



Department
for Education



Ministry
of Defence

Guidance

Service children in state schools handbook 2013

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1. Introduction

Service children in state schools (SCISS) was formed as a working group to look into the issues relating to English state schools providing for children whose parents serve in the armed forces. It was convened by CEAS (Children's Education Advisory Service) in the latter part of 2003. CEAS is a UK wide Ministry of Defence (MOD) service which provides information, guidance and support to service families, schools and local authorities and, since 2010, has been part of the MOD's Directorate for Children and Young People (DCYP).

SCISS is now an affiliation of more than 1500 state-maintained schools in England which have children of service personnel on roll, led by a National Executive Advisory Committee made up of headteacher and local authority representatives. The group is

8. Liaison with military communities
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supported by representatives from the Department for Education (DfE), DCYP, in the forms of Service Children's Education (SCE, responsible for the provision of education to children of service personnel in a number of locations abroad), CEAS and the Directorate's Policy Officer. The working group and its two sub-committees, for Strategy and School Improvement respectively, meet at least three times a year to advise government and to develop, through an action plan, strategies which can help schools in England to provide more effectively for the children of service personnel on their rolls.

The SCISS National Executive Advisory Committee played a significant role, through the submission of papers, in persuading the government to introduce, from April 2011, the Service Pupils' Premium (£300 per annum from April 2013) and, subsequently, the [Support Fund for State Schools with children of service personnel](/government/admin/publications/79438, which enables DCYP to allocate across the UK, until the end of the 2010-15 Parliament in the first instance, up to £3million per year to bids from schools and local authorities to improve educational provision for service children, particularly in respect of service-induced mobility.

CEAS holds a list of English state schools which provide, to a greater or lesser extent, for service communities. The schools on the list had initially been entirely self-nominating but now CEAS receives information from the DfE which identifies those schools which draw down the Service Pupils' Premium each year and this information is used to populate CEAS's database of SCISS schools. Schools wishing to contact CEAS or SCISS to be included on the list or removed from it should contact:

enquiries@ceas.uk.com or the CEAS Helpline on 01980 618244.

CEAS, in partnership with SCISS, periodically holds regional events;

- to set out developments, in relation to the education of children of service personnel
- to seek contributions from those attending to ensure that the working group is up to speed with all relevant issues
- to promote ideas from those working direct with children of service personnel and their families with regard to education

Whilst the majority of children of service personnel worldwide are located and educated in England, a significant minority are educated in SCE (within the English National Curriculum framework) and other schools overseas, as well as in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Education is a devolved matter in these last three administrations and one of the challenges for children of service personnel, their

parents and the schools and local authorities that serve them is these children's movements between these administrations.

In addition to facilitating and supporting SCISS, CEAS is also involved with similar forums in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

2. The SCISS handbook

The SCISS handbook is intended to be a supportive resource, written largely by practitioners in schools for their peers. It is intended to be interactive in the sense that it can be amended to incorporate suggestions to improve the handbook, examples of good practice from users and used to facilitate communication between schools and local authorities with similar needs. It is not a directive.

Although SCE's resource is primarily for its own schools which operate within a framework modelled very closely on the English system, the children on roll there come from and return to schools all over the UK but, in the main, England. We hope you find the handbook useful. Feedback is always helpful, so please do not hesitate to contact us through CEAS to let us know your views about the resource.

3. What's so special about children of service personnel?

Children of service personnel will join your school bringing with them a wide range of strengths and needs but, in many cases, they will also have a variety of educational and personal experiences to provide you and their fellow pupils with an exciting and different dynamic. They may also have had (or have whilst they are with you) experiences of a more stressful nature.

The specific implications of providing for children of service personnel and working with their families relate essentially to the following two issues:

- mobility
- deployment

However, each of these issues needs to be broken down if their implications are to be understood properly.

4. Mobility

The MOD encourages accompanied service for married personnel in the armed forces. This means that when the serving member of the family moves home because of his/her job, the spouse and any children move too.

In the case of the army, this often involves unit moves in which whole regiments, battalions or squadrons move as the result of regular army planning, known as the Arms Plot. Although this planning may be conceived well in advance of any move, troop deployments made as the result of previously unanticipated world or national events may result in significant changes to the army's plans, sometimes at short notice. The implications of such moves and any changes to them are significant for children, families, schools, local authorities' children services' departments and health services.

Except in situations where there is the wholesale movement of personnel, as the result of a base closure, for example, RAF personnel and their families tend to move individually as their careers develop and in accordance with the needs of the service. Such movements are described as 'trickle postings'.

Royal Navy (including Royal Marines) personnel and their families are more likely to live in one location for extended periods of time but they do move, sometimes to locations not normally associated with the sea, to work with personnel from the army and the RAF. Such movement is normally on a 'trickle posting' basis.

4.1 a) Changes to patterns of service mobility

Service mobility is changing with the government's long term plans for the armed services. The basis of the changes to both services in the UK is to try to establish greater stability for forces personnel and their families and achieve economies of scale through the development of so called 'super garrisons/bases'. This approach is called the '[New Employment Model](#)'.

The idea is to develop an already large military base like Catterick Garrison in North Yorkshire or RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire as the centre of an enlarged base on a number of different sites within a fifty mile radius of the central base, incorporating a range of military functions. Service families will be quartered at one of the locations within the enlarged base and when the serving member of the family changes jobs, he or she might change their place of work but they and their families will continue to live at the same address.

Additionally, the MOD and the services will, within this context, encourage more service families to buy their own homes. Most service personnel will continue to be deployed away from home for days, weeks or months at a time depending on the needs of the services and the requirements of the government.

It is anticipated that, as a result of these changes, service mobility will change rather than disappear altogether. As a result of the steps being taken to establish the New Employment Model, it is anticipated that army unit moves will continue and that RAF personnel will experience greater turbulence than normal as bases are closed or amalgamated. It is likely that 'trickle postings' requiring moves of house for personnel in all three services will, if anything, increase as they develop their careers in addition to these changes, in 2010, the government announced a commitment to withdraw its armed forces from all garrisons in Germany by 2020 and, since that time, has announced a series of reductions in the sizes of all three armed services. This is resulting in an increase in the movement of military personnel and their families, in terms of both the relocation of whole units from Germany to a variety of locations in the UK and of the relocation of individual service families as the results of either voluntary or compulsory redundancies.

In the cases of whole unit moves, it is essential that the military units involved, local authorities and schools plan effectively together to ensure that there is sufficient school capacity in the areas affected by the moves and that the transitions of children as a result of these moves take place as smoothly as possible. The MOD has made a commitment to fulfill its responsibilities with regard to the drawdown from Germany by establishing arrangements and processes enabling the earliest possible contact with those local authorities, schools and other public services which may be affected, to establish effective planning partnership arrangements. The military personnel and civilian staff, from the planning to the implementation stages, work increasingly more intensely with the relevant local bodies to effect the moves as smoothly as possible. CEAS supports those managing these arrangements regarding issues relating to the education of children of service personnel who are affected by such movements.

4.2 b) Implications of mobility

Schools may have mobile pupil populations for a variety of reasons. Some schools will cater simultaneously for a combination of mobile groups. This handbook focuses on children of service personnel but, in so doing, it will become apparent that the needs of this group will overlap in some respects with the others.

The extent to which the mobility of children of service personnel is a problem will depend on a variety of factors. This handbook attempts to identify many of the issues and share strategies for dealing with them so that the problems of providing for children of service personnel can be minimised and the benefits celebrated.

(i) For children

Like all children, children of service personnel are individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds. Consequently, their responses to a mobile lifestyle will vary accordingly. Mobility brings both benefits and problems in different proportions for each child. Children may be affected significantly by the attitudes and approaches they encounter both at home and at the schools they attend. Whilst this handbook cannot be exhaustive, it seeks to highlight ways in which many of the benefits may be harnessed and the problems minimised.

The possible problems for mobile children include:

- a sense of loss at each move
- extrovert or introvert behaviour, especially if a parent is on active service insecurity
- a dependence on adults and/or other children of service personnel (including siblings)
- identifying special educational needs
- language difficulties (for children who have been learning in languages other than English)
- difficulties in making commitments to relationships with peers, adults and schools as a whole, the danger of disaffection
- curricular discontinuity
- complications with public examinations courses
- poor school transfer of information leading, for example, to lack of challenge
- emotional and social development difficulties
- lack of continuity of provision for SEND.

