

SERVICE CHILDREN IN STATE SCHOOLS
HANDBOOK

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1) Introduction

SCISS (Service Children in State Schools) 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 U.K.- wide Ministry of Defence (MOD) service which provides information, guidance and support to Service families, schools and local authorities.

SCISS is a group of headteacher representatives from primary and secondary schools from many of those parts of England where significant Service communities live. The group is supported by representatives from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), MOD (Service Personnel Policy: Families), Service Children's Education (SCE – responsible for the provision of education to Service children in a number of locations abroad) and CEAS. The working group meets at least three times a year to advise Government and to develop, through an action plan, strategies, of which this handbook is one, which can help schools in England to provide more effectively for the Service children on their rolls.

CEAS holds a list of English state schools which it believes provide for Service communities. The schools on the list have been entirely self-nominating. Schools wishing to contact CEAS or SCISS, be included on the list or removed from it should contact: enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk or the CEAS Helpline on 01980 618244.

CEAS periodically holds regional events

- to set out developments, in relation to the education of Service children,
- 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 Service children and their families with regard to education.

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. This Handbook also draws your attention to the web-based Toolkit produced by SCE for its own schools. The Toolkit, like this Handbook, focuses heavily on the impact on schools, children and families of Service-induced mobility. 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 U.K. but, in the main, England. Consequently, SCE is keen for its Toolkit to be used and contributed to by schools in the U.K.

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 Service children?

Service Children will join your school bringing with them a wide range of strengths and needs but, in many cases, will have, in addition, 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 Service children 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.

a Changes to patterns of Service mobility

Service mobility is changing with the Government's long term plans for the Armed Services. The RAF is also earmarked for significant change. The basis of the changes to both Services in the U.K. 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'.

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. The timescale for such changes is long – perhaps up to twenty years from 2006/7 – and, in the meantime, partly as a result of the steps being taken to establish 'super garrisons/bases', 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.

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 Service Children 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 Service children 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 Service children can be minimised and the benefits celebrated.

i For children

Like all children, Service children 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 Service children (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

The possible benefits for mobile children include:

- 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
- SEN
- 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 Service children 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 U.K. countries
- Meeting SEN quickly and effectively
- Meeting Service children'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 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
- Ofsted judgements on schools with mobile pupil populations
- Changes to schools' EMAG 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 U.K. and because of changes to or delays in the planned movements of groups of Service personnel
- The need to achieve the 'Five Outcomes' identified by 'Every Child Matters' and the Children Act 2004 for all Service children moving into, learning in and moving out of each school

iv For local authorities

Government continues to require local authorities to devolve to schools as much funding as possible. Each local authority must decide, in consultation with its Schools Forum, which factors should trigger the release of funds within its funding formula to meet particular needs. Some authorities have decided to use the number of Service children on roll in each school as a funding trigger. However, authorities that decide to take this course of action have to prioritise this need over others and some believe that the financial burdens of Service mobility require additional Government assistance if other pressing needs are to be addressed effectively in their schools. From January 2008 schools are required to identify the number of Service Children on their roll.

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;
- Considering how to support school budgets adversely affected by changes to or delays in the planned movement of Service personnel;
- Deciding whether the specific funding of Service children should be included in formulae for devolved funding to schools;
- Ensuring, with the support and guidance of Admissions Forums, that the admissions arrangements of all the admissions authorities in their area meet the needs of Service families consistent with In-Year Fair Access Protocols;
- Ensuring, in areas where there are significantly-sized Service communities, that there is representation on Admissions Forums from those communities (Authorities seeking such representation should contact CEAS);
- Ensuring that there are effective channels of communication between military and educational communities within the boundaries of each authority;
- Considering how the 'Five Outcomes' identified by 'Every Child Matters' and the Children Act 2004 can be achieved for all Service children moving into, living in and moving out of each authority.

