they can tell their parents about what they are doing. We have bespoke provision, leadership programmes and clubs they have asked to run at lunchtime to help build social skills and we are able to address needs they raise with us – particularly as we receive benefit from the MOD funding money."

Unit Welfare Officer, Army Welfare Services

"4.2 41% of schools indicated they have put specific interventions in place to support a Service child with specific needs. This is significantly higher, at 66%, when looking at just the four key local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan)."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

Benefits of early interventions and support for mental health and wellbeing include:

- Children can learn strategies that work for them, so that they can self-regulate their behaviour, developing life-long skills
- Children have their individual needs met, helping them to develop their strengths, emotional resilience and independence
- Children become better engaged with their learning and can access more of the curriculum
- Staff in schools have increased understanding, confidence and knowledge – and are therefore better equipped to work with children that may need support with mental health and wellbeing difficulties
- They support the positive relationships and partnership working between schools, families and children, resulting in a consistent approach to behaviour at home and school.

Local authority wellbeing provision

“4.4 7% of schools indicated they had encountered issues in meeting prioritization thresholds for mental health and wellbeing support for Service child. This is higher, at 11%, when looking at just the four key LAs (Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan).”

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

Local authorities

Visit local authority websites for details on the local provision in the following areas:

- Independent counselling services – including school- and community-based services
- Education welfare
- Education psychology
- Behaviour support
- Family Information Services – they provide free, impartial help, support and advice on a range of family issues, including: childcare and help with its cost, healthcare, education and training, leisure services and finances
- Social services
- Youth services – they offer support/advocacy/preventative/early intervention services for Service young people aged 11–25. See the [Youth provision](#) section of this toolkit for further information.

University health boards

There are seven health boards covering all 22 local authorities in Wales.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has responded to feedback from its Armed Forces Forum colleagues to enhance the offer of priority healthcare for Service children. It has agreed to fast-track referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for the children of Armed Forces families. This supports the board’s continued commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. All referrals into paediatric services are screened to identify whether the referral is a child from an Armed Forces family.

Find contact details below in the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#).

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Support (CAMHS)

CAMHS provides a range of interventions and treatments, which include consultation, psychiatric assessment, developmental assessment, family therapy, individual therapy, behavioural therapy, medication and group work. It supports children aged up to 17.

If members of a CAMHS team are interested in having a better understanding of the experiences of Service children, to assist them in their support, they can visit www.SSCECymru.co.uk or contact SSCE@wlga.gov.uk.

As part of the Armed Forces Covenant commitments, any time that is accrued on NHS waiting lists in one location should be considered when moving to a new area. It is advisable to get copies of any supporting medical evidence and treatment to pass onto the new healthcare professional/practitioner.

For more information visit

www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/

School wellbeing provision

The following are strategies and support ideas for schools through either a whole-school approach, whole-class/group learning activities, training and courses for support with an additional adult or extra resources. Many of these strategies are currently being used in schools with Service children in Wales.

See the [Case studies](#) section for good practice examples of mental health and wellbeing provision.

UNCRC award

A rights-respecting school, with teaching and learning about, through and for rights, is a methodology for practically implementing the UNCRC award in every aspect of school life.

For more information, visit

- [UNICEF UNCRC - summary](#)
- [UNCRC - Teaching and learning resources](#)
- [Childrens Commisioner of Wales - resources](#)



“When I am angry I do mindfulness and meditation.”

Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)

This curriculum resource aims to develop the underpinning qualities and skills that help promote positive behaviour and effective learning. It focuses on five social and emotional aspects of learning:

- Self-awareness
- Managing feelings
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social skills.

The materials help children develop skills such as understanding another's point of view, working in a group, sticking at things when they get difficult, resolving conflict and managing worries. They build on effective work already in place in the many primary schools that pay systematic attention to the social and emotional aspects of learning through a whole-school ethos. Initiatives include Circle Time or buddy schemes, and the taught Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship curriculum.

Many resources are now only available to download at webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110812101121/http://nsonline.org.uk/node/87009

Heads Together

Launched in August 2019, this mental health initiative is spearheaded by the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. It combines a campaign to tackle stigma and change the conversation on mental health with fundraising for a series of innovative new mental health services.

www.headstogether.org.uk/



Mentally healthy schools

"One in ten children will experience a mental health difficulty at least once before age 11, and many adults with lifetime mental health issues can trace their symptoms back to childhood. We also know that many children can wait up to ten years before effective diagnosis or treatment. Mental health support in schools can make a significant difference in a person's life, but teachers are already stretched and with so many resources available, it can be difficult to know where to start."