The possible benefits for mobile children include:

- strengthened resilience
- adaptability
- the ability to socialize and make new friends quickly
- experience of travel
- experience of foreign languages and cultures
- independence/confidence
- a sense of perspective gained from a wider range of experiences than their 'civilian' peers

(ii) For families

From a family perspective, a mobile lifestyle can throw up a range of issues which may be a reflection, at least to some extent, of their children's needs.

These needs include:

- selection of schools/obtaining useful information/making school visits
- admissions to schools/admissions appeals
- the transfer and transit of useful information to new schools
- SEND
- term-time holidays
- the consideration of the boarding option
- significant differences between areas, quality of accommodation/life, standards of education, accessibility of schools, access to extended family support, attitudes of schools towards children of service personnel and communities
- unrealistic expectations regarding school standards and/or support in moving from one local authority to another
- notice of postings/availability of advance information about accommodation addresses
- choices between meeting individual children's needs (e.g. re the continuation of chosen public examination courses) and keeping the family as a whole intact
- remaining focused on meeting children's needs when there are many other issues competing for attention when family moves occur

(iii) For schools

Schools have interests and concerns in common with children and families when it comes to mobility, albeit from a different perspective.

For schools, SCISS headteachers have identified the following as issues which face them in respect of pupil mobility:

- the transfer and transit of useful information about pupils, including prior learning data
- different approaches to the curriculum and assessment in different UK countries
- meeting SEND quickly and effectively
- meeting children of service personnel's pastoral needs effectively and recognizing that many of them may
- have only one parent at home for long periods of time
- the availability of funding within the context of School Funding Reform, specifically for a mobile service pupil population
- the timing of the release of AWPU funding, together with the implications of funding for staffing and curriculum planning
- the impact of mobility on the availability of material resources
- the administrative costs of mobility
- curricular discontinuity
- term-time holidays
- the fairness and accuracy of Ofsted judgements on schools with mobile pupil populations; changes to schools' EMTAG profiles
- stability of the parent community and availability of parent governors (more frequent induction and training may be required)
- effective liaison with the military community
- threats to the viability of small schools both because of the changing geographical profile of the military in the UK and because of changes to or delays in the planned movements of groups of service personnel
- an increased likelihood of pupils of service personnel engaging in a variety of risky behaviours and having behavioural, social or emotional difficulties

(iv) For local authorities

In 2012, the government announced its intention to reform school funding in England. Concerns about wide variations in levels of school funding between local authorities had led the DfE to consult widely amongst stakeholders; the government concluded that, after the subsequent spending review, it intended to establish a national funding formula for all state schools in England. Prior to this, from April 2013 and the beginning of each financial year beyond, the government would restrict incrementally the discretion held by local authorities to decide how they would deploy funding to

meet particular local needs. A fundamental principle of this reform would be that funding would be focused as much as possible on the numbers of children on roll. Consequently, the government is limiting the ability of local authorities to divert money to groups of children with particular needs (not SEN); one example of this is a restriction on the ability of local authorities to structure an element of school funding according to the known levels of pupil mobility at some schools. It is still possible to fund pupil mobility but only on the basis of the actual mobility of individual pupils.

The government has indicated that, during this stage of transition in school funding, it will continue to consult with stakeholders and make any amendments to its proposals it subsequently deems to be necessary.

For local authorities, the implications of service mobility include:

- marrying their planning for school places with the shorter term, changeable MOD planning for the location of service personnel, together with the possible emergence of academies and free schools in their areas
- ensuring the smooth transitions, in and out of the schools within their boundaries, of children with completed statements
- considering how best to support schools, including those serving military communities which are adversely affected by [School Funding Reform](#)
- ensuring, if necessary through representations to the [Office of the Schools' Adjudicator](#), that the admissions arrangements of all the admissions authorities in their area meet the needs of service families, in accordance with the recommendations and requirements set out in the 'School Admissions Code'
- ensuring that there are effective channels of communication between military and educational communities within the boundaries of each authority

4.3 c) Strategies for mitigating service induced mobility

(i) For children

Mobility need not be a passive experience for children. If they can be encouraged to prepare positively for enforced moves, some or all of the negative implications of mobility may, at least, be alleviated or, better still, avoided altogether. Much will depend on the nature and needs of each child but, taking these two factors into consideration, encouraging his/her positive engagement with a move may well pay

dividends on and after arrival at the new location.

Some of the specific ways in which this can be achieved are:

- use of the CEAS 'Moving Schools' pack or other local equivalents. This pack is intended for primary phase children and is in three parts. The second part contains a booklet for use by the children themselves to help them think about and prepare for their forthcoming move. Copies of this resource are available from CEAS or are downloadable from the CEAS web site at: www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service
- if children are involved, in ways appropriate to their ages and understanding, in selecting schools to apply for (many children enjoy using the internet) and are given information about applications and (if necessary) the admissions appeals' processes they may be in better positions to anticipate and manage their emotional responses to events
- if possible, prior visits to new areas and (prospective) new schools are always helpful to children
- encouraging children to take as much responsibility as possible for helping their moves to go smoothly (without them feeling they are to blame if problems arise!)
- peer to peer support systems
- supporting early contact with new school prior to a move.

(ii) For families

Moving house is, for many people, one of the most stressful experiences there is in modern life. For service families, such movement is often a regular part of their lives. Even if service families develop a higher level of expertise in house moves than their civilian counterparts, there is still a great deal to think about and plan for.

Most parents value their children's education very highly but, in the midst of all that needs doing when moving house, it is possible for some issues to be neglected or overlooked. There are a number of things that can be done by hard pressed service parents, subject to the period of notice received, regarding the posting.

These include:

- using CEAS's 'Moving Schools' pack or local equivalent. In addition to the part of the 'Moving Schools' pack for primary aged children, the other two parts of the pack are for parents to use, helping them to think about what needs to be done
- use of the internet to research possible school places, local authority policies and provision (including special needs provision), Ofsted inspection reports and the

CEAS web site

- if possible, making a visit to a new area, to visit (prospective) schools, assess home to school distances and, if a school place has been obtained already, to have an initial discussion with school staff about the child(ren) concerned
- discussing the move with the child(ren)'s existing school to understand its view of/concerns about the implications of the move for the child(ren)
- for parents of children with special educational needs, ensuring that they are registered with CEAS so that they can be supported with any difficulties which may arise in relation to the move(s) of school(s).

(iii) For schools

(a) Maintained boarding schools

There is a small but thriving state boarding school sector, consisting currently of 37 schools. These are not independent (private) schools. Nearly all state-maintained boarding schools are secondary schools. One offers entry before the age of 11 and some are upper schools only. Most have sixth forms. Some are single sex and others are mixed. Education is free, as in any maintained school, and a fee is charged for the boarding provision only.

Some schools are all-ability comprehensive schools, some are grammar schools which select pupils on the basis of academic ability, some are faith schools, many have specialisms in particular subjects such as music, technology, mathematics and languages and some are academies. All pupils follow the National Curriculum, unless they attend academies and take the same examinations as they would in maintained day schools.

Maintained boarding schools established their own organisation in the early 1990s to promote and develop state boarding schools. It is called the State Boarding Schools Association (SBSA). SBSA has its own web site which will show the number of schools (currently 37) and gives details of how to contact each school.

SBSA is also a member of the Boarding Schools Association (which includes independent preparatory and senior boarding schools) and information can be obtained from:

The Director,
Boarding Schools Association,
Grosvenor Gardens House,

35-37 Grosvenor Gardens,
London
SW1W OBS.
Telephone 020 7798 1580
Fax 020 7798 1581.

Web site: sbsa.org.uk

There is a free 'Parent's Guide to Maintained Boarding' available from the BSA by contacting them by telephone, fax or e mail.

The particular advantage of boarding in a maintained school is the cost. Although the costs vary between schools they are invariably less than those in the independent sector as there is no charge for education. If you contact SBSA you will see the latest fees. Most offer weekly as well as termly boarding and the other benefits match those in the independent sector including academic and reputation.

Maintained boarding schools welcome children from all backgrounds. They can admit UK and other European Union nationals. Children from outside the EU need to have the right of residence in the UK before they can be accepted as a boarder. Schools take children at all different ages; please see the individual school entries for more detail. The further education college listed in this guide can admit students from outside the European Union. As stated above most SBSA schools have many years of experience of helping the children of service families obtain access to the best education available in the maintained sector. It is important that families make contact directly with individual schools they are interested in and also discuss the options with their child's current headteacher and school.