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. 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;
- 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!).

ii For families

Moving house is, for many people, one of the most stressful experiences there is in modern Britain. 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. In addition to the part of the 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

Some Local Authorities maintain (state) schools that take boarders as well as day pupils. They are not independent (private) schools. Nearly all 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 grammars and many have specialisms under the Governments scheme to encourage schools to offer the very best in particular subjects such as music, technology, mathematics, languages. All pupils follow the National Curriculum and take the same examinations as they would in a maintained day school.

Maintained boarding schools establish their own organisation in the early 1990's 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 34) and gives details of how to contact each school

SBSA is also a member of the Boarding Schools Association (which includes Independent Preparatory and secondary 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.

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 cost varies 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 achieve 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. Boarding after the age of 16 is undoubtedly an excellent preparation for university life or employment away from home. Many maintained boarding schools have sixth forms and one further education college with boarding is also listed in this guide.

(b) Independent Boarding Schools

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 private 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 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 on their own provision and on the children's educational experiences. Examples of this expertise can be found on Service Children's Education's (SCE) web site, in the 'Mitigating Mobility' Toolkit section. U.K. schools who would like access to this part of SCE's web site should contact CEAS.

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.

Families with children with SEN who are offered postings abroad must register their children with CEAS 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 at parental request and, if their families are offered foreign postings, they should be encouraged to register.

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 identify clear roles and responsibilities for staff in this respect;
- Considering the E2L needs of incoming children and the implications for the school's EMAG provision;
- Considering the role of the school SENCO and support staff in relation to meeting effectively and quickly the SEN of mobile Service children
- 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 explained on Self-evaluation Forms (SEFs). Ofsted inspectors cannot accept pupil mobility as a contextual factor affecting achievement unless they are provided with supporting evidence;
- Providing hard evidence to local authorities and Schools' Forums about the costs of providing for Service children - to influence local funding decisions;
- Participating in SCISS regional events to ensure that DCSF 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.

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

U.K. 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.

There is a locally based point of contact in many local authority areas, one of whose responsibilities it is to ensure the availability of information on the movement of Service personnel into, out of and within that authority. Details of these contacts can be found by contacting CEAS.

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 places specific requirements (paragraphs 3:22 to 3: 24) on local and other admissions authorities with regard to considering the particular needs of Service families in respect of admissions to schools;
- This Code requires local authorities (paragraph 3:23[c]), to consider, when establishing their Admissions Forums, whether a representative of the Service community should be invited onto the Forum;
- 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 ;
- 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;
- Local authorities, in consultation with Schools Forums, should consider the need for the specific funding, through formulae for the devolution of funds to schools, of Service children (N.B. From January 2008, the Annual School Census will require schools to identify Service children in a similar way to the identification of other groups of children such as refugees/asylum seekers).

d Housing and Moving.

Although the MOD encourage 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 Housing Executive (DHE).

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 DHE that the family should remain in their quarter until the relevant assessment / course of study is completed. It is usually agreed to.

For children with a history of high mobility or who have other special educational needs, CEAS can offer a letter of support which may assist a family to remain in the same location, if the DHE has the resources available.

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 S.A.T.s

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.

a Implications of deployment

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

b Strategies for dealing with the implication of deployment

The ways in which individual Service children 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.

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 Safeguarding 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 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.

- ix Critical incident and bereavement support – Many schools have established plans for managing a range of critical incidents. For schools with Service children on roll, this is essential. The Educational Psychology Service in SCE has developed some guidance for schools to devise strategies and approaches to a range of deployment issues. Copies are available, on request, from CEAS. The last of these deals with approaches to the serious injury or loss of a Service parent. Schools in the U.K. are welcome to use this resource as a framework for developing their own approaches to these difficult issues. Also, schools with significant numbers of Service children should consider involving their own EP and CAMHS services in the formulation of their own approaches to such matters.