Part of the Heads Together initiative, Mentally Healthy Schools brings together quality-assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing. Its aim is to increase staff awareness, knowledge and confidence to help support pupils.

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/about

For further information and resources, see the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#).

Independent counselling services

In Wales counselling is a universal provision for 11- to 18-year-olds and Year Six pupils that 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.

www.gov.wales/independent-counselling-services-guidance-local-authorities

Counselling directory

Set up by a team who know how difficult it can be to find the support and information people need, Counselling Directory was launched in 2005 and continues to work closely with counsellors, psychotherapists and visitors to ensure they provide the very best service. Counselling Directory has over 10,000 qualified counsellors listed.

www.counselling-directory.org.uk/

Little Troopers wellbeing course

The first of its kind, this course is designed to encourage children in the Armed Forces community to explore the unique challenges they experience whilst their parents are in the Armed Forces.

The comprehensive pack features all the resources needed for the child-friendly, interactive course, which is made up of seven sessions. Topics covered include how to cope with separation, deployment, house moves and living abroad, as well as the personal themes of belonging, identity and mindfulness. There is a cost for the pack and other resources are accessible on the website.



The course has been created by a group of experts, including a cognitive behavioural therapy specialist, creative arts psychotherapist and play therapists, alongside Little Troopers' founder: Army veteran and Service parent Louise Fetigan.

www.littletroopers.net/wellbeing-course/

For further information and resources, see the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#).



**“
I worry about
bullies.**”

Support and resources

"The exit pack has really helped with James. He is really positive about the move now. A few weeks ago he was quite nervous and really upset about leaving Wales. It's quite simple: a few sheets of paper with a few boxes – what do you think about yourself, what have you achieved, what do you want to do in the future. Very simple but very, very effective."

Parent of a Service child

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.



Organisations/programmes include:

- Change Step
- TGP Cymru
- Thrive
- Nurture
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)
- Lego therapy
- Blob Tree Communication Tools
- Circle time model.

SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to mental health and wellbeing support include:

Checklist: School actions and activities

Template: School website – Service children information

Template: School welcome pack

Checklist: Transition in and out of school

Examples questions: To ask a new Service child

Guidance: Service children pupil voice

Advice: Recommended resources

Template: Moving school booklet (for Service children)

Template: Service children school transfer information.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).

SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to mental health and wellbeing support include:

- Ysgol Plascrug (Ceredigion) – Tailored pastoral support for Service children
- Crickhowell High School (Powys) – Supporting Service children mental health and wellbeing needs
- Kymin View Primary School (Monmouthshire) – School collaboration to support Service children
- Llantwit Major High School (Vale of Glamorgan) – Effective use of funding to support Service children
- Brynmill Primary School (Swansea) – Tailored pastoral support for Service children.

SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)

Recommended reading

SSAFA: Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum (FANDF) guide

www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/disability-support/additional-needs-and-disability-support

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and Welsh Assembly Government: School-based counselling operating toolkit

www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/home/

BACP: School counselling for all

www.bacp.co.uk/media/2127/bacp-school-based-counselling-for-all-briefing-dec15.pdf

NHS: Five steps to mental wellbeing

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing



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Youth Provision





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What is Youth Provision?

"Article 15: Your right to meet with friends and join groups and clubs."

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

"Article 29: Your right to become the best that you can be."

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

"Article 31: Your right to relax and play."

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

Youth Support Services is a suite of services given its statutory basis in the Learning & Skills Act (2000) Section 123, which states:

The National Assembly for Wales may direct a local authority:

- a) to provide youth support services;
- b) to secure the provision of youth support services;
- c) to participate in the provision of youth support services.

In this section 'youth support services' means services which in the opinion of the National Assembly will encourage, enable or assist young persons (directly or indirectly):

- (a) to participate effectively in education or training,
- (b) to take advantage of opportunities for employment, or
- (c) to participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities.

In this section 'young persons' means persons who have attained the age of 11 but not the age of 26.

