

# Newsletter

Spring 2020

## SSCE Cymru mission

### Knowledge 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.

### Activity and resources

Working with schools, local authorities, charities and support organisations to produce resources that will help professionals support Service children throughout their education.

### Impacting policy and systems

Work with Welsh Government to ensure the mission of SSCE Cymru is understood. Provide evidence to recognise the impact policy has on Service children.



## SSCE Cymru data collection

SSCE Cymru is currently aware of around 2,100 Service children living in Wales and is working with local authorities to establish the best way to capture data in 2020.

Why understanding the number and location of Service children is important:

- SSCE Cymru can work with the schools and offer support when required
- Schools can be kept up to date with resources and training that can help them to support their Service children
- Funding available to support Service children in education can be used as effectively as possible.

## RSLOs

In collaboration with 160<sup>th</sup> (Welsh) Brigade, SSCE Cymru has recently been awarded £338,00 from the Armed Forces Covenant – Removing Barriers to Family Life Fund, to introduce four *Service Children – Regional School Engagement Officers (RSLOs)* in Wales for two years.

Each of the RSLOs will cover 5/6 local authorities and will be hosted by four lead local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Newport, Pembrokeshire and the Vale of Glamorgan). They will be recruited and appointed by August 2020 and will all follow the same workplan and activities; produced and monitored by SSCE Cymru, with a clear focus on sustainability and measuring the impact.

For further information, contact [SSCE@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:SSCE@wlga.gov.uk)

## New SSCE Cymru resources

SSCE Cymru has recently launched a suite of new resources:

[New website](#) – one stop shop of information and resources for schools, education settings, local authorities, Service children and Service families.

[New SSCE Cymru School Toolkit](#) – including information, advice and signposting to relevant support; broken down into eight sections, including the Armed Forces in Wales, Service children's experiences, Mental Health & wellbeing and Research.

[SSCE Cymru Tools](#) – produced in conjunction with the SSCE Cymru School Toolkit; these resources can be downloaded, tailored and used by the school, parents/carers or Service children.

[Directory of support](#) – includes details of nearly 100 organisations that are relevant to supporting Service children; with search and filter functions that help users utilise the breadth of information.

[Welsh films](#) – celebrating Service children learning Welsh and sharing their new language skills.

[Case studies](#) – sharing good practice examples of how schools and local authorities are identifying the need of their Service children and supporting them.

## Listening to our Service children (2020) – findings

SSCE Cymru held discussion groups with 115 Service children in 14 schools across Wales. Using qualitative and quantitative methods to capture the discussion topics, the evidence captured will be used to shape the future plans and activities of SSCE Cymru.

The full findings report is now available [here](#).

## New SSCE Cymru definition of a Service child

For the purpose of the SSCE Cymru project, the definition of a Service child is now:

**“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.”**

Reasons for updating the SSCE Cymru definition:

- So that it incorporates all Service children
- So that it is aligned with organisations across the UK
- So that schools have a better understanding of who is classed as a Service child.

The new definition was chosen during one of the activities at the recent SSCE Cymru Virtual Stakeholder Day, with 67% of participants voting for this definition.

## MOD LAP (4<sup>th</sup> March)

**Venue:** Parc Dewi Sant, Carmarthen

The second Ministry of Defence (MOD) Local Authority Partnership (LAP) group meeting included representatives from Welsh Government, the MOD, Education Consortia’s and 10 local authorities. The meeting included lots of positive discussions on how local authorities can work with SSCE Cymru and DCYP to support their Service children. Thank you to all that attended!

**Agenda items included:**

- SSCE Cymru update
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- Sharing good practice – Newport City Council
- Sharing good practice – Vale of Glamorgan County Council
- TGP Cymru
- Data collection proposal.

Copies of the presentations and notes have been circulated to those that attended or sent their apologies.