6) Special Educational Needs

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. These additional factors 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 U.K.), 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 SEN 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 successfully working relationships with Service children with SEN and their families.
- iii Decision making – all schools and local authorities have statutory responsibilities to ensure that their children's SEN 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 SEN usually takes time, that schools and local authorities are under constant pressure to allocate resources to individual children with SEN and that mobile Service children have time-limited stays in schools, there is a danger that either SEN 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 Service children's mobility for their SEN.
- iv Resourcing – whilst all local authorities and state maintained schools in England are required to have regard to the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice in meeting children's SEN, 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 SEN. The opportunities for misunderstanding and conflict are considerable in such circumstances.

a Registration with CEAS

Service families in the U.K. are able to register their children with SEN with CEAS. Service parents may register children from School Action onwards although most do so from School Action Plus.

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 SEN from initial concerns about their children's progress in school right through to support with the SEN and Disability Tribunal.

Service families moving abroad MUST register with CEAS any of their children with SEN as CEAS is required to pass on to commands and relevant agencies abroad information about children's SEN 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 U.K. 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 SEN 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 Command Paper July 2008

In July 2008, the Government published a Command Paper entitled, 'The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans'. This Paper sets out a range of cross-Government commitments, including a number relating to the education of Service children. Amongst these is a commitment (paragraph 2.25 and Annex 7) to consider explicitly the needs of mobile Service children with SEN when the DCSF reviews the current SEN Code of Practice after the OFSTED review of SEN in 2009. The Command Paper and, in 2006, the House of Commons Defence Committee's inquiry into the education of Service children both confirm a recognition at national level of the particular difficulties faced by all concerned when SEN are mixed with Service-induced mobility.

7) Roles of MOD services with responsibilities for Service children and their families

a Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)

CEAS has been established by the MOD 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 a 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 U.K. in mitigating the effects of mobility on the education of Service children. CEAS works with Service Children's Education (SCE), the MOD and other Government departments 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 U.K. and around the world;
- The provision of support to Service families when postings require changes to children's educational placements;
- A registration service for Service children with SEN 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 SEN (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 SEN 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 Service children;
- 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. Full details about CEAS are available from their website, www.ceas.mod.uk.

b Service Children's Education Forum (SCEF)

The MOD, on the recommendation of the House of Commons Defence Committee, has established SCEF to gather information about and to consider strategies to deal with those educational issues which arise for Service children, their families and the schools and local authorities which serve them when they move within, between and in and out of the four home countries.

The Forum consists of representation from the MOD, CEAS, the Army Education and Training Service (responsible for children's issues across the Services), the Department for Children, Schools and Families (England), the Scottish Executive, the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Wales), the Department for Education in Northern Ireland, SCE and the Association of Directors of Children's Services.

c Service Children's Education (SCE)

SCE is an MOD agency, established in 1996, to provide education to Service children in those locations abroad where there are significant concentrations of Service personnel accompanied by their families.

SCE operates on a similar basis to an English local authority with a responsibility for providing education for all children within its boundaries. Its schools offer the English National Curriculum and its assessment arrangements and, in its secondary schools, access to all those public examinations normally available in English schools. It is important, however, to be aware that in locations where SCE makes educational provision, it is unlikely that the full range of educational and non-educational provision made normally by U.K. local authorities, health trusts and other providers will be available; this means that, sometimes, children with special/additional needs cannot be provided for adequately abroad.

SCE is committed to the further development of its inclusive practice for children with special/additional needs but for reasons of both educational effectiveness and efficient use of resources is not in a position to provide special school provision for children with profound and complex needs. Even children whose needs are met in a mainstream context, perhaps with the support of non-educational provision, may not be able to be provided for in overseas locations.

Clearly, this is a difficult and potentially contentious issue for all concerned – most of all, for the children and families concerned. It is essential that all Service parents with a child/children with special/additional needs register their children with CEAS when offered a posting to a location abroad served by SCE. This will enable work to be done to establish whether or not such children can be provided for in the locations concerned and, as importantly, enable an alternative arrangement to be made if necessary.

The decision about whether or not a child can be provided for in an SCE location abroad is made by the command concerned, on the advice of all the relevant children's services available there, subsequent to consideration of all the existing, relevant information on him/her.