Types of youth provision could include:

- Accreditation
- After-school clubs
- Alternative curriculum
- Arts and drama
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- European and international
- Gender-specific
- Health and wellbeing
- Holiday schemes
- Information and marketing events
- Information technology
- Minority groups
- Participation/forum/councils
- Residential
- Sports and physical activity
- Provision which supports and enables Welsh language/culture.

Youth Service

The Youth Service in Wales refers to the framework by which youth work is delivered, and is done so mainly through the local authority and voluntary national and local youth organisations.

Youth work involves the education and development, both social and personal, of young people aged between 11 and 25 (particularly those aged 13- 19) and is delivered in a variety of settings, including youth clubs; residential settings; in information, advice and counselling centres; on the streets; in various public locations where young people meet; and through special issue-based projects, etc.

Youth work is a distinct profession with its own qualifications framework and National Occupational Standards (NOS). Professional youth workers working for local authorities, voluntary sector organisations, schools or further education institutions are required to register with the Education Workforce Council (EWC).

“ Excited to see friends who I had met before; they were in the school I was moving to.”



Why is youth provision important for Service children?

Many “social competencies” are learnt by seeing and doing, by experiencing and failing as well as succeeding – gaining the ability to cope with failure, to bounce back and learn from the experience. Youth work, as a complementary educational provision, provides not only opportunities for young people aged 11-25 to build and re-build aspects of their lives, to reflect and evaluate, but also learning programmes using different techniques in supportive environments, which offer an alternative for young people seeking to achieve their full potential.

The Youth Service and youth work offers all young people opportunities, regardless of their background, abilities and circumstances, to develop their personal and social wellbeing, to access formal, non-formal and informal education and improve their employability and life chances. Benefiting from trusting relationships with reliable adults, a positive peer group and the chance to learn from a range of new opportunities whilst focusing on people, not problems are essential processes in young people’s transition from young person to adult.

There is broad recognition that formal educational attainment is boosted significantly when teachers focus on wider personal and social development, for example, the success of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programmes, which applies to children and young people of all abilities.

“In the world of a Service young person where multiple schools and regular change of location is the norm, having access to good-quality youth support services is key to ensuring that Service young people have ‘the best start in life’ regardless of the unique life they may lead.”

Community Development Officer, RAF Valley

“Service children demonstrate a wealth of positive qualities, so it is imperative that they have the opportunity to make the most of these through their education. The distinctive features of Service life, including mobility and the emotional demands of service, mean that it is important for the education community to understand and engage with the lived experience of Service children in developing their practice.”

Dr Michael Hall, [SCiP Alliance](#)

“Youth work offers an opportunity to access education through a different approach, which is less formal than school or further education and is often [young-person-led]. It is based on a voluntary engagement with young people aged 11–25 and offers an access point to other services which may be identified during the relationship with a young person – youth workers know their communities well and are skilled brokers of/into other services via a less stigmatised approach.”

Lifelong Learning Policy Officer (Youth), [Welsh Local Government Association](#)

“Youth provision for Service children is important as it gives a quick, easy and friendly way of linking into their new surroundings when moving in and out of areas with their Service families. There is some continuity when accessing AWS services across the country which can offer support and friendship giving a sense of belonging which in turn can ease the transition of what can be a very stressful time.”

Community Support Development Worker, Army Welfare Service

“Youth work in Wales is based primarily on a voluntary relationship between young people and youth workers. It is a universal entitlement, open to all young people aged 11–25. The key purpose of youth work is to ‘enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential’ (Youth Work National Occupational Standards).”

Chief Executive, [Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services \(CWVYS\)](#)

Youth Provision in Wales

Wales National Youth Work Strategy

This strategy sets out a shared vision for the future of youth work in Wales. The high-level principles set out in this document have been co-developed with young people and the youth work sector. The strategy identifies a series of actions that will move us closer to the Welsh Government’s long-term goals and will be supported by an implementation plan.

www.gov.wales/youth-work-strategy-2019

Wales Principal Youth Officers Group (PYOG)

This professional learning community of serving officers, comprises the strategic leads for the Youth Service in the 22 local authorities in Wales.

www.wlga.gov.uk/principal-youth-officers-group-wales

Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF)

The framework’s implementation plan is the Welsh Government’s commitment to increase the engagement and progression of young people aged 16–25 into employment, education or training.

www.gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-implementation-plan

Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Service (CWVYS)

The representative body for the voluntary youth sector in Wales, the council is an independent charitable body that promotes quality youth work and represents the interests of its membership and the wider sector.

www.cwvys.org.uk/

Local Youth Provision

Along with national youth programmes, there are many organisations offering local schemes. See the local authority websites for information.