(b) Independent boarding schools

Independent schools offer a wide range of educational settings for parents to choose from. Service families can select any school that is listed on the MOD's Accredited Schools Database (ASD). This is a list of schools that offer full boarding and is a member of one of the accreditation bodies (Independent Schools Council and constituent member associations). There are over 600 schools on the ASD. Some schools accept boarding pupils from age 8, others from age 11 or 13. Some schools are selective and many who accept pupils from age 13 require them to pass the common entrance examination. Independent school range in size from small, family orientated preparatory schools to large senior schools.

Continuity of Education Allowance

The Continuity of Education Allowance (Board), CEA, formerly the Boarding School Allowance is a provision for service personnel who chose to educate their children in a UK maintained or independent boarding school. The CEA does not cover the full fees: parents must make a compulsory contribution of a minimum of 10%, even when the fees are less than the full rate of CEA (Board). All service personnel should refer to their pay office or admin unit to establish their entitlements to claim CEA (Board). If parents are eligible and can be supported, children qualify for CEA from the age of 8 up to the age of 18. The CEA (Board) can be claimed for weekly and full boarding.

(c) State schools

Many schools dealing with service mobility have developed considerable expertise in minimising its negative effects. Examples of this expertise can be found on Service Children's Education's (SCE) web site at: <http://www.sce-web.com>, in the mobility section.

Schools are asked to encourage service parents to register with CEAS any of their children with SEN if those children are at School Action Plus or beyond. Registration will provide service parents with access to information, advice and support to enable them to secure for their children provision which meets their SEN. This assistance can be particularly useful for mobile service families who often find the differences in provision, thresholds and policies between schools and local authorities very difficult to deal with on their own.

Army parents with children with SEN, at School Action Plus and beyond, and those from all three services who are offered postings abroad must register their children with CEAS. In the latter case, this is to enable consideration to be given to whether or not those needs can be met in the foreign location concerned. Children at School Action may also be registered with CEAS.

In general terms, schools can take a number of steps to ease any problems, for their children and for them, arising from service-induced mobility. These include:

- early liaison with the school(s) from which children are coming, to discuss information transfer protocols (for information in addition to that provided in the CTF), curricular issues and any individual pupils of special interest or concern (including SEN); planning for curricular discontinuity
- ensuring the child(ren)'s current school(s) provide access to helpful information (e.g. details of and rationale for a school's policy for term-time holidays) about their new school(s), including contact details and points of contact; schools could, for example, provide (in consultation with parents) children taking term-time holidays

with homework to enable them to keep up with their peers

- particularly where families are located in other countries, using electronic communication wherever possible
- making every effort to smooth the admissions process and, if places are not available in a particular year group, ensuring that the requirements of the School Admissions Code are adhered to
- establishing effective induction arrangements for new pupils and their parents
- in the case of army unit moves, ensuring good contact with the Unit Welfare Officer
- devising strategies for preparing children, parents and receiving schools for children moving on
- establishing clear policies and procedures about mobility and identifying clear roles responsibilities for staff in this respect
- considering the EAL needs of incoming children and the implications for the school's EMTAG provision
- considering the role of the school SENCO and support staff in relation to meeting effectively and quickly the SEN of mobile children of service personnels
- ensuring service/service parent representation on governing bodies
- establishing good communication between school staff and relevant personnel on military bases
- ensuring that the implications of pupil mobility for school performance are properly considered during self-evaluation. Ofsted inspectors cannot accept pupil mobility as a contextual factor affecting achievement unless they are provided with supporting evidence
- participating in SCISS regional events to ensure that DfE and MOD are kept up to date with the issues around providing for service children and to be kept up to date with developments nationally
- effective use of Service Pupil Premium (N.B. examples of good practice in respect of the uses of the Service Pupils' Premium can be found at:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/service%20children%20pupil%20premium%20case%20studies.pdf>).

(iv) For local authorities

Local authorities are dependent on the MOD and individual services for information about the movement of service personnel and their families. Whilst the MOD is planning, in the long term, to establish in the UK a more stable service community, the creation of this more stable state and developments in national and international events often require changes to those plans, sometimes at short notice. All of this

can have significant implications for school organization, planning and, in the case of short notice changes to existing plans, for the effective management of school and local authority budgets.

To ameliorate such difficulties, it is essential that local authorities with significant concentrations of service personnel within their boundaries establish the best possible lines of communication with those communities.

Local authorities should consider establishing lines of communication which enable representatives of service communities to engage easily with appropriate personnel within each authority.

In addition to this, there are other ways in which local authorities can meet more effectively the needs of service children:

- the School Admissions Code 2012 places specific requirements (paragraphs 1:41 (b), 2:15 (f) and 2:18) on local and other admission authorities with regard to considering the particular needs of service families in respect of admissions to schools
- the Education Act 1996 places duties on local authorities, where necessary, to carry out statutory assessments of children's SEN and to draw up Statements of SEN. These duties are set out in chapters 7 and 8 of the [Special Educational Needs Code of Practice](#). During the course of 2013-2014, the DfE is revising this code in the light of Parliamentary debate of the -Children and Families' Bill. The DfE is consulting with a wide variety of stakeholders, including the MOD's Directorate for Children and Young People, about the contents of this revised code
- it may be the case that schools and local authorities, when considering appropriate strategies and interventions to meet children's SEN, are tempted not to prioritise a service child about to move on. If this does happen, such children are in more danger of not having their SEN assessed and met appropriately. Best practice suggests that the implications of a service child's mobility for his/her SEN should be considered carefully at each decision making stage
- share good practice in the use of Service Pupil Premium. DfE published some examples of good practice at:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/service%20children%20pupil%20premium%20case%20studies.pdf>.

4.4 d) Housing and moving

Although the MOD encourages service families to buy their own permanent homes, many rely on the provision of service family accommodation, known traditionally as 'quarters'. The provision of quarters is, on behalf of the MOD, the responsibility of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

MOD regulations make provision for families with certain educational needs to remain in their quarter for a limited time after the service person has been posted out of the area. CEAS can advise and support service families seeking to retain their quarter.

Moving may disrupt or halt statutory assessments leading to statements of special educational needs or notes in lieu. Moving may disadvantage children who have started a public examination course such as GCSEs, 'A' Levels or equivalent. For these families CEAS is able to provide an impact statement. This is a strong recommendation to the DIO that the family should remain in their quarter until the relevant assessment / course of study is completed. It is usually agreed to.

CEAS may also be able to provide an impact statement in other circumstances where there is strong evidence that a child's education and/or well being may be significantly damaged by a change of schools at the juncture determined by a new parental assignment. In all circumstances, impact statements apply, once issued, for a maximum of two years in the first instance; extensions may be granted if further evidence from relevant professionals supports any request made.

Housing support is available to provide families with limited stability during these crucial times but not all service personnel opt to accept this help as they prefer to move in order to stay with their families. Retained quarters mean that incoming families may be housed in private rental accommodation which has a cost implication for the tax-payer, so each family's case is carefully considered. CEAS is unable to support families to remain in their quarters in order to sit Standard Assessment Tests (SATs).

5. Deployment

Deployment is 'active service' when the government requires parts of the armed services to carry out the roles for which they have been trained in a variety of operational theatres both internationally and nationally. Service personnel usually serve, unaccompanied by their families, for several months at a time during periods

of deployment.

The Educational Psychology Service in SCE has developed some guidance for schools to devise strategies and approaches to a range of deployment issues;

www.sce-web.com/

Those wishing to access the site may determine their own password. Schools in the UK are welcome to use this resource as a framework for developing their own approaches to these difficult issues. In addition to this, the following observations may be helpful:

5.1 (a) Implications of deployment

Deployment, in addition to mobility, places further strains on family life and can have an impact on the education and emotional well being of service children. Deployment can result in children being cared for by a lone parent or other carer for substantial periods of time.

5.2 (b) Strategies for dealing with the implication of deployment

The ways in which individual children of service service react to the deployment of one or, sometimes, both their parents will depend on a range of factors; for example: family attitudes and relationships, timing, previous levels of mobility, educational context and sensitivity, SEN, proximity of wider family and awareness and understanding of news media as well as prior experience of deployment.

Each child will have a unique way of dealing with or responding to the deployment of a parent. Similarly, a non-serving parent will have a range of emotional and practical issues to cope with during a period of deployment. Schools can help both children and parents through these periods in a number of ways.

