

Definition of a Service child

The [SSCE Cymru](#) definition of a Service child is:

- A person whose parent, or primary carer, serves in the regular armed forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life.

The definition of a Service child varies between different organisations but are always consistently focused on supporting children of Service personnel.

Experiences of Service children

May include:

- Emotional impact of separation during deployment/training
- Frequent school and home moves
- Missing curriculum content/duplicating curriculum content
- Making friends
- Adapting to different curriculums
- Living in different countries
- Learning Welsh for the first time
- Missing friends and family
- Impact on family lifestyle when parent/s transition out of the Armed Forces.

[See the SSCE Cymru video on Service children experiences for an overview](#)

Our commitment and support

School ethos and 'Rights of the Child'

The [UNCRC](#) recognises that children are in a different situation than adults and will often have varied needs because childhood involves stages of physical and emotional development. Our school recognises that the child of a Service family may at some point in their lives need support in learning and mental health and wellbeing due to their unique circumstances. This could be due to mobility, deployment, education and/or social needs.

At Mount Street Infant School we provide support and advice to ensure that Service children are provided with every opportunity to achieve the best possible outcomes and fulfil their potential. We aim for Service children to receive their full entitlement to statutory services and support and suffer no disadvantage due to their parent's service commitments; this is the underpinning principle of the Armed Forces Covenant. We aim to provide support that is proactive and preventative as well as being responsive to emerging needs.

Identifying Service children

Awareness of the number of Service children at Mount Street Infant School enables us to understand their needs and access support/funding if required. On admission to the school we ask the following question as part of our enrolment process, then log the details on the internal school data systems. Annually, we share the total number of Service children enrolled at our school with [SSCE Cymru](#).

"Is the child a member of a Service family? (A child whose parent(s) is/are **currently** serving or have **previously** served in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, British Army, Royal Air Force or as a Reservist.)"

Listening to our Service children

It is important that we listen to Service children themselves to learn about their experiences and find out what support they need and what opportunities that would like. At Mount Street Infant School we do this through offering all learners an opportunity to be involved in pupil voice programmes.

Engaging with our Armed Forces community

Mount Street Infant School recognise the commitments our Armed Forces families and wider community make and we promote those achievements in the school in a positive and respectful manor. Some examples of how we engage with the Armed Forces community and celebrate the achievements of the Armed Forces include:

- We attend our local authority Armed Forces Forum to ensure we have relevant and up-to-date information and contacts
- We host Service family forums and events and offer support/advice
- We commemorate relevant events such as [Remembrance Day](#)
- We ensure all our pupils are aware of the experiences and commitments of the Armed Forces community
- We have a member of the Armed Forces community on our school Governing body
- We collaborate with other schools that have Service children to share information, advice and support.

Term-time absence policy for Service children

Mount Street Infant School recognises that Service families may not be able to take holidays together at other times during the school year. The headteacher, (Mrs S Kenchington), does have a discretionary power to authorise leave for a family holiday during term-time where parents seek permission. When submitting a request for term-time absence, a Service family should provide a letter from their unit with confirmation of their need to be absent.

When making a decision about term-time absence, the headteacher will consider:

- The time of year of the proposed absence
- The length and purpose of the absence
- The impact on continuity of learning
- The circumstances of the family and wishes of parents
- The overall attendance pattern of the child.

Support offered to Service children and their families

- We ensure all our staff have an understanding of the experiences of Service children and how this may impact their education
- We engage with SSCE Cymru and utilise the many resources that are available
- We have created a comprehensive transition pack to ensure minimal impact for Service children moving in and out of Mount Street Infant School

Funding success

Our school has been successful in securing the following funding:

- Armed Forces Covenant Fund – Local Grants
- Supporting Service Children in Education – Welsh Fund

The success of this funding has enabled us to:

School contact

For any queries regarding Service children or the support offered by (*enter school name*), please contact:
(*Enter the following details as appropriate*)

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