**Next MOD LAP:** date (TBC) July 2020, venue (TBC).

## SSCE Cymru Stakeholder Day (17<sup>th</sup> March)

**Venue:** Virtually

SSCE Cymru was due to hold another Stakeholder Day in RAF Valley. In light of uncertainty of our ability to hold the event face to face, as planned, on 10<sup>th</sup> March we circulated plans to hold elements of the event virtually. A number of delegates participated in the Stakeholder day and feedback showed that 100% of the delegates found the event to be beneficial and met their expectations.

Thank you to all that participated in the activities and workshops which help to shape the upcoming work of SSCE Cymru.

**Agenda items included:**

- New SSCE Cymru resources
- Listening to our Service children findings
- New SSCE Cymru definition of a Service child
- Funding priorities to support Service children.

A copy of the agenda and a summary of the discussion notes/comments during some of the key activities are available on the [SSCE Cymru website](#).

**Next SSCE Cymru Stakeholder Day:** date (TBC) September 2020, venue (TBC).

For more information on the SSCE Cymru project please see [www.SSCECymru.co.uk](http://www.SSCECymru.co.uk) and follow [@SSCECymru](https://twitter.com/SSCECymru) on Twitter

Please feel free to circulate the SSCE Cymru newsletter to your own network and contacts. Anyone that would like to join the SSCE Cymru Network can sign up [here](#).

## Funding updates

### Welsh Government funding



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

For the third year running Welsh Government have confirmed £250,000 will be made available again for the academic year 2020/21, to support schools and local authorities with Service children. SSCE Cymru is working with Welsh Government on shaping how the funds will be used.

### MOD funding



Ministry  
of Defence

There is currently no confirmation from the MOD on whether they will be making funds available to supporting Service children in education in 2020/21.

### Small grants (under £20,000)



ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT

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

Under the Armed Forces Covenant Local Grants programme, grants of up to £20,000 are available for local projects that support community integration or local delivery of services.

In the most recent round of funding, the following education settings were successful in their applications for funding:

- Llantwit Major High School – MPCT project
- Treffos Independent School & Nursery – Outdoor learning space
- University of South Wales – Establish a SCiP Alliance Hub and running Creative Forces Days.

For further details, visit [www.covenantfund.org.uk/local-grants-and-digital-development-programme/](http://www.covenantfund.org.uk/local-grants-and-digital-development-programme/)

Guidance and advice on applying for grants is available on [www.SSCECymru.co.uk](http://www.SSCECymru.co.uk)

# SSCE Cymru Network updates

## Education



### Thriving Lives toolkit

A self-reflection tool for schools to look at their support for Service children.

SCiP Alliance have secured funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust to commission some further research to user-test the currently England-focussed Thriving Lives toolkit in the different national contexts. The project is due to complete in January 2021.

The launch of the Thriving Lives Toolkit will be followed by a conference round across the UK, funded by the MODs Education Support Fund. One of conference will be hosted by the University of South Wales and supported by SSCE Cymru, in early 2021. For further details, contact [info@scipalliance.org](mailto:info@scipalliance.org)



### Creative Forces Days

In collaboration with SSCE Cymru, the University of South Wales has secured funding to run targeted outreach events, Creative Forces Day, with Service children in South Wales. The events use the SCiP Alliance programme structure and resources. There will be no cost to schools and transport will be provided. Dates are yet to be confirmed.

For more information about Creative Forces Days, click [here](#).

For further information or to get involved, contact [SSCE@wlg.gov.uk](mailto:SSCE@wlg.gov.uk)

## Armed Forces organisations



Ministry  
of Defence

### Directorate Children and Young People (DCYP)

The MOD have confirmed that military assignments will be temporarily frozen, except for those essential to operational capability and/or Defence's COVID-19 response.

An assignment normally means personnel moving location as part of their unit, or as individuals; this is typically to another local authority or can be out of the UK entirely.

This assignment freeze takes effect immediately and will apply until 1<sup>st</sup> July initially, with a review no later than 30<sup>th</sup> April, to judge if an extension is required. If no extension is required, then a graduated return to routine assignments will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> July.

This will mean that some Armed Forces families, who were in receipt of assignment orders during this period, may not be moving as originally planned, impacting school and local authority support and planning.



