



Service Families' Newsletter



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Preparing For School



The Best Start in Life programme provides information, advice and support for families during this important period. Support can include pregnancy and maternity services, infant feeding, parenting advice, baby development, early communication and emotional wellbeing.

For Service families, accessing the right support can sometimes feel more challenging when moving between locations. Your local Family Hub can be a useful starting point for finding out what support is available in your area

Find out what's available for you and your family and make the most of the support on offer : [City of York Council Plan](#)



Preparing for school

Boost your child's school readiness with everyday activities. First practical tips for preparing for school and building confidence at every stage.

[Best Start in Life](#)

Transition: Supporting Service Families through Change

Change is a natural part of life. Moving to a new area, starting a new school, making new friends or adjusting to a parent being away can be exciting, but it can also feel challenging for children and families.

That's why transition support is so important. The right support at the right time can help children feel safe, confident and connected as they navigate change.

☀ Helping children settle in – giving them time, space and encouragement to feel at home in a new school or community.

📖 Supporting school moves – helping children maintain friendships, learning and a sense of belonging when moving between schools.

💬 Making space for feelings – recognising that every child responds to change differently and making sure they know who they can talk to.

👉 Building connections – helping families discover local services, activities and other families who understand the service lifestyle.

🌱 Growing confidence and resilience – helping children develop the skills and confidence to manage change and embrace new experiences.

For Service families, transition can happen many times throughout a child's life. With understanding, consistency and the right support, these changes can become positive opportunities for children to grow, connect and thrive.

For more information, advice and guidance, click on the images below.



Problems at school | Mental health advice

If school feels hard right now, you're not alone. This guide shares practical tips to help you manage problems at school and find a way forward.

[Young Minds](#)



Families > Services Children's Champion

If you are a parent or carer in the Armed Forces community, this space is designed for you. Here you'll find...

[Services Children's Champion](#)



Making the change from military to civilian life

As Month of the Military Child draws to a close, we reflect on an experience all children from armed forces...

[Forces Children Scotland](#)



Defence Children Services



Education and support for children of service families | Campaigns | Royal British Legion

We have explored the challenges Service children face and produced best practice guides looking at ways to support them in school.

[The Royal British Legion](#) - Feb 11, 2019



News & Updates



EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Taking your first steps into the world of work can be daunting, especially if you've experienced life as a Service child.

Regular school moves, parent deployments, overseas assignments and gaps in education all create challenges.

The Forces Employment Charity (FEC) Families Programme supports Service children aged 16-24. Their dedicated advisors provide 1-1 advice and guidance, helping everyone realise their full potential.

Receive guidance on identifying your next steps, whether that is applying for an apprenticeship or a job, finding the right university course, training, mentoring or interview preparation, the FEC will help you future-proof your career.

Click the image below to find out more.



Do you need information about Health, welfare and wellbeing

The Families Hub online portal helps
find information on:

- Mental, physical and emotional health
- Relationship support, including separation
- Safeguarding, including domestic abuse



Find the Families Hub



Visit the [Discover my Benefits](#)

[website](#) or search for "Discover my



ONLINE EVENTS

Every Thursday in October,
starting 1 October 2026.

Educational and practical
skills to help you learn about
PTSD and trauma related
mental health.

With Dr Vicky Aldridge,
Principal Clinical
Psychologist at Combat Stress

COMBATSTRESS
STRONGER TOGETHER PROGRAMME



LOCAL OVERSEAS ALLOWANCE RATE CHANGES



From 1 October some Local Overseas Allowance (LOA) rates are going up, while some are going down, depending on the cost of living in your location.

The child rate is staying the same. The payment for a second car is reducing, this recognises the cost of running a car in the UK being lower than before.

You can find the details on defnet and Defence Connect in the directed letter 'Revised Local Overseas Allowance Rates effective from 1 October 2026.

If you'd like to provide us with any feedback about LOA please email moneysupport@aff.org.uk

Could you help improve military housing for Service families?

DIO is recruiting volunteers for its new Regional Experience Committees. It is looking for people living in SFA who want to:

- Help improve housing services
- Share local experiences and feedback
- Represent Service family voices
- Influence positive change in their region

No qualifications or experience are needed, just enthusiasm and a commitment to attend quarterly meetings over a 12-month period.