The changing pattern of Service deployment abroad is, inevitably, resulting in changes to the shape and pattern of SCE's provision. Detailed information about these changes can be obtained from SCE direct or from CEAS.

d 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.

e Army Welfare Service (AWS)

AWS is funded by the MOD to provide a range of support to soldiers and their families. The Service has three strands: Community Support, Personal Support and administration. It operates across the whole U.K. and abroad and is intended to work with but be separate from a soldier's 'chain of command', offering confidential advice and support (subject to civilian and military law).

With regard to education in England, many Welfare Support Officers, who lead teams of welfare workers 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.

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

NPFS/RMW offers a range of services, including:

- A comprehensive social work service to Royal Navy personnel and their families
- A pro-active community support service
- Advice to the Royal Navy about community issues
- A link between Naval personnel and their families in times of difficulty
- A Naval equivalent of the Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Chatrooms /forums, through NPFS/RMW's website, linking families with deployed personnel and support networks

The main areas of work with which NPFS/RMW become involved are:

- Relationship problems
- Debt
- Bereavement
- Child care concerns
- Mental Health
- Special needs
- Support for deployed personnel
- Physical illness
- Pregnancy complications

g RAF Community Support

The welfare of RAF personnel and their families remains the responsibility of its 'chain of command'. RAF Air Command at High Wycombe employs both uniformed and civilian staff tasked with maintaining and developing an overview of the aspirations, needs and concerns of RAF personnel and their families and ensuring, through the 'chain of command' at each RAF station, that these are met and addressed – subject to the exigencies of the Service. Many RAF stations employ Community Development Workers (CDWs) who work in conjunction with station staff with personnel responsibilities and outside agencies to ensure the

welfare and well-being of all personnel and their families within the station community. CDWs are civilians who are accountable, ultimately, to the Station Commander where they work. There is no separate welfare service like the AWS or the NPFS for RAF personnel and their families

h Army Families' Federation (AFF)

AFF is a charity, established in 1982, that represents, independent of the 'chain of command', the aspirations, needs and views of Army families – direct to the high command and to Government Ministers. In addition, AFF offers advice and support to Army families having any difficulty with Service life or life in general and makes referrals to appropriate agencies inside and outside the MOD/Army frameworks to enable such families to obtain the help they need.

AFF has appointed several specialists to enable it to focus its support most effectively in those areas of Army life where the most issues arise. Consequently, AFF has specialists in: Housing, Education and Child Care, Health and Additional Needs, Non-U.K. born spouses and Territorial Army/Reserve Forces

i Naval Families' Federation (NFF)

NFF, based in Portsmouth, fulfils similar functions, for Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families, to those undertaken by AFF for the Army community. As the Royal Navy, in terms of personnel, is significantly smaller than the Army, the NFF is smaller than and organized differently to the AFF but its purposes are broadly similar. Most importantly, although it works with the 'chain of command', it is independent of it and, in addition to supporting individuals and their families, it is mandated to represent the aspirations, needs and concerns of the whole naval community to the highest levels of naval command and the Government.

j Royal Air Force Families' Federation (RAF FF)

Like the Army and Royal Navy, the RAF is keen to ensure that its personnel and families have an independent voice that enables them to raise any concerns they might have outside the formal "chain of command". The RAF Families Federation was launched in November 2007 and its small team of 6, based at RAF Wittering, provides a confidential service to all members of the RAF family. The Federation has its own website, a quarterly magazine and runs a programme of unit liaison visits to gather evidence about issues causing concern to RAF personnel and their families. This evidence is entered into a central database and the reports arising from this are staffed to senior RAF and MOD staffs, and occasionally Ministers, to ensure that the policy-makers are aware of the impact of their decisions on RAF families. The RAF FF works closely with unit staff and operates in partnership with RAF HIVEs (see entry below) to provide 2-way communication between the RAF and its families. The RAF FF is part of the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA), a well-established charity and the Federation contributes to RAFA's wider support to the serving RAF community

k Welfare services and education

Any one or more than one of these services 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, 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.

l HIVE Information Service

HIVE Information Centres are established at most military bases in the U.K. and across the world. Where they have not been established, arrangements are made to ensure that the relevant Service community has access to all the information it needs. Information Centres are staffed by at least one professionally trained Information Officer, depending on the sizes of the bases where they are located.