- [Blaenau-Gwent](#)
- [Bridgend](#)
- [Caerphilly](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Carmarthenshire](#)
- [Ceredigion](#)
- [Conwy](#)
- [Denbighshire](#)
- [Flintshire](#)
- [Gwynedd](#)
- [Isle of Anglesey](#)
- [Merthyr Tydfil](#)
- [Monmouthshire](#)
- [Neath Port Talbot](#)
- [Newport](#)
- [Pembrokeshire](#)
- [Powys](#)
- [Rhondda Cynon Taf](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [The Vale of Glamorgan](#)
- [Torfaen](#)
- [Wrexham](#)

Family Information Services

This organisation can provide information on a number of services in a local area, including youth provision.

www.fis.wales



Support and resources

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.




SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to youth provision include:

- Checklist: School actions and activities**
- Template: School website – Service children information**
- Template: Promoting youth provision**
- Guidance: Service children pupil voice.**
- Advice: Recommended resources**

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).



SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to youth provision include:

- **YEP Service Children's Champion (Rhondda Cynon Taf) – Positive impact of youth provision**
- **Community Development Officer (RAF Valley, Isle of Anglesey) – Service children activities and youth provision.**



SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

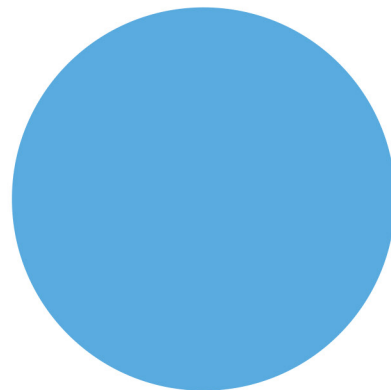
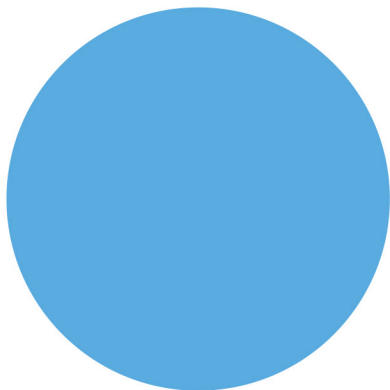
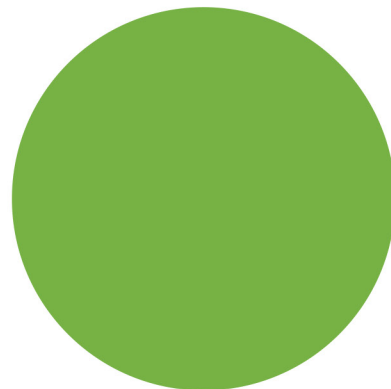
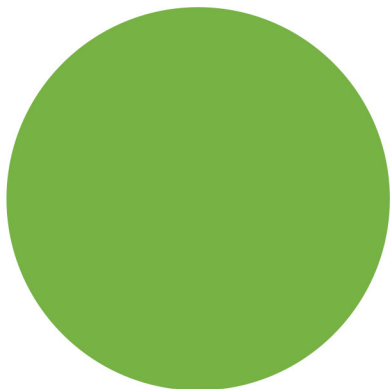
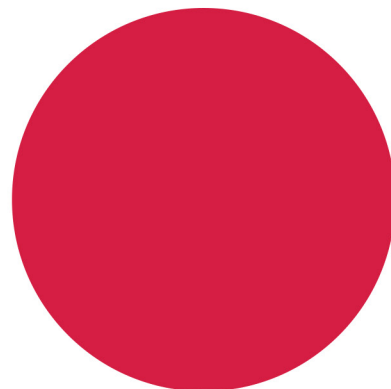
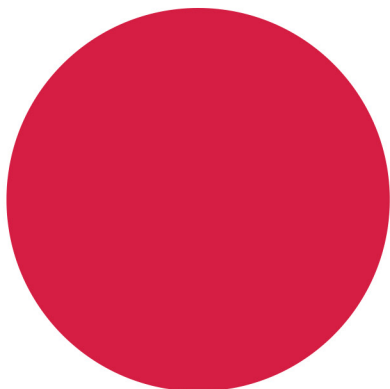
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[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)



Funding





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"We receive benefit from the MOD Education Support Fund, and it has helped us put in provision that might not have existed in our school."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School



Inclusive education funding 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. Funding is in place to support all learners to ensure they are not disadvantaged.



No Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in Wales

The Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in England grants £300 per Service child to help provide additional pastoral support during periods of parental deployment and reduce the disadvantages Service children may face.

There is currently no specific funding provided to support Service children in Wales as a group. Schools in Wales are only able to access funds in support of their Service children through the grant schemes indicated below.

"The Legion welcomed the introduction and renewal of the Supporting Service Children in Wales Fund, by the Welsh Government. Schools in Wales have been successful in securing funding and are delivering some excellent work as a result. However, the Legion maintains that the absence of a Service Pupil Premium (SPP) leaves the children of serving personnel in Wales disadvantaged compared to their peers elsewhere in the UK."

Campaigns Manager for Wales, [Royal British Legion](#)

The Welsh Government has committed to adding a question on Service children to the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC).

The MOD's Directorate of Children and Young People is currently reviewing the impact of the SPP in England. Its findings are due to be released in 2020.

Once this data and evidence has been collected, it will give SSCE Cymru the opportunity to investigate the implications and potential benefits of an SPP in Wales, in order to establish if further conversations on this topic should be considered.

"We have put in place for Forces families, a link person. They know who they can contact. We put out regular contact to our families and we are able to address needs they raise with us – particularly as we receive benefit from the MOD funding money."

Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major High School



Funding for schools and local authorities in Wales

"Schools in the four key local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Vale of Glamorgan) are 18% more likely to be accessing funding to support their Service children. This links to their greater awareness of Service children needs."

SSCE Cymru school survey (2019) findings

Schools across Wales are being very proactive and doing some great work to ensure that their Service children are not disadvantaged due to the impact of being part of an Armed Forces family. See the [SSCE Cymru website](#) for case studies and examples of good practice.

Sometimes, schools and local authorities need to access additional funds in order to continue to support Service children in the most effective way. SSCE Cymru recognised that it's not always easy identifying what funds are available, what grants are most relevant to a project and what is the best way to approach completing the application forms.

In 2019, there were a number of funding streams available for schools and local authorities to apply for, including:

Supporting Service Children in Education – Wales Fund:

- £250,000 to help schools in Wales understand the needs of Service children and equip them with the skills to cope with the challenges of an Armed Forces lifestyle throughout their schooling

MOD – Education Support Fund (ESF):

- £2m available to schools across the UK to assist schools and local authorities in overcoming the challenges they face as a result of significant mobility and/or deployment

Armed Forces Covenant Fund – Local Grants:

- Grants of up to £20,000 are available to support projects across the UK that either help integrate Armed Forces and civilian communities across the UK, and/or deliver valuable local services to the Armed Forces community

Armed Forces Education Trust

- Collective and Collaborative grants are available to help ease the difficulties that sometimes happen with the education of children of members of the Armed Forces as a result of their parents' service.

For the most up to date information on these funds, click [here](#).

SSCE Cymru funding guidance for schools and local authorities in Wales

"7.1 When asked what resources they would find beneficial in helping them to support their Service children, 58% of schools indicated they would like guidance on funding."

[SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

In 2019 a group of SSCE Cymru stakeholders have produced a document in order to provide schools and local authorities in Wales with a guide on the grant streams that were available that year, along with advice on completing the application forms. This advice comes from members of the funding panels, as well as schools and local authorities that have been successful in applying for the grants.

For further information on the guidance, click [here](#).

Before applying for any funding that is aimed at supporting Service children, schools and local authorities in Wales are advised to spend some time engaging with the SSCE Cymru resources, and contact SSCE@wlga.gov.uk to discuss their project/proposal.



" I like hearing his stories about his journeys."

" We get to facetime sometimes."



Support and resources

SSCE Cymru directory of support

See the [SSCE Cymru directory of support](#) for information on organisations and charities relevant to supporting Service children, including any useful resources identified by SSCE Cymru.