This is your chance to make a difference while gaining a better understanding of Defence housing and developing new skills along the way.

Valuing Forces Families Overseas Webinar



15th October 2026
1900-2000

Sign up to join via MS Teams

THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST
Funded by HM Government

Naval Families
FEDERATION

aff army
families
federation

ROYAL
AIR FORCE
Families
Federation
Support. Investigate. Influence.

If you're considering taking up an overseas assignment with your family this free Valuing Forces Families Overseas webinar will show you what you need to think about before you go. It'll also take you through the process and answer your questions.

VFFO is a tri-Service project run by AFF with the Naval and RAF Families Federations, and funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, to improve the overseas experience for Service families.



Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is a national promise ensuring that those who serve or have served in the British Armed Forces—along with their families and the bereaved—are treated fairly and face no disadvantage in civilian life.

What this means for schools

- The Armed Forces Covenant ensures that Service children are treated fairly, removing disadvantages caused by mobility, separation, or service life.
- State-funded schools and academies have a legal duty to have “due regard” to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when making certain education-related decisions.

Click here for more information: [Armed Forces Covenant](#)

Armed Forces Bill

The Armed Forces Bill 2026 is moving through Parliament and is currently being debated in the House of Lords.

Covenant Extension: The bill extends the Armed Forces Covenant legal duty to UK government departments, devolved administrations, and 12 policy areas (including housing, healthcare, education, social care, and employment)

The Armed Forces Covenant Duty for schools comes from the Armed Forces Act 2021, rather than schools simply choosing to participate in the Covenant.

Simplified!

Armed Forces Act 2021 → Armed Forces Covenant Duty → statutory duty for certain schools/public bodies.

Click here for more information: [Armed Forces Bill](#)



Make Sure Your Child's School Knows You're a Service Family

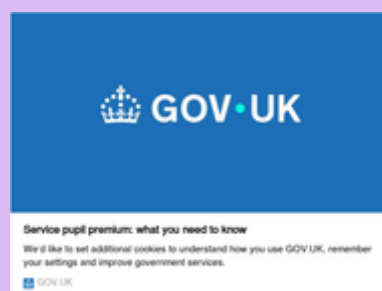
Help your child's school access Service Pupil Premium

If you're a Forces family in England with children in state education (Reception through to Year 11), please make their school aware of your Service status before the Autumn School Census on 1 October.

Schools can receive £360 per Service child via the Service Pupil Premium which enables them to provide pastoral support.

- Tell your child's school that you're a Service family.
- Eligible children in Reception-Year 11 can attract £360 SPP.
- Schools use SPP to provide pastoral and wellbeing support.
- Make sure your Service status is recorded before the 1 October school census.

Click the image below to find out more.





Lights. Camera. Action.



Beyond the Barracks

Est. 1841

YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

FILM PROJECT

York St John University | Inspired Youth

**AUTUMN
2026**

@ YORK ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY



Collaborate with professional filmmakers to share your experiences as a student from a military family

For more information, please contact:

l.clarke1@yorks.ac.uk

Travel and catering fully funded for participants

How to Apply:

The deadline for applications is **Friday 23 October 2026**.

Travel and catering will be fully funded.

The form can be found here:

https://yorks.ac.uk/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3UC0vu2hJZnyaou

There will be **2 scriptwriting workshops**, which will take place after October half term. Timings for these will be 4-6pm, and I will confirm dates with applicants as soon as possible. Filming will take place in November and will be scheduled to suit participants.

Anyone interested in finding out more can get in touch with me via email: l.clarke1@yorks.ac.uk

The Beyond the Barracks Film project is a collaboration with professional filmmakers Inspired Youth and aims to showcase the lived experiences of post-16 students from military Service families.

We have relaunched the film project this autumn, and applications are currently open for sixth form and college students from military Service families. In addition to experiencing a university campus, participants will gain firsthand insight into the world of filmmaking, collaborating on all aspects of the process including scriptwriting and production. They will also get to meet other young people from military Service families in the local area and contribute their lived experiences to an informative short film which will be shared widely with young people, educators, and professional stakeholders.

We hope that the short film produced will raise awareness of the experiences of students from military families, enabling educators and other professionals working with young people to provide enhanced support.