HIVE Information Centres exist to provide information on:

- Relocation
- Unit facilities and resources
- Local community resources and facilities
- Local leisure activities and places of interest
- Local schools and colleges
- Housing

- Health care facilities
- Employment and training opportunities

Information is available to Service personnel and their dependants electronically and in hard copy. Information Officers are able to offer initial, confidential advice and support to personnel and/or their dependants but are trained to refer them on to relevant service providers and agencies rather than to provide support on a long term and intensive basis. HIVEs operate on a tri-Service basis. HIVE Information Officers play an important role in ensuring that Service personnel and their families who are moving to and from their area have access to all the information they need about the new area.

In addition to the procurement and provision of information, HIVEs also offer email facilities to Service families to assist communications with loved ones deployed overseas and for those without email to communicate with a range of public services and agencies

HIVE Information Officers collect and display as much information they can about schools and children's services. Schools and children's services departments wanting to ensure that the Service communities in their areas have access to the best possible, most appropriate and most up to date information about their provision and access to it should establish and maintain good lines of communication with their local HIVE Information Officer(s).

All relevant MOD support services are required to provide to deployed reserve Service personnel and their families support similar to that which is made available to regular personnel and their families.

8) Liaison with military communities

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. In order to address this, the MOD has established a network of Points of Contact in each local authority in the U.K. These Points of Contact are responsible for ensuring that, at both unit-school and local authority levels, communication and links with schools and children's services directorates are as effective as possible. This does not mean that each Point of Contact will undertake personally all the communication between the communities but s/he will facilitate it and ensure that effective and appropriate communication is established and maintained. Details of these Points of Contact are available from CEAS.

The nature of the Service presence within a particular local authority will determine the number and nature of the Points of Contact within it. In some authorities, there is a Point of Contact for all three Services and in others only one or two Services are represented. Where there is more than one Point of Contact in a local authority, one of them will be identified as Lead Point of Contact with an overarching responsibility for communication between all military and educational communities within that authority. This often includes, in conjunction with CEAS, representing Service communities on Admissions Forums and trying to ensure, in conjunction with relevant units, that the best possible information about the movement of Service personnel and their families is made available to schools and local authorities. Some Points of Contact and their staff involve themselves in case work with individual Service families; for example, this could include supporting a family at an admission appeal or an exclusion hearing.

Inevitably, the list of Points of Contact changes frequently. Up to date information about the names, posts and contact details of all Points of Contact can be obtained from CEAS. Points of Contact for the Army are generally Welfare Support Officers in the Army Welfare Service; the RAF is usually represented by personnel or training officers and the Royal Navy by the Naval Personal and Families Service.

Many schools and children's services directorates already have good links with the military communities in their areas and the idea of the MOD's liaison framework is not to replace existing arrangements that work well but to support them and to encourage other areas to adopt best practice. Although military voices on admissions forums are important for their specific intended purpose, they should also assist liaison regarding other issues of mutual interest and concern (e.g. planning for school places). Unit representation on the governing bodies of schools serving military communities is usually of considerable mutual benefit.

a Exemplar of good practice

Catterick Garrison is one of the largest in the country and will develop, over the next few years, as one of the so-called 'super garrisons'. 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.

b Engaging 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 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 roles 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

A list of Points of Contact for schools and local authorities everywhere in the U.K. is available on the CEAS web site. These Points of Contact have a responsibility to ensure that communication and liaison between military and educational communities is as effective as it can be. If, for example, you are having difficulty finding out who to contact at your local military base regarding a particular issue, the relevant Point of Contact should be able to help you link with the right person. Points of Contact may also sit on local Admissions Forums and be a conduit for information about significant simultaneous movements of Service personnel and their families.