SSCE Cymru Tools

The SSCE Cymru Tools can be amended/tailored by a school to suit their needs. Tools particularly relevant to funding include:

Checklist: School actions and activities

Template: Letter to parents

Guidance: Service children – pupil voice

Template: Parent/carer questionnaire.

See the full list of SSCE Cymru Tools [here](#).



SSCE Cymru case studies

Good practice examples are available on the [SSCE Cymru](#) website. Case studies that are particularly relevant to funding include:

- **Ysgol Plascrug (Ceredigion) – Tailored pastoral support for Service children**
- **Llantwit Major High School (Vale of Glamorgan) – Effective use of funding to support Service children**
- **Gilwern Primary School (Monmouthshire) – Effective use of funding to support Service children**
- **Prendergast Primary School (Pembrokeshire) – Supporting Service children school transition**
- **Brynmill Primary School (Swansea) – Tailored pastoral support for Service children.**



SSCE Cymru resources

[Service children – funding guidance for schools in Wales](#)

[Films on Service children's experiences](#)

[Films on good practice examples in schools](#)

[Films on learning Welsh](#)

[SSCE Cymru newsletters](#)



Research and evidence





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One of the three key areas of the SSCE Cymru mission is **Research and evidence**:

Conduct and commission research into the experiences of Service children in education – to help identify where they experience additional challenges. Use the findings of research to frame the focuses and work of SSCE Cymru.

This impacts the other two key areas of the SSCE Cymru mission, which are to:

- Conduct activities and produce resources
- Impact policy and systems.



SSCE Cymru evidence

In 2019 SSCE Cymru conducted various activities to understand the needs of schools, Service children and their families. The views of schools and Service children have been instrumental in supporting and planning the new SSCE Cymru School Toolkit and resources.

School Survey

A total of 167 schools across Wales contributed details of their experiences in supporting Service children in education through an online survey.

Some of the key findings included:

Challenges Service children face

- The most significant challenge identified by primary schools was the emotional impact of separation
- The most significant challenges identified by secondary schools are making friends and missing curriculum content.

Challenges schools face in supporting Service children

- The most significant challenges identified by primary schools were supporting Service children with their emotional and wellbeing needs and understanding the Armed Forces lifestyle
- The most significant challenges identified by secondary schools were supporting Service children with the gaps in their learning and gaining information from a Service child's previous schools

- Schools from the four key local authorities that have obvious links to the Armed Forces community (Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Vale of Glamorgan) were more aware of the challenges their Service children face in education, in comparison to schools in all local authorities in Wales, yet they felt less equipped to support them.

School support for Service children

- The most beneficial types of support offered to Service children was tailored pastoral support and having a dedicated member of staff to support their Service children
- A substantial percentage of schools have put specific interventions in place to support their Service children or referred them for Mental Health and Wellbeing support. Many of these schools had issues meeting the prioritisation threshold, presenting disadvantage to Service children.

To see the full findings from the survey, visit [SSCE Cymru school survey \(2019\) findings](#)

Listening to our Service children

SSCE Cymru visited a number of schools across Wales to conduct discussion groups with Service children, to hear about their experiences and find out what support they would like. 115 Service children from 14 schools took part in the project.

Some of the key findings included:

- A number of discussion topics prompted responses and comments that were both positive and negative
- One consistent message that is seen throughout the discussions regarding mobility, is the importance of the support Service children receive from friends and family, and the negative view of leaving/being away from them
- Understandably, the majority of comments and views from Service children, regarding their experiences of deployment were overwhelmingly negative. A wide range of coping mechanisms are used by Service children to deal with their emotions and feelings during deployment
- Discussions about their experiences of living and being educated in Wales, prompted responses and comments that were both positive and negative but were primarily positive.

These findings will feed into the [SCiP Alliance's](#) *Year of the Service Child Voice* project.

To see the full findings from the discussion groups, visit [Listening to our Service children \(2020\) findings](#).



“ I didn't know the language when we lived abroad. ”

Service children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Report

Commissioned by SSCE Cymru and conducted by the University of South Wales and Arad Research, this research explores the challenges of identifying, assessing and implementing support for Service children with ALN in Wales. It examines the impact the new ALN code of practice may have for Service children living in and moving into Wales.

The report includes the following:

- Policy context
- Literature review
- Feedback from the SSCE Cymru Conference 2017
- Analysis of survey data from schools
- Key stakeholder interviews
- Areas for further consideration.