These include:

i) Awareness

Good lines of communication with the military base(s) served by a school should ensure that the nature and duration of a deployment will be known.

ii) Planning

In consultation with parents and the command, a planned approach to meeting the challenges of deployment will always be helpful. Thinking in advance about the general issues likely to arise as well as specific issues around individual children and families should enable schools to establish a safe, sensitive environment in which anxiety can be alleviated, children supported so learning continues. Preparing children for a forthcoming deployment with a variety of activities can be invaluable. However, many schools and parents report that keeping school and home life as 'normal' as possible during periods of deployment provides children with the essential stability they need to come through a time of great uncertainty.

iii) Communication

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

iv) Family support

Families deal with deployment in a variety of ways but, inevitably, some are more vulnerable than others. The involvement of parents in schools has always provided opportunities for strong home-school links to be developed and for parents to support each other. The development of extended services through schools, including access to non-educational services should provide other opportunities for the creation/extension of a network of provision to meet the needs of service families experiencing deployment.

v) Multi-agency approach

Ensuring that other local statutory services with responsibilities towards children are informed about deployments and that referral processes are sufficiently rigorous should create a tighter multi-agency framework through which any emerging service family needs should be met more effectively.

vi) Increased awareness of the need to safeguard children.

It is possible that the absence of one or both parents could lead to a child in need being placed at greater risk consideration should be given, in consultation with other

agencies if necessary, to the steps which need to be taken to safeguard that child within the contexts of the Common Assessment Framework and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

vii) Preparation for the return of deployed parents.

Whilst this is always welcome, schools must consider how to deal with the potential disruption to children's learning and home lives which can be caused by the return of deployed parents before, during and after the return.

viii) Ensuring clarity on the policy of term-time holidays.

Service personnel returning from deployments are usually given periods of leave on their return both to rest and recover and to enable them to spend some time with their families. Very often, this leave occurs in term time. Pressure on schools to ensure 100% pupil attendance balanced against leave within the law for parents to take their children on term time holidays, which schools must classify as 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence, can lead to conflict. Most schools establish policies about such absence. Ideally, both the policy and the rationale for it should be explained to service parents before deployments occur and, in schools with significant numbers of service children on roll, formulation of the policy should take into account the particular needs of service families in this respect. Ofsted, the government agency, responsible for inspecting standards in schools, issued, in March 2010, guidance to its inspectors:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/schools-and-inspection-march-2010>

to enable them to exclude, from their assessments of school performance in respect of attendance, authorized absences for children taking term-time holidays as the result of post-operational tour leave; the specific references to children of service personnel may be found on page 13 of the document reached by the link.

ix) Provision of keeping in touch clubs, such as 'e blueys'.

x) Provision of a named member of staff to whom pupils of deployed pupils can talk to in confidence about concerns.

xi) Critical incident and bereavement support.

Many schools have established plans for managing a range of critical incidents. For schools with children of service personnel on roll, this is essential. The SCE deployment resource:

contains guidance on these issues. Also, schools with significant numbers of children of service personnel should consider involving their own EP and CAMHS services in the formulation of their own approaches to such matters.

6. Special educational needs and disabilities

The mobility of service children and the deployments to hostile locations of some of their parents provide additional layers of complexity to the challenges faced by schools, local authorities and health trusts in making effective provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. These additional complexities include:

- assessment, monitoring and evaluation
- communication and the development of trust
- decision making
- resourcing

i) Assessment, monitoring and evaluation: these vital activities can be impaired by mobility. Different assessment frameworks (particularly across the four component countries of the UK), the slow transfer of relevant information between schools and/or local authorities, different thresholds and approaches in various schools and needs which take time to manifest themselves are all examples of factors that can get in the way of timely and appropriate responses to children's SEN. Awareness of the duration of a mobile service child's enrolment at a school is vital to ensure that s/he is not disadvantaged by that mobility.

ii) Communication and the development of trust: clear, honest and compassionate communication between schools and families is vital for every child. Children will feel more secure and will usually be more successful if schools work well together with their families. Sometimes, anxieties can lead to misunderstandings which can undermine mutual trust. For mobile service families moving between different countries, local authorities and schools (all of which approach SEND provision in different ways), the opportunities for breakdowns in communication and trust are much greater. It is vital that schools and/or local authorities understand the

educational and other contexts from which mobile service children come if they are to develop successful working relationships with children of service personnel with SEND and their families.

iii) Decision making: all schools and local authorities have statutory responsibilities to ensure that their children's SEND are fully met. The demands resulting from these responsibilities can be extensive and deciding which children should benefit from the, often scarce, resources at the School Action, School Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and Statement stages is difficult. Given that assessing accurately children's SEND usually takes time, that schools and local authorities are under constant pressure to allocate resources to individual children with SEND and that mobile children of service personnel have time-limited stays in schools, there is a danger that either SEND will not be identified adequately before a further service family move occurs or the imminent moves of some such children may incline decision makers to prioritise more permanent members of their communities. It is important that decision makers are conscious of this danger and of the need to consider the implications of children of service personnel's mobility for their SEND.

iv) Resourcing: whilst all local authorities and state maintained schools in England are required to have regard to the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice in meeting children's SEND, funding arrangements and patterns of provision differ widely between authorities. This is on top of the differences in approach found between individual schools (which, of course, may be related to the differences in funding arrangements between authorities). Mobile service families are often taken aback by these differences, particularly if their children have completed statements and they discover that receiving authorities have different funding thresholds and approaches to meeting particular kinds of SEND. The opportunities for misunderstanding and conflict are considerable in such circumstances.

(a) Registration with CEAS

Schools are asked to encourage service families to register with CEAS any of their children with SEND if those children are at School Action Plus or beyond.

The purposes of registration are to enable CEAS to offer information, advice and support to service families with any issue relating to their children's SEND from initial concerns about their children's progress in school right through to support with the SEND and Disability Tribunal.

Service families moving abroad MUST register with CEAS any of their children with SEND as CEAS is required to pass on to commands and relevant agencies abroad information about children's SEND so that decisions may be made about whether or

not their needs can be met abroad.

The MOD and the armed services abroad are not bound by the same legislation as schools and local authorities in the UK and are not able to make the full range of provision required at home. It is possible that a very small number of children with SEND may not be able to travel to a location abroad because the educational/medical/social provision they require may not be available in that location.

(b) The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant sets out the government's aspirations and strategies for ensuring that Britain's service personnel and their families, past and present, are not disadvantaged as the result of their involvement with the armed forces.

With regard to the education of service children, the 2012 Covenant states the following:

“Education

- we have delivered a scheme to provide scholarships to bereaved service children. As of October 2011 a total of 22 further education and 61 higher education scholarships have been awarded for academic years 2010/2011 and 2011/12
- we have introduced the pupil premium for the children of those currently serving (£200 per child), amounting to £9 million for 2011/12 (for 2012/13 this will be increased to £250, meaning service children will benefit from around an extra £11 million). In addition, we have made available £3 million per year for state schools with service children (including those of reservists). Since the launch of this fund, 139 bids from schools have been approved, amounting to £2.9 million for this financial year
- schools can now exceed the 30 pupil limit for infant classes in order to accommodate service children
- a service child indicator is now part of the annual school census in England and DFE is now able to identify separately the children of parents in the armed forces”
In addition to this, the Service Pupils' Premium will, from the beginning of the financial year 2013/14, be extended to the children of service personnel who die whilst still serving and those who leave the armed services for other reasons, provided that the children have been eligible to generate the Premium prior to the bereavement or the cessation of service. The Service Pupils' Premium will be generated by such children for up to six years after their bereavements or their parents departure from the armed services.

Also, in 2013-14, in the light of the Children and Families' Bill, the DfE is consulting on revisions to the SEN code of practice. Parts of the bill relate to the proposals to reform SEN legislation, set out in the 2011 green paper entitled, 'Support and Aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs' and this, together with the fact that the SEN code had not been amended since its publication in 2001, requires that the code be substantially amended.

The government had made a commitment in earlier versions of the Covenant to take into consideration specifically the particular needs of service children with SEN and those of their families in any review of this code. DfE is honoring this commitment by ensuring that the MOD's DCYP is consulted directly about the changes.

(c) The Armed Forces Community Covenant Scheme and the Community Covenant Grant

This scheme and its related grant builds upon the Armed Forces Covenant and enables local authorities which have signed the Community Covenant and the public and voluntary services within them to bid for resources better to enable the aspirations in the Armed Forces Covenant to be met, in respect of the effective integration of military and civilian communities. This grant does not have a specific education focus but schools, local authorities and other education and children's services providers are able to bid for monies under this scheme to support initiatives with a community focus.