### On the road

For the first time, this year, Little Troopers will be taking a military specific roadshow to schools around the country. Schools with lots of little troopers can get involved by contacting [info@littletroopers.net](mailto:info@littletroopers.net)



## Excellence in education

Throughout March AFF have been focusing on sharing examples of Excellence in Education on social media, shining a light on schools that go the extra mile for Service children, whether through after-school clubs or dedicated teaching assistants. AFF have identified handy snippets of information on important issues affecting Service children and highlighted support that is available.

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)



The RAF Families Federation exists to represent all serving RAF personnel, whether married, in a partnership or single and their families. Key stakeholders are Ministers, senior MOD and Defence personnel and education networks and local government bodies around the UK. In addition, they can offer help and advice to those supporting Service personnel, families and children. The RAF FF website offers a single point of information on a wide range of topics. You can subscribe

for free, to the RAF FF magazine 'Envoy' or weekly e-bulletin which rounds up RAF FF news and that of defence more widely. [www.raf-ff.org.uk](http://www.raf-ff.org.uk)

Contact RAF FF via [enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk) or use the 'report an issue' button on the website.



Cobseo, as the Confederation of Service Charities, provides a single point of contact for interaction with Government, including local government and the Devolved Administrations; with the Royal Household; with the Private Sector; and, of course, with other members of the Armed Forces Community. This allows Cobseo

Members to interact with all interested parties and especially to cooperate and collaborate with others in order to provide the best possible level of support to beneficiaries.

[www.cobseo.org.uk](http://www.cobseo.org.uk)

## Defence Transition Service

Defence Transition Services (DTS) is administered and run through Veterans UK. They provide information and support for service leavers and their families as they leave the Armed Forces and adjust to civilian life. Transition is about more than the service leaver finding employment; the impact of leaving the Forces affects the whole family. DTS will support the service leaver or family member on a range of issues including housing, wellbeing, health, children and education.

If you, or someone you know, might benefit from the support available from DTS:

- Speak with your Chain of Command
- Email [DBSVets-DTS-Central@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBSVets-DTS-Central@mod.gov.uk)
- Visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/help-and-support-for-service-leavers-and-their-families> and complete:

DTRP Form 1 (Tri-Service Military Authority or Military Contractor Referral)  
or DTRP Form 2 (Self-referral/third party referral).

## Local authorities



### Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer (AFLO)

Hayley Edwards has recently started in her role as the new AFLO for Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.

The role of the AFLOs in Wales is to support implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Hayley will be working closely with SSCE Cymru to support schools and local authorities to understand the needs of Service children and identify ways they can provide support.

Contact Hayley on: 01437 775445, 07717 450846, or [HREdwards@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:HREdwards@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

### Regional Armed Forces Covenant Support Officer (AFSO)

Ian Pritchard has recently started in his role as the new AFSO for local authorities in North Wales.

Ian's role will be to work with Stephen Townley (North Wales AFLO) to support implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Ian will also be working with SSCE Cymru to support schools and local authorities to understand the needs of Service children and identify ways they can provide support.

Contact Ian on: [ian.pritchard@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:ian.pritchard@wrexham.gov.uk)



Neath and Port Talbot County Borough have recently employed a new Armed Forces Education Liaison Officer. Heather Thomas works in the authority and took on this exciting addition to her current role in January. Having been a forces wife and when not in work, is a Veteran Support Officer, Heather felt that she could bring her experience and knowledge to the role of supporting schools, Service children and their families.

Already work has begun on linking in with schools and support agencies in the area. It is hoped that social events and much more will follow in the coming months.

Contact Heather on: 07971660077, [h.thomas2@npt.gov.uk](mailto:h.thomas2@npt.gov.uk)

### Service children activity retreat

The HMF Education Support Officer for Newport and Monmouthshire, Emma Ashmead, is working with [Forces Fitness](#) and [Woody's Lodge](#) to organise an activity weekend at the [Amelia Trust Farm](#). The weekend will focus on bringing Service Children together to create social opportunities through structured and tailored activities that are designed to motivate and enthuse young people. It will offer a personal approach that supports individual development, improves confidence, self-esteem and resilience, enabling the young people to overcome challenges and empowering them to think beyond the presenting behaviours. The programme be coordinated by Force Fitness, with a number of organisations running activities over the weekend. There are 16 spaces available to Service children in local authorities in Gwent and is completely free of charge.