"...[T]he percentage of Service children (6.1%) being supported at School Action level is considerably lower than the percentage of all pupils (11.17%) from across our sample. ...the differential of five percentage points is interesting in that it would appear to support comments received during the qualitative phase of the research, where parents, practitioners and stakeholders expressed the view that the Additional Learning Needs of Service children with lower levels of need are more likely to go unidentified and unsupported. One explanation for this may be that the transient nature of this population may make it less likely for any initial differentiated learning approaches to be evaluated and, in turn, progressed onto support through School Action."

Service Children ALN Report (2018)

The full report can be found [here](#).

Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance

"Article 29: Your right to become the best that you can be."

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

Service Children's Progression ALLIANCE

The SCiP Alliance has a vision of thriving lives for Service children. It supports education practitioners and partner organisations to champion the progression of the children of Service personnel, so that they can make informed and confident transitions through further and higher education into thriving adult lives and careers.

The SCiP Alliance pursues this vision and mission by leading collaborative work to develop a robust evidence base, connect and support practitioners and influence the policy environment.

SSCE Cymru is a member of the SCiP Alliance Practice Group and participates in the activities it conducts.

The SCiP Alliance produces briefings that help summarise research and provide recommendations for practice and policy. Subjects include resilience and moving schools. The briefing series can be found [here](#).

Progression of Service children to further and higher education

“Four out of ten Service children who have the ability to progress into higher education are unlikely to do so.”

McCullouch and Hall (2016), [Further and higher progression for Service children](#)

The SCiP Alliance is committed to improving Further and Higher education outcomes for Service children. “They need to know better before they can do better”. That’s why the SCiP Alliance is a research-practice hub.

To see the full research, visit www.scipalliance.org/research/scip-alliance-research-group

SCiP Alliance stakeholder consultation 2018

In a 2018 stakeholder consultation exercise, the majority of respondents, 50% of whom work in schools, told the SCiP Alliance that they had observed that Service children’s experiences have an impact on their education, which is significantly different to the challenges and opportunities experienced by other groups.

Key risk factors were reported as:

- The central position of the Armed Forces in the lives of Service families
- Mobility
- Family separation
- Transition to civilian life.

The key impacts of these factors on education were felt to be:

- Periodic family stress
- A transitory mindset
- “Service child” experiences shaping aspirations.

To see the full report and an executive summary, visit www.scipalliance.org/resources/the-scip-alliance-stakeholder-consultation-2018

SCiP Alliance – Hub Cymru

“Helping professionals achieve together what they cannot achieve alone.”

SCiP Alliance

The SCiP Alliance network of regional hubs brings together partnerships which connect stakeholders so that they can:

- Enable new and better collaborations
- Facilitate communication
- Build capacity and capability
- Reach out to new stakeholders
- Communicate with, contribute to and draw from the SCiP Alliance Practice Group and Strategy Board
- **Share and respond collectively to:**
 - Effective practice
 - Challenges
 - Ideas
 - Priorities
 - Questions.

The SCiP Alliance – Hub Cymru is to be led by the University of South Wales (USW) and SSCE Cymru. The first meeting took place in November 2019.

For further information and contact details for the USW, click [here](#).



Evidence on the impact of being a Service child

The Overlooked Casualties of Conflict Report

Commissioned by the Royal Navy Royal Marines Children's Fund, this 2009 report delves into many topics which help us to understand the challenges that Service children may face, from stresses and strains while a parent is away to dealing with a parent's illness or injury.

The full report can be found [here](#).

Army Families Federation (AFF) – Listening to our Service children survey

"89% of families told us they are considering whether to leave the Army due to the impact of Service life on their child."

The findings from the 2019 survey conducted by the AFF are included in a brief to Army command and can be found [here](#). They include a summary on gaps in learning, the effect on wellbeing and much more.

Armed Forces Covenant Report 2018

As part of the UK Government's annual review of its commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant, data on the attainment levels of Service children and non-Service children in England was provided by the Department for Education. Its findings included:

"The average attainment of Service children at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Key Stage 4 is lower among those who move schools on multiple occasions than it is among those who are more static."

The full annual report can be found [here](#).

"I live near the secret RAF beaches."



Support and resources

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SSCE Cymru resources

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