7. Roles of MOD services with responsibilities for service children and their families

Welfare services and education

Any one or more than one of the services below may become involved in supporting service families with issues relating to their children's education. It may be that a non-educational problem affecting a family is having an impact on a child's education or that the child's education is the main problem. Although CEAS is the MOD's specialist service for advising and supporting service families with issues relating to their children's education and other welfare services are advised to refer families to it, it is one part of the MOD's Directorate for Children and Young People (DCYP) and

sometimes it is more appropriate and effective for CEAS to work in partnership with other services and to support other professionals in their work with families. Ultimately, the needs of the children and families concerned should be paramount.

7.1 (a) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

CEAS is part of the MOD's DCYP and has been established to inform, advise and support service families with any issue relating to the education of their children. The MOD is keenly aware that constant service induced mobility often places great strain on family life; such strain can lead to personnel leaving the services prematurely which, amongst other things, is a waste of training and expertise. So, retention of personnel is a major objective.

CEAS's mission statement is:

To support operational effectiveness in the armed forces by enabling service (and eligible MOD civilian) families to secure appropriate provision for their children in the UK and overseas.

CEAS exists, therefore, to assist service parents, schools and local authorities in the UK in mitigating the potentially negative effects of mobility and deployment on the education of service children. CEAS works within the MOD's Directorate of Children and Young People to help to achieve this aim. CEAS also supports non-mobile service families.

CEAS, within this context, facilitates and supports SCISS.

Specific services offered by CEAS include:

- the provision of information and advice about access to educational provision and services available to service children, in the UK and around the world
- the provision of support to service families when postings require changes to children's educational placements
- a registration service for children of service personnel with SEND which enables CEAS to support service parents in securing the right educational provision for those children; this service also enables CEAS to collect information about children's SEND (when their parents are offered a posting abroad) and to send it to the relevant command so that consideration can be given to the likelihood of the child's SEND being met in that location

- the provision of information and advice about boarding education and the MOD allowances which support such provision
- support for/representation of service parents in meetings, reviews and educational appeals of all kinds
- liaison with the service community, other government departments, children's services departments, representatives of the state and independent boarding sectors and schools to try to achieve strategic solutions to issues around the education of children of service personnel
- support for service families being able to retain their quarters when their children are following public examination courses or are undergoing statutory assessments of their special educational needs and disabilities. Full details about CEAS are available from their website: www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service

7.2 b) Service Children's Education (SCE)

SCE provides the children of Her Majesty's armed forces and other members of the Ministry of Defence and sponsored organisations, stationed overseas with access to a first-class education system.

SCE aims to mirror the state education system in the United Kingdom, from nursery through to sixth form and to ensure that children benefit from their stay overseas.

SCE Schools, nurseries and foundation stage settings are located in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Cyprus, Falkland Islands, Belize and Brunei.

SCE schools follow the English National Curriculum, administer national curriculum tests and public examinations and are inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). Teachers in SCE schools are UK qualified professionals especially recruited for service in SCE schools.

Each SCE school has a School Governance Committee that represents the local service community in a manner similar to the way Governors work in the UK and SCE provides a very comprehensive programme of training and development for its staff.

SCE Headquarters is located in Upavon, with offices in Bielefeld in Germany and Episkopi in Cyprus. An Executive Board oversees strategy and provides day to day leadership, management and direction for pupil and family services, teaching and learning, standards and assessment, policy and planning and support services.

The Pupil and Family Services team encompasses educational psychologists, social workers and a team of specialist inclusion support staff work from dedicated pupil and family services centres in Germany and in Cyprus. SCE works very closely with relevant partner organisations such as the British Forces (Germany) health service and the Army Welfare Service (AWS) and the British Forces Social Work Service (BFSWS).

Except for very small isolated detachments, primary schools are established in all overseas commands. Secondary school provision is available for most pupils in north west Europe and Cyprus, whether at local secondary schools on a daily basis, or in weekly boarding schools in Germany at Gütersloh. SCE secondary schools again mirror the best of UK practice and are run on comprehensive lines. Service personnel posted to more isolated locations (ISODETS) will be funded to use local host-nation or international schools as appropriate.

Transfer from primary to secondary schools in SCE is usually at the end of Year 6 (age 11) although in Sennelager in Germany, children transfer at the end of Year 3 or 4 from a first school to a middle school and into a secondary school at the end of Year 8.

Additional educational needs

Children with a wide range of special and or additional educational needs are fully supported in SCE schools. However, SCE does not have any special schools, special units or pupil referral units, and is unable to make provision overseas for the complete range of special needs. Queries about support for children with special or additional needs should, in the first instance, be referred to the Upavon based Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).

enquiries@ceas.uk.com

0044 (0)1980 618244 (civilian) or (9)4344 8244 (military)

More information about SCE and its provision is available from

info@scschools.com

www.sce-web.com

Admissions to SCE schools

Age of first admission

Children are admitted termly to foundation stage 1 settings. A child is eligible for admission from the beginning of the term following his / her third birthday. For this purpose, terms are defined as beginning on 1 September, 1 January, and 1 April regardless of actual term dates.

Children are admitted annually to foundation stage 2 classes. A child is eligible for admission from the beginning of the school year following his / her fourth birthday. For this purpose, the school year is defined as beginning on 1 September regardless of actual term dates.

Admission to an SCE school as a boarder

For children who live beyond daily travelling distance of an SCE secondary school, SCE maintains boarding houses at King's School in Gutersloh and Windsor School at Rheindahlen.

Admission to boarding is subject to the parents' / carers' written agreement to accept a range of responsibilities.

Headteachers of SCE boarding schools have the right to refuse admission as a boarder.

For further information about boarding places please refer to HQ SCE, www.sce-web.com

Parental preference

Children of entitled parents normally attend the designated SCE school for their quartering area. However, parents have a right, as they do in the UK, to express a preference for a place at an alternative SCE school. Places, other than at the designated school, will only be allocated if there is spare capacity at the preferred school.

Retention of children in SCE secondary schools

Children attending SCE schools overseas normally move with their families on posting. Some children will be studying for public examinations, to be taken at age 16 and beyond, and may have reached a stage in their course when a change of school would reduce their chances of success. Subject to certain conditions these children will be permitted to remain at school until they have completed their examinations.

Further information about retention is available from info@scschools.com

Entitlement to education free of cost to parents

Children of the following personnel are entitled to education in SCE schools free of cost to parents if their posting overseas is recognised officially:

- Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force
- children of United Kingdom-based civilian staff and employees of the MOD and its agencies.
- some children of loan service personnel: For clarification, please refer to HQ SCE
- children of parents serving on exchange with British Forces where reciprocal arrangements exist: For clarification please refer to HQ SCE
- children of staff of other government departments who are recruited and based in the United Kingdom, if the department concerned has approved the attendance of the children in SCE schools and has agreed to meet the fees determined by SCE, which are published annually.
- for the British section of SHAPE school only: children of parents who have non fee-paying status under the SHAPE International School Memorandum of Understanding

Application for admission to an SCE school should be made by the parents / carers to the headteacher of the school. Parents / carers must complete the appropriate admission form and have it certified by their employing unit confirming their child's entitlement to free education in a SCE school.

Entitled fee-paying pupils

There are three categories of entitled fee-paying pupils:

- children of United Kingdom-based employees of the service institutions and welfare organisations
 - SSVC / BFBS
 - NAAFI
 - Meteorological Office
 - SSAFA-Forces Help
 - Relate
 - Homestart
 - Salvation Army
 - Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association (SASRA)
 - YMCA

- YWCA
- Other Council for Voluntary Welfare Workers (CVWW) Member Organisations
- Field Commissioner, BFG Scout Organisation
- Probation Service
- BFG Health Services (civilian personnel)
- children of US forces personnel whose admission to an SCE school is approved by DoDDS
- children of members of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) whose countries are signatories to the ARRC Agreement
 - Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and USA

Application for admission of an entitled fee-paying child to an SCE school should be made by the parents / carers to the headteacher of the school.

Admission is subject to the availability of a place in the school.

For further clarification please refer to HQ SCE www.sce-web.com

Admission of non-entitled children

Where there is spare capacity at an SCE school, non-entitled children may be admitted on a fee-paying basis.

Application for admission of a non-entitled child to an SCE school should be made by the parents / carers to the headteacher of the school.