For further information or to get involved, contact [Emma.Ashmead@newport.gov.uk](mailto:Emma.Ashmead@newport.gov.uk)

## Other network members



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

### Veterans scoping exercise / Veterans strategy

Following the veterans scoping exercise, which heard from over 1,000 respondents across Wales, the Welsh Government has established a new Programme board to take forward the recommendations working with the Armed Forces Expert group and other forums. In education, the work will aim to 'raise the profile of the needs of Service children in Wales, providing support where needed and improve data'. Partners such as SSCE Cymru, DCYP and SCIP alliance will form, part of that work.

Believe in  
children



Barnardo's

### Research: A Needs Assessment of Veterans in Custody, their Families & Children

This research project was led by [Barnardo's NICCO](#) and funded by [Forces in Mind Trust](#). The report provides an insight into the needs and experiences of the families of veterans in custody. Amongst other key findings, the analysis

revealed high levels of family breakdown and, much like the transition from military to civilian life, the greatest challenge for veterans and families occurring when the veteran leaves custody and returns to the community.

To see the full report, click [here](#).

## Resources

Resources and materials for teachers and school staff to build their skills and make mental health and wellbeing a core, rewarding part of their job.

[School Resources](#)

Schools can sign up for free resources straight to their lead person [here](#).

Briefing note on 'School Place Allocation process'.

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

'Departures', is a guide for families on transition to civilian life which aims to help families plan for the inevitable day they will leave the RAF and offers advice and signposting on a range of topics, including education.

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

### Homeport

The latest edition is available here:

<https://nff.org.uk/homeport-magazine/>



## Army & You magazine

The latest edition is available here:

[https://issuu.com/armyandyoumag/docs/army\\_you\\_spring\\_2020?fr=sMTc5NzE5MDU3OA](https://issuu.com/armyandyoumag/docs/army_you_spring_2020?fr=sMTc5NzE5MDU3OA)

Including a mention of the support available from SSCE Cymru Cymru on page 47.



## Envoy

The latest edition is available here:

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

## Covid:19 support resources

See [@SSCECymru](https://twitter.com/SSCECymru) on Twitter, where we will share lots of relevant information and advice on how to support Service children during COVID-19.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

[5 things you need to know before sending your children to school or childcare \(coronavirus\)](#)

[Guidance for schools, childcare providers, colleges and local authorities in England on maintaining educational provision](#)

[Government launches Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp](#)



[How to Support Armed Forces Young People during the Coronavirus](#)



[Statement on the decision to cancel summer 2020 exams](#)

[FAQs](#)



[COVID-19 advice for parents with children in UK Boarding School](#)



[Responding to the coronavirus: resources for mental health and wellbeing](#)

['What's going on?' A book written by Clare Shaw to help explain Covid-19 to younger children](#)

[PE with Joe, at 9am every morning](#)

# Upcoming events

One feature on the new SSCE Cymru website is a calendar of events. Click [here](#) to see details of:

- Upcoming SSCE Cymru events
- Upcoming SSCE Cymru network member events
- Upcoming Armed Forces Forums
- Upcoming University Health Board Armed Forces Forums
- Previous SSCE Cymru event details (including copies of agendas and presentations).

To share details of an event that is relevant to the Armed Forces Community, please contact [SSCE@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:SSCE@wlga.gov.uk)

# Case studies

**SSCE Cymru has recently added a suite of new case studies to the [website](#), sharing examples of good practice in schools across Wales.**

To tell us about the work you are doing and how that has benefited your Service children or school community, please contact [SSCE@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:SSCE@wlga.gov.uk).



The next SSCE Cymru Newsletter will be circulated in the Summer 2020. If you would like to contribute content to the next issue, please send it to [SSCE@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:SSCE@wlga.gov.uk) by 10<sup>th</sup> June.



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