As part of this film project, you will:

- ✳ Share your unique experiences as a student from a military family.
- ✳ Get firsthand insight into the world of filmmaking, including scriptwriting and production.
- ✳ Co-create an informative short film which will be shared with educators, professional staff, and young people.
- ✳ Be invited to a film screening to celebrate and launch your work.
- ✳ Meet other young people from military families in your local area.

TO APPLY:
SCAN THE QR CODE
DEADLINE: FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER



Beyond the Barracks

Est. 1841

YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY



Competiton Time!



International Competiton Launch

The Never Such Innocence International Competition is now OPEN!

This is the 12th annual International Competition. This year, NSI are inviting young people aged 9 to 18 from around the world to share their perspectives through our new theme:

"Through My Eyes"

This year's theme invites participants to explore war and conflict through their own eyes. Through their original creative work, young people can explore perspective, storytelling and voice. They might consider how their identity, culture, heritage and experiences shape the way they see the world, tell stories from their lives, families, communities or history, and explore the issues that matter most to them.

Young people can respond through three creative categories:



Entrants may submit one entry in each category. This gives every young person three chances to win. Individual and group entries are welcome.

KEY DETAILS

Deadline: 26 February 2027

Who can enter?: Young people aged 9 to 18 from anywhere in the world.

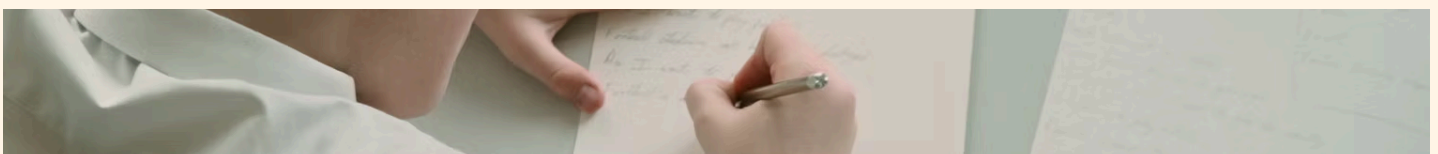
Prizes: Winners will have their work published and showcased internationally and receive an NSI prize pack

Certificates: All participants will receive a personalised digital certificate of commendation

How to Enter: Visit our [competition page](#) to view full guidelines and submit your work.



NEVER SUCH INNOCENCE





Useful contacts

Connecting you

Here are some helpful local and community contacts, all in one place. Whether you're looking for advice, support, or simply someone to talk to, I hope you find them useful — and please feel free to share them with others in our community.

Army Welfare Service

For all Personal Support enquiries and referrals please contact the Intake and Assessment Team (the AWS welfare single point of contact) at:

RC-AWS-IAT-OMailbox@mod.gov.uk or 01904 882053 (civ) / 94777 3053 (mil)

21 Multi-Role Medical Regiment

Welfare Officer: Christine Hawkins

Email: 21MMR-RHQ-WELFARE-
OMAILBOX@MOD.GOV.UK
Tel: 01904 442989

(Out of hours welfare please call the guardroom on 01904 442864 and ask for the Duty Welfare Officer)

Unit Welfare Clerk
Mrs Susan Wilson
Email: 34Hosp-rhq-welfare-clerk@mod.gov.uk

2 Signals Regiment

UWO: Capt Mark Davies
WO2 Carl White

2sig-spsqn-welfare-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk
Civ: 01904 651572 | Welfare Mob : 07973817562

Service Families' Liaison Officer

Beccy Dixon
r.dixon@ebor.academy
Tel: 07895202551



Together for Our Service Children

A message from me...

Moving On and Moving Forward

Change is a natural part of life. While new beginnings can bring excitement and opportunities, they can also bring uncertainty and mixed emotions.

If you are due to transition or move, remember that it is perfectly normal for everyone in the family to respond to change differently. Take things one step at a time, talk openly together, and give yourselves time to adjust. Small steps, familiar routines and staying connected with the people who matter can all help make the transition feel more manageable.

As you look ahead to the next chapter, take time to celebrate the journey so far and look forward to what lies ahead. Every transition is different, and there is no right or wrong way to experience change.

Wherever your next journey takes you, we hope it brings new opportunities, positive experiences and lasting connections.

Wishing you and your family all the very best for the transition ahead.

Beccy 