For further clarification please refer to HQ SCE info@scschools.com

7.3 c) Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families' Association (SSAFA) Forces Help

SSAFA is a charity that has been established to provide a range of support to current and former service personnel and their families. This support includes:

- welfare services
- financial support
- social work

- health care
- housing
- family support
- friendship

SSAFA Forces Help provides a range of social work services to military personnel and their families around the world. The services offered vary in each location but may include counselling and advice on general problems, adoption, recruiting and supporting foster carers, assessing and delivering services to children in need (including protecting children) and registering childminders and providers of childcare.

The family escort service provides volunteers who can accompany service families and/or their dependants who are travelling to and from or within the UK where public transport would be difficult to use. In the UK services include the personal support and social work service RAF. The services provided to the RAF community are tailored to meet the diverse needs of both serving personnel and families. With the serving person having to spend increasing amounts of time away from home on deployments around the world, the pressures upon the individual and upon the family are increasing and becoming more complex.

Personnel and families are supported when they are redeployed. Support is offered in various forms such as emotional preparation addressing practical concerns and helping individuals and families to adjust to and settle into their new environment. This entails linking in with other military and civilian agencies such as health, education, and local authority children/adult services. This is multi agency co-operation aimed at ensuring that the individual and families adapt to their own surroundings and communities.

Information about these services in the way of flyers and contact details are available from the RAF/SSAFA Forces Help and should be displayed in schools and communities to highlight the diverse range of services provided by SSAFA Forces Help.

7.4 (d) Army Welfare Service (AWS)

AWS is a mixed military and civilian organisation that delivers welfare support to army personnel and their families. AWS has 3 main delivery strands: community support,

personal support and HIVE. It operates across GB and NI, Germany and other overseas theatres and works with, but is separate from, a soldier's 'chain of command', offering comprehensive confidential advice and support (subject to civilian and military law).

With regard to education in England, many welfare support officers, who lead AWS teams in their respective areas of the country, have been identified by the MOD as 'Points of Contact' between army (and, sometimes tri-service) communities and educational communities in one or more local authority. The main purpose of this aspect of their work is to facilitate effective communication and, where appropriate, partnership working between army/tri-service communities, Children's services directorates, children's trusts and schools. Such work is intended to be undertaken at strategic, local and individual family levels, often in partnership with CEAS.

Schools and/or local authorities who wish to identify the point of contact for their areas should contact CEAS for confirmation of his/her identity and contact details.

7.5 (e) Naval Personal and Family Service and Royal Marine Welfare (NPFS/RMW)

NPFS offers:

- a comprehensive social work service to Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families
- a professional service to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Executive and Divisional / Regimental system
- a link between the service person and their family in times of difficulty
- a proactive community service
- NPFS RN HIVE information service and RM HIVE
- fully moderated community forums

Services provided by NPFS:

- direct, or in conjunction with other agencies, advice, counselling, support (practical or emotional), advocacy on behalf of clients

These services are available to individuals, couples or families and whilst this list is by no means exhaustive it includes:

- relationship problems
- bereavement
- debt advice
- child Care concerns
- mental Health
- special Needs
- NOK Support for deployed personnel
- physical Illness
- pregnancy complications

7.6 (f) RAF community support

The RAF community primarily includes RAF personnel and their families and reserve personnel and their families but can also extend to wider groups connected with the RAF.

The RAF is proud of its personnel and believes that the RAF is more effective and cohesive as a result of the support they receive from their families. Because the RAF demands sacrifices from its servicemen and women and because their families support their serving loved ones, the RAF feels passionately that it should offer support and welfare provision to the RAF community.

Whilst the RAF provides community support to service personnel, reservists and their immediate family members, it recognises that there is no generic family model and that one size does not fit all. RAF families come in many shapes and sizes and, therefore, a variety of support services is offered to meet their various needs. In order to do this, teams at each RAF Unit and specialists embedded in Joint Units and within RAF HQ at Air Command are able provide information, practical support and guidance on a range of personnel issues.

The RAF places unique demands on its service personnel and their families, particularly when personnel are deployed overseas on operations and also at home supporting operations. The vital role of the RAF's Community Support Team is to ensure that the service person deploys knowing that their family will be well supported. This team offers specialist advice and points of contact for families and aims to foster a vibrant online community through the RAF community support website both for those families living on base and those who are located further away

from their home unit. There is a range of supporting resources for children to help them cope with separation and to maintain contact with their serving parent.

The role of community support is to influence policy in the best interests of the service and to ensure that RAF personnel and their families are housed appropriately to enable them to focus on the work related demands that are placed upon them. The RAF recognises that moving families has an impact on children and their education and it works hard to mitigate that disruption. The RAF Community Support Team is enormously proud of the strong partnership that it has developed with the RAF Benevolent Fund in providing childcare facilities, play parks and youth activities through their 'Airplay' initiative, delivered locally by Community Development Officers (CDOs). 'Airplay' provides children and young people aged 0 to 19 with exciting and challenging activities in addition to developing opportunities for RAF dependants to come together with their peers including other service children to feel part of a wider Service community. CDOs identify the key community needs and issues and co-ordinate the actions required to address these. They also act as an interface with local authorities and other external agencies to access provision through, for example, Community Covenant partnerships and ensure that the educational needs of service children are kept to the fore.

RAF HIVEs are often at the very centre of its communities. HIVEs provide a focus for tri-service, local and national information and assist families with solving many of their day to day problems including those related to schooling, employment for spouses and housing. RAF HIVEs also provide family information packs during deployment.

The RAF community support team works closely with many service charities and the RAF could not support its families as well as it does without the help it receives from them. RAF families are supported, both individually and through larger initiatives, by charities including the RAF Benevolent Fund, RAF Central Fund, Nuffield Trust, RAF Association and the RAF Charitable Trust and it is extremely grateful for their contribution to and continued support for its work.

RAF families are, in many ways, no different to those in wider society and they may face many of the same daily difficulties. The RAF aims to assist its families by offering specialist welfare support, including access to SSAFA's professional social work services 24 hours a day.

7.7 (g) Army Families' Federation (AFF)

The Army Families Federation (AFF) is an independent, worldwide charity which supports and empowers the thousands of families linked to the British army.

It helps with issues around housing, education and childcare, employment, foreign and Commonwealth, and health and additional needs. It campaigns for a fair deal for army families, and this includes TA and reserve forces.

In addition, AFF works with Army command, government ministers, and outside agencies, to provide answers to families concerns. Regularly gathering evidence to support campaigns and policy changes, AFF has been the voice of army families since 1982.

More information about the AFF can be found at: www.aff.org.uk

7.8 (h) Naval Families' Federation (NFF)

The Naval Families Federation offers an independent voice to Royal Naval and Royal Marines families. It has direct access to government, the chain of command, the MOD, service providers, other government departments and devolved administrations. The NFF represents the views and concerns of naval service families at the highest level, ensuring that the unique challenges they face are considered in the tri-service arena and when policies are reviewed. The NFF provides independent feedback and evidence to inform stakeholder discussions and to make them aware of the consequences their recommendations make on the naval service family.

The NFF can offer assistance, support and guidance to individual families on many issues including: education and childcare, accommodation, pay and allowances, access to healthcare, and community/family support.

7.9 (i) Royal Air Force Families' Federation (RAF FF)

The RAF is keen to ensure that its personnel and their families have an independent voice that enables them to raise any concerns they might have outside of the formal "chain of command". The RAF Families Federation was launched in November 2007 and its small team of 8, based at RAF Wittering, provides a confidential service to all members of the RAF family. The federation has its own website, a quarterly

magazine (“Envoy”) and can be found on both Facebook and Twitter. It also conducts online surveys and runs a programme of unit liaison visits to gather evidence about issues causing concern to RAF personnel and their families. The reports compiled from this evidence are passed to senior RAF and MOD staffs, and ministers, to ensure that the policy makers are aware of the impact of their future decisions on RAF families. The RAF FF works closely with unit staff and operates in partnership with RAF HIVEs and relevant service charities, such as SSAFA-FH, to provide 2-way communication between the RAF and its families. The RAF FF is parented by the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA).

7.10 (j) HIVE information services

- The Army HIVE information service

“The Army HIVE information service supports the chain of command and the service community through the delivery and feedback of up to date and relevant information.”

The HIVE information service is available to all members of the service community providing comprehensive information support to the regular forces, TA and reservists and their families and dependants.

Across UK the army’s HIVE Information Support Officers (HISOs) manage their HIVE information centre from where they source and deliver an extensive range of information on service and civilian matters covering assignments, transition, operational deployment support, local facilities, housing, healthcare, education, employment and welfare referrals. They work closely with their local authorities and agencies to ensure up to date local information is readily available for the service user. Each HIVE maintains a local Blog to ensure that news update and information for their local communities is available at all times.