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 Service children 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.

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, in paragraphs 3:22 to 3:24, gives specific guidance – some of which is mandatory – in respect of Service children 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. However, it is essential that Service parents in these circumstances 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) Common Transfer Records

When pupils transfer schools, data must, by law, be transferred from any maintained school in England to any other maintained or independent school in England. This must be done within 15 school days of a pupil ceasing to be registered at the old school.

The information which is to be transferred is known as the common transfer file. This must be transferred in machine readable form, except where either the old school, or the new school (including any school in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland), does not have the necessary facilities to send or receive such information in that form. It may be transferred in machine readable form or in paper form, or a combination of both.

If the school does not know the details of the new school, schools are encouraged to send the common transfer file to the special area of the teachernet secure file website, which forms a database of missing pupils. Schools which do not receive common transfer files for new pupils can ask named contacts in the LEA to search this database to see if the files are there. The secure area is accessible via www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/ims/datatransfers/s2s/

The common transfer file consists of:

- a The pupil's
 - i unique pupil number
 - ii surname (and where known, former surname)
 - iii forenames(s)
 - iv date of birth
 - v gender
 - vi ethnic group
 - vii first language
 - b For SEN pupils, the type of special education provision being made for the pupil ('School Action', 'School Action Plus or 'Statement').
 - c The following information in relation to the school year in which the pupil transferred:
 - i total number of sessions in the school year
 - ii total number of sessions in that school year attended by the pupil
 - iii total number of pupil's unauthorised absences in the school year
 - d Departmental number and name of the old school.
 - e Departmental number and name of the new school.
 - f The pupil's cumulative achievements in education:
 - i the results of the teacher assessment of the pupil's NC levels of attainment at the end of any key stage completed, excluding any such assessment in English at the end of the first key stage;
 - ii the results of the teacher assessment of his NC attainment targets;
 - iii where the pupil has not completed any key stage or is between key stages when he transfers school, the most recent assessment by the teacher of his NC levels of attainment, where any such assessments have been made;
 - iv subject to sub-paragraph (b), the results of the NC tasks and NC tests taken by the pupil at the end of any key stage completed, by level and score;
 - v the age-standardised scores, derived from tables produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, where these have been applied;
 - vi the NC test tiers, where appropriate;
 - vii the results of any public examinations taken, by subject and grade;
 - viii details of any vocational qualifications or credits towards any such qualifications gained.
- For full details of the relevant legislation, please see www.legislation.gov.uk/si/si2005/20051437.htm

11) Moving School Packs

There is a wide variety of views amongst schools across the U.K. 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.

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) Curriculum

a England

All state schools in England follow the national Curriculum which aims to develop successful learners who are confident individuals and responsible citizens.

The Education Act 2002 laid down the requirements for schools in England to deliver a balanced and broadly based curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural mental and physical development of learners and prepares the learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life

The National Curriculum orders for each key stage lay down the subjects which must be taught to children

- aged 5-7 years, Key Stage 1;
- aged 7-11 years Key Stage 2;
- aged 11-14 years, Key Stage 3
- aged 14-16, Key Stage 4 study GCSEs (see 14-19 curriculum).
-

Schooling beyond the age of 16 years is non-compulsory.

Children are tested at the end of each Key Stage in England and there are targets for levels of achievement which children should reach at each Key Stage. Service Children may move before Key Stage tests.

There is a significant issue for Service children about continuity of the curriculum when Service children change schools. Although the subjects which must be taught, at Key Stages 1-3, are prescribed the order in which teachers cover the topics varies from school to school, class to class and year to year. There is even greater variation in teaching at Key Stage 4 where children study for public examinations. They choose to do different options and schools may offer different syllabi according to the different examination boards

b Scotland

There is a single entry date into the Scottish system at the beginning of the Autumn Term. The year of entry is based upon the child's age on the previous 1st March. A child who is 4 after 1st March will not start school until August/September the following year, when they will be 5.5 years old.

