

Service Children Strategy Rationale: Brampton Village Primary School

Why do we need a Service Child Strategy?

We need to ensure that we have effective monitoring of compliance with legal duties, SPP spending and impact of interventions.

The Thriving Lives Toolkit

It is important that the support available to Service children is effective in meeting their unique needs. The Service Children's Progression Alliance (SCiP) has created the Thriving Lives Toolkit to provide schools with an evidence-based framework of 7 principles of effective support.

The 7 principles of effective support identified in the Thriving Lives Toolkit are:

<u>Principle</u>	<u>Vision</u>
1. Our approach is clear	Leaders' understanding and approach ensure resources and strategies improve Armed Forces children's outcomes
2. Wellbeing is supported	Tailored pastoral provision supports Armed Forces children's mental health and wellbeing
3. Achievement is maximised	Teaching, assessment and support ensure the continuity of Armed Forces children's learning and progression
4. Transition is effective	Systems and support ensure seamless transitions for Armed Forces children arriving at and leaving school
5. Children are heard	Armed Forces children's diverse voices are heard and inform the support they receive
6. Parents are engaged	Strong home-school partnerships help Armed Forces families feel valued as part of the school community
7. Staff are well-informed	Supportive training and networks ensure all staff understand and support each Armed Forces child

Service Pupil Champion Role Description

Key responsibilities of the role:

- to act as the school's strategic lead for Service Children, focusing on identifying the barriers faced by eligible pupils in the school.
- to coordinate activities in the school that support Service Children to achieve positive outcomes using the SPP.
- to champion and advocate for the specific needs of Service Children and to recognise the impact this may have on their mental and social wellbeing.
- to measure the impact of the SPP spending in school.
- to liaise with the governing body, the local community and local Armed Forces Bases to raise the profile of Service Children in the school.
- to communicate with staff so that they are well-informed and know how to support and understand each service child.

Service Pupil Premium

The Department for Education introduced the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in April 2011 in recognition of the specific challenges children from service families face and as part of the commitment to delivering the Armed Forces Covenant.

State schools, academies and free schools in England, that have children of service families in school years Reception to Year 11, can receive the SPP funding. It is designed to assist the school in providing the additional support that these children may need and is currently worth £335 per service child who meets the eligibility criteria.

What Service Pupil Premium can be spent on

To support the pastoral needs of service children, schools have flexibility over how they use the SPP, as they are best placed to understand and respond to the specific needs of those pupils for whom the funding has been allocated. The funding could be spent on providing a variety of means of support including counselling provision, nurture groups.

Schools might also consider how to improve the level of and means of communication between the child and their deployed parents. In addition, staff hours may be required to support the needs of service children when they join a new school because of a posting or when a parent is deployed and these hours could be funded by the Service Pupil Premium.

Whilst schools will not use the money to subsidise school trips to support curriculum based learning, schools may choose to fund specific school trips just for service children, to help them enjoy their time at school and build a sense of a wider community and understanding of the role their service parent plays (e.g. with military specific trips) to help them cope with the potential strains of service life.

Brampton Village Primary School

Service Children Strategy

At Brampton Village Primary School, we ensure effective monitoring of compliance with legal duties, SPP spending and impact of interventions.

BVPS supports the transition of Service pupils prior to the pupils arriving at the school. In the first instance this includes:

- sharing a bespoke pack for the pupil, with a photo and message from their new teacher and detailed school information for parents.
- allocation of a ‘buddy’ on arrival at the school and have settling in sessions with the Service family pastoral lead over the first few weeks.
- a phone call home to parents/ carers at the end of the first week to communicate how the transition has gone. This ensures that pupils are welcomed and settled into the school quickly and any issues can be identified and addressed.

Once the initial transition period is complete, support is ongoing with opportunities for Service families to be brought together for educational experiences and pastoral support at key points in the school year. This includes:

- support for pupils if their parent(s) is deployed by having a weekly session with a family support coordinator, where they can complete activities such as writing ‘blueys’ (aerogramme letters that can be sent free of charge to serving personnel overseas) or making a video call to their parent who is away.
- online/virtual parents’ evenings which are a positive opportunity for parents who are away to connect with the school and stay involved in their child’s education.
- a deployment form online, where parents fill in the dates and details of upcoming deployments. This enables staff to know which pupils require additional support.
- an online parent forum to facilitate communication with parents of Service pupils.
- A monthly meet up in a Service Student Group. These group sessions are led by the Service Child Champion adult and/or pastoral TA and allows older pupils to provide peer support for fellow service pupils - especially at times of deployment and transition as well as allow time for planned wellbeing activities to take place.