HISOs are not trained in welfare counselling but are able to advise on referral to those professional agencies best suited to an individual’s circumstances. All HIVE staff are bound to the army’s code of confidentiality.

The HIVE Service is recognised and valued across the armed forces for its professional delivery, initiative and commitment to its many users.

- RAF HIVE

“RAF HIVE information offices support the chain of command and tri-service

community through the provision of up to date and relevant information.”

RAF HIVE information officers are able to provide an extensive range of information on relocation, the local unit and civilian facilities, places of interest, schools and further education, housing, healthcare facilities, employment and training opportunities.

Communication is fast and effective. RAF HIVE staff network worldwide, resourcing national and local information as needed. Information on future relocations is one of the key areas of information support and is available either in advance or on arrival at the receiving unit. RAF HIVE staffs are also involved in providing operational deployment support, including information on ways of communicating with deployed personnel and other useful info.

RAF HIVE information officers are not trained in welfare counselling, however, they are able to offer initial support to individuals and can advise referral to those professional agencies best suited to the individual’s circumstances. All RAF HIVE staff are bound by a Code of Confidentiality.

RAF HIVEs provide a comprehensive information service; it is recognised and valued by the chain of command and tri-service communities for its professional approach, initiative and commitment to deliver.

Contact your local RAF HIVE for further information and assistance.

[Ministry of Defence HIVE Website](#) (including tri-service HIVEs)

[HIVE Europe Website](#) (including Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy)

8. Liaison with military communities

The distinct nature of life in and with the armed services ensures that service communities share many common bonds and experiences, both negative and positive. From the outside they can appear to be self-sufficient and separate from other members of local communities.

Conversely, service communities can perceive that those local communities that they move into do not always understand their needs and are treated more favourably by local services than they are. Many service personnel and their families are used to

various forms of provision being allocated to them with limited choice available; the need to be pro-active in matters relating, for example, to their children's education (e.g. expressing preferences for schools) does not always immediately occur to them.

The impact of service deployments to hostile locations abroad has continued to grow as those deployments have increased in frequency in recent years and can strengthen further service communities' sense of separateness from their civilian counterparts.

Schools are ideally placed to assist in the breaking down of barriers between service and other local communities, as part of their role in establishing whole school communities. Indeed, it is vital for children from service and all other communities that any barriers are minimised without damaging the positive aspects of life with the armed services.

The transitory nature of service life and the complex structures of the armed services and the MOD sometimes make clear and consistent communication between civilian and military communities difficult to achieve and maintain. Despite this, in many locations around the country, communication and liaison are good, information is shared well and mutual understanding is developed, so that the needs of children of service personnel, their families and those that serve them in schools and local authorities can be considered and met within the context of the inevitable constraints on all parties.

Where there is a willingness between all parties to reach out, communicate and engage, liaison works well. Ways of engaging with the local service community include:

- local base/unit representation on your governing body
- negotiating extended schools' provision with local military bases
- shared strategies for dealing with the effects of deployment on children of service personnel and their families with a local unit whose personnel are deployed abroad
- ensuring that the service community is adequately represented in the paid and unpaid school work force
- sharing with local units strategies for celebrating the presence of the service community in your school
- working with service parents, children and communities prior to and in advance of moves to other locations, to minimise the negative effects of mobility
- The Armed Forces' Community Covenant Grant may be a source of funds to

support initiatives which focus on drawing service and civilian communities closer together.

Good liaison between garrisons and army brigades is essential in respect of local authorities and the schools/academy chains within their boundaries, particularly in respect of planning school places in cases of the larger scale moves of service personnel and their families. In the case of moves back from Germany, as the result of army re-basing, these are being managed by the MOD's Project Borona Team which works proactively with local authorities, schools and all other relevant public and third sector services to plan and implement such moves.

Should schools or local authorities have any difficulties in establishing good channels of communication or engagement with military bases, commands or Project Borona, they are advised to contact CEAS in the first instance.

8.1 (a) Exemplars of good liaison arrangements

As North Yorkshire has within its borders one of the largest military populations of any local authority in the country, it has, together with its schools, neighboring local authorities, the army, the MOD and DCYP, developed a pro-active approach to meeting the needs of children of service personnel and their families. This approach includes the development of resources for school leaders to support in them in managing successfully the implications of providing for children of service personnel, in large or small numbers and the convening, each year, of an Information Sharing Day; this enables best practice to be shared, not only within North Yorkshire but also with colleagues from outside the county and within the military and MOD frameworks.

Within this context and pre-dating it, Catterick Garrison is one of the largest garrisons in the country. The Catterick Education Forum meets termly; it contains representation from the garrison, schools serving the garrison and the surrounding area, the local authority (including, when appropriate, attendance from local authority services outside the schools' sector), AWS and CEAS. It has been established for many years and exists to meet the challenges posed by providing effectively for a large service community and to maximize the opportunities.

The forum, with the support of the resources available in a larger base, has been able to facilitate visits to Northern Ireland and overseas by headteachers, AWS and CEAS to brief and offer support to incoming families. It is chaired by the point of contact for North Yorkshire who also sits, with a colleague from CEAS, on that

county's Admissions Forum. The direct contact and communication between the military and educational communities minimizes misunderstandings and is a major force in that area in mitigating the effects of service-induced mobility.

A similar forum has been established in York by the local authority, to enable information to be shared regarding the movements and deployments of service personnel and their families and also to consider the ways in which the achievement, attainment and well-being of children of service personnel can best be improved by schools and the local authority, working in partnership with the local military community.

In the light of the transitions of significant numbers of children of service personnel from Germany to Rutland in 2012 and 2013, as the result of the drawdown from Germany, Rutland County Council established two special sub-committees to work with the military units concerned and their chain of command in the UK to ensure that the transitions take place as smoothly as possible for all stakeholders in the process.

In Staffordshire, in the light of the possible transitions into the county of a significant number of additional children of service personnel from Germany from 2015 and the subsequent engagement of the MOD's Project Borona team with the County Council and Stafford Borough Council, forums of headteachers and local authority education officers have been established to start to plan for the transitions, should ministers confirm the base in Stafford as a location for them.

In Gloucestershire, the local authorities involved, together with other local public services, the MOD, DCYP and the Command established, under the auspices of Project Borona, an effective working partnership to facilitate the transition of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) from Germany to Gloucester in the summer of 2010. The ARRC is a multi-national Corps, staffed by personnel from a range of NATO countries, a third of which move each summer. Following on from this, CEAS continues to facilitate on-going liaison between the ARRC, other units based at Imjin Barracks in Gloucester and the local authority's admissions and SEN teams to ensure that these regular transitions of service children, from a range of nations, have their educational needs met as effectively and smoothly as possible. Consideration is also being given to wider, more coherent liaison in Gloucestershire between military and educational communities in the county.

In Hampshire, the Community Development Officer at RAF Odiham convenes a termly meeting of local headteachers, together with CEAS to share information and to address any issues of mutual interest or concern.

In Wiltshire, the local authority, with the support of many of its headteachers has

covenanted for several years an annual conference on the education of service children which focuses on the sharing of good practice and relevant information.

In Plymouth, the local authority has been the driver behind the establishment of an exciting project called 'HMS Heroes' which involves schools and service children directly in activities which help to celebrate their status and needs as children of service personnel and to represent the service community with pride. 'HMS Heroes' is spreading, with the help of charitable and other funding, across the UK and not just to Royal Navy communities. More information about 'HMS Heroes' can be found at:

www.plymouthcurriculum.swgfl.org.uk/hmsheroes

There are other similar forums around the country and no 'one size fits all' approach is advocated. The size, membership and purposes of a local forum must be determined locally but it has certainly been the case that, where the types of forums outlined in this sub-section exist, there are better opportunities for all interested parties to work successfully together to meet the needs of children of service personnel and their families.

9. Admissions to schools

In England, in particular, admissions have become a complex issue for all concerned. The [School Admissions Code](#) and the [School Admissions Appeals Code](#) set out the statutory requirements on all those with responsibilities for admissions to schools and all matters relating to admissions should be dealt with within the boundaries of these requirements. The School Admissions Code gives specific guidance, some of which is mandatory, in respect of children of service personnel and their admissions to schools.

