

Briefing Note for Schools: Service Pupil Premium (SPP)

Dear colleagues,

By helping to identify service children, schools can make a real difference to pupils and families who may be experiencing the unique challenges of service life. This briefing note explains what the Service Pupil Premium is, who is eligible, and how schools can help ensure children receive the pastoral support and additional funding available.

What is the Service Pupil Premium?

The Service Pupil Premium (SPP) is additional funding provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to support children and young people from armed forces families. It was introduced in recognition of the unique challenges that service children may experience, including parental deployment, family separation, mobility between schools, and transitions associated with military life.

For the 2026–27 financial year, schools receive **£360 per eligible service child**. The funding is intended primarily to provide pastoral support and help mitigate the impact of service life on educational engagement and wellbeing.

Why is it Important to Identify Service Children?

Many service children do not self-identify, and schools may be unaware that they are eligible for support and funding.

Identifying service children helps schools to:

Who is Eligible?

A pupil may be eligible if:

- A parent is currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces, including Full-Time Reserve Service.
- A parent serves in the armed forces of another nation and is stationed in England.
- The pupil has been recorded as a service child in any school census within the last six years ("Ever 6" measure).
- A parent died while serving in the armed forces, and the child receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or War Pensions Scheme.

What Schools Can Do

To ensure eligible pupils are identified and supported, schools are encouraged to:

1. Ask the Question

Include a service child identification question:

- On admissions forms.
- During annual data checks.
- Within parent/carers surveys and communications.

2. Raise Awareness

Share information with parents and carers about:

- What SPP is.
- How the funding benefits children.
- Why schools need families to declare service status.

3. Record Accurately

Ensure eligible pupils are correctly recorded in the school census. Service personnel are encouraged to notify schools of their child's service status before the Autumn Census to support accurate funding allocations.

4. Use the Funding Effectively

Examples of support include:

- Emotional wellbeing and pastoral support.
- Transition support for new pupils.
- Peer support and service children groups.
- Activities that help maintain connections during deployments.
- Staff training to better understand the experiences of service families.

Key Message for Parents

If you are a serving member of the Armed Forces, have left the Armed Forces within the last six years, or your child is otherwise eligible under the Service Pupil Premium criteria, please inform your child's school. This information enables the school to access additional funding and support for your child.

Further Information

Service Pupil Premium guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know>

Coventry is proud to support the Armed Forces community through the Armed Forces Covenant and encourages all schools to help identify and support service children within their school communities.