It is, of course, entirely appropriate to refuse to admit a child to a year group if the published admission number has been reached or exceeded, although the 2012 code does give admissions authorities limited flexibility in admitting children over numbers or in increasing published admission numbers in certain circumstances. Paragraph 2.15 (f) enables admission authorities and, by implication, independent admission appeal panels to allow exceptions to statutory infant class size limits in respect of in-year applications for incoming mobile children of service personnel in key stage 1. It is essential that service parents are responded to in line with the requirements of the codes and that, throughout any appeal process, schools and their admissions authorities balance their own need to defend appeals with an

understanding of the needs and circumstances of service families moving into areas, often at times outside the normal admissions round.

Service parents should be made aware that they can obtain information and support with admissions issues and admissions appeals from CEAS.

10. Data transfer of children's schooling records

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, we recommend that schools do more 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 United Kingdom and includes 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 specifies the information which must be transferred securely using the department's school-2-school system (DfE's S2S) and common transfer file. This must be done within 15 school days of a pupil ceasing to be registered at the old school.

We also recommend 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. Then where gaps in knowledge and understanding are identified, 'catch up' or intervention programmes should be organised immediately, making use of flexibility that is deliberately built into the staffing structure. However, all early assessments should be handled sensitively to ensure that the pupils do not see it as a very stressful start to the new school.

Schools that do not receive a common transfer file from the pupil's previous school may ask their local authority to search this database. Also, if the new school is

unknown, the department recommends that the school should still complete the common transfer file and load it on the s2s secure file transfer service area on the department's website.

To access the s2s secure file transfer service and download a useful handbook for schools and for LAs please visit:

[s2s secure file transfer service](#)

North Yorkshire County Council, in collaboration with the MOD's DCYP, is producing a resource, called a 'Pupil Information Profile', to support schools in the timely electronic transfer of curricular and other information about mobile children of service personnel, regardless of where in the world they may be moving from or to. Further information about this will become available in the school year 2013/14.

11. Moving school packs

There is a wide variety of views amongst schools across the UK about the nature and quantity of additional information it is useful for receiving schools to obtain on incoming pupils.

CEAS, in conjunction with the HIVE information service, has produced, for primary aged service children and their families, an information pack called 'Moving School'. This pack consists of three booklets: two for parents and one for each child. The first booklet gives parents advice on the kind of additional information schools may find helpful when a child is admitted so that, on or prior to the child's arrival, the information can be passed to the receiving school to assist in its initial assessments of abilities, interests and needs. The booklet also provides advice on the issues to consider and to ask about when visiting and considering schools, as well as a template for recording a parental copy of the names and contact details of all a child's previous schools.

The second booklet provides each child with a framework for recording for a new school those pieces of information about him or herself he/she believes to be important. It also prompts the child to undertake activities which will help prepare him/her for the change of schools and encourages him/her to record the contact details of those friends from which they will be parted.

The third booklet provides a template for parents to record for receiving schools the

names and contact details of all their children's previous schools.

All three booklets are downloadable as pdf files from the CEAS web site at: www.gov.uk/childrens-education-advisory-service.

Children moving to or from schools in the devolved administrations (particularly Northern Ireland and Scotland) pose particular problems for receiving schools, in terms of initial assessments, because of the differences in curriculum and assessment arrangements in those two countries. What is considered to be useful information about children's abilities and needs in English schools (e.g. SATS levels) may not be thought so useful in the other three home countries. Similarly, information from a school in, say, Northern Ireland, about children's reading ages may not be thought so useful in an English context.

12. Ofsted and schools' self-evaluation

Advice from Ofsted suggests that each school's self evaluation would benefit from including a clear description of the features that characterise a school's context, and which mitigate the negative impact on outcomes for pupils of different types of mobility and other unsettling factors, due to parents' military deployment.

For example, a self-evaluation could ask about:

- the extent and patterns of mobility that have affected learners in a school
- the strategies used in school to rapidly mitigate the negative impact mobility might have on learners' achievement
- the evaluation of the impact of a school's strategies; for example, by reference to learners' outcomes in standards, achievement and personal development
- the extent to which the school has rigorously sought information from the school that pupils come from; or quickly transmit information to the schools to where pupils are going, to ensure continuity
- comments should be made on any particular strengths or weaknesses of a school's provision identified by the evaluation

13. Funding schools with children of

service personnel

Clearly, the introduction and subsequent expansion of the Service Pupils' Premium, together with the monies available until, at least, 2014/15 through the Support Fund for State Schools with Service Children (the £3million Fund) have been very welcome. However, these initiatives have coincided with cuts in education expenditure elsewhere which have made it more challenging, in some schools, to meet the particular needs of children of service personnel, together with those of the other communities they serve.

Further to this, School Funding Reform, from April 2013, will affect school budgets either adversely or positively, depending on the impact of the changes on the funding arrangements made prior to this time. It seems clear that some schools, including some serving military communities will be adversely affected, some to a very large degree. Whilst the DfE have made it clear that a minimum funding guarantee will try to ensure that those schools experiencing large losses of income will incur those losses gradually, rather than suddenly, the full impact of the losses will have to be managed at school level eventually. The DfE has undertaken to continue to consult stakeholders in the lead up to the establishment of a national funding formula but some SCISS schools and local authorities are already expressing concern about the impact these changes are likely to have, not only on provision in general in such schools but provision for children of service personnel in particular.

The House of Commons Defence Committee launched, during the course of 2013, a further enquiry into the education of children of service personnel worldwide. It has indicated its intention to consider what might be the most effective method of allocating the Service Pupils' Premium, in the light of the fact that it may be easier to deploy the resource in a school with large numbers of children of service personnel than in one with only a handful on roll.

SCISS and CEAS would be very interested in any information from schools which sets out clearly and specifically the financial implications of providing effectively for children of service personnel, both in terms of provision which is made and provision which could be made if the resources were available. Schools are asked to provide information about the ways in which they use the Service Pupil Premium so that examples of good practice can continue to be posted on the DfE website at:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/pastoralcare/a00212882/service-children.

Any information should be emailed to Olivia Denson (Assistant Director, CYP (CEAS))

- MOD - Vice Chair) at: enquiries@ceas.uk.com or posted to:

Mrs O Denson
Assistant Director (CTP) CEAS - MOD - Vice Chair
Trenchard Lines
Upavon
Pewsey
Wiltshire
SN9 6BE

Service children in state schools

National Executive Advisory Committee members

Name	Post / Organisation
Grahame Shepherd	Headteacher, Le Cateau Primary School (North Yorkshire) Chair
Olivia Denson	Assistant Director CYP (CEAS) - MOD - Vice Chair
Jeremy Watt	Deputy Head of Service, CEAS - MOD
Mary Kiely	Interim Lead for Admissions and Access (Nottinghamshire)
David Fugurally	DfE
Matt Blyton	Education Development Advisor (0-19 Vulnerable Learners), (North Yorkshire)
Coryn Bell	Assistant Headteacher, The Priors LSST (Lincolnshire)
Alex Bostock	Retired Headteacher, (Wiltshire)
Mike Curtis	Headteacher, Carterton Primary School (Oxfordshire)
Hilary Alcock	Headteacher, Buntingsdale Infants School (Shropshire)
John Stephens	Headteacher, Goosewell Primary School, Plymouth
Amanda Rowley	Headteacher, The Wavell School (Hampshire)
Mike Chislett	Inspector Adviser, SCE Germany

Glossary of terms

AFF	Army Families Federation
AWPU	Age Weighted Pupil Unit
AWS	Army Welfare Service
BSA	Boarding School Association
CA04	Child Act 2004
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
CDW	Community Development Worker
CEA	Continuity of Education Allowance
CEAS	Children's Education Advisory Service
CTF	Common Transfer File
DFE	Department For Education
EAL	English as an Academic Language
EMTAG	Ethnic Minorities and Travellers' Achievement Grant
EP	Educational Psychologist
HIVE	Services' Local Information Centre
LA	Local Authority
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NC	National Curriculum
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NFF	Navy Families Federation
NPFS	Naval Personnel & Families Service
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
RAFA	Royal Air Force Association
RAF FF	RAF Families Federation
RMW	Royal Marines Welfare

SATS	Standard Attainment Tests
SBSA	State Boarding School Association
SCE	Service Children's Education
SCEF	Service Children's Education Forum
SCISS	Service Children in State Schools
SEF	Self Evaluation Form
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
SENCO	SEN Coordinator
DCDS PERS	Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Personnel
SSAFA	Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association
Tri-Service	The Armed Forces (Army, Navy & RAF)
UWO	Unit Welfare Officer

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