Primary to Secondary Transfer

Transfer from primary to secondary is dependent upon a child having completed seven full years of primary education. Most children transfer between 11.5 years and 12.5 years and complete four years of secondary education (S1-S4) before reaching the minimum school leaving age. These are broadly comparable to Y8-Y11 in the English system.

There are implications for children moving into Scotland if they are in Year 7 in an English secondary school. They will be required to attend a Scottish primary school for up to one year (depending on the time of the move). Similarly, a child returning to England at age 11/12 may move from a Scottish Primary straight into an English secondary school without the normal preparation. Although standards in English and maths are similar in the two systems, the children may have had little opportunity to study subjects such as secondary science and modern foreign languages. These differences do diminish as children move through the Key Stage, so that by the age of 14 years standards are comparable across the UK. The academic levels are broadly similar in the two countries and each Education Authority will consider each case on its merits.

Assessment at 16

Years S3 and S4 in the Scottish system equate to Years 10 and 11 in England to prepare pupils for external examinations. In Scotland the Standard Grade examinations are broadly comparable with GCSEs. Both types of course place considerable emphasis on assessment of course work in addition to formal examinations. There are, however, likely to be considerable differences in syllabus content and teaching methods.

c Northern Ireland

The entry date into education in Northern Ireland is 2nd July. This means that Service children with July and August birthdays may be placed in the year group below that which they should normally be in England. Children enter school when they are 4 years old. Statutory schooling in Scotland and Northern Ireland encompasses 12 years compared with 11 in England.
(NB If children complete a full year in reception in England they will have completed 12 years)

d Wales

Education legislation has, hitherto, applied to England and Wales but now the Welsh Assembly has the power to make its own legislation. The indications are that Early Years and Key Stage 4 provision will be developed significantly differently to the English system.

e The 14-19 Curriculum

From 2007, DCSF has been leading on significant changes to the 14-19 curriculum in England. Secondary schools, colleges of further education, universities, employers and local authorities in England will be fully aware of the nature of these changes and many of their implications.

Currently, Service children who move schools during Years 10 and 11 and 12 and 13 often experience significant difficulties in matching GCSE, A/S, A Level and other public examination courses and boards and find themselves having to repeat years or even failing to complete their studies. This is why Service parents are able to approach CEAS for support in retaining their Service family accommodation at the location which the serving member of the family is leaving; although it may mean that families are split for periods of time, the students are able to complete their examination courses.

The introduction of Diplomas which aim, amongst other things, to offer students access to both academic and vocational courses of equal status and the further development of consortia between schools, colleges and employers (some of a specialist nature – e.g. engineering) will probably exacerbate the difficulties of Service children when they move. This is because consortia are likely to be developed on the basis of the specialisms and strengths of local educational provision as well the nature of the employers in any given area; this will give consortia a distinctly local flavour.

Although GCSE and A Level courses are to remain within the new arrangements, the emphasis will be on encouraging students to establish a consistent direction of travel in course selection across the whole 14-19 age range; this could mean that a move of school at 16 will be more difficult in the future than it is now.

Given the specialist nature of many consortia and subsequent differences between what is on offer at 14-19 in areas around the country, it is probable that parental preferences for schools on transfer to secondary/high school will be expressed largely on the basis of such provision. Service families applying for places on their children's transition to secondary/high schools, who know that their children will have to change schools before Year 10, may be at a disadvantage because they will not be able to consider 14-19 issues when expressing their preferences.

It would be very helpful, when 14-19 arrangements and consortia are being constructed within this context, if careful consideration could be given to the implications for mobile Service children.

13) OFSTED and SEF guidance

Advice from OFSTED suggests that each school's self evaluation would benefit from including a clear description of the features which mitigate the impact of mobility on outcomes for pupils.

For example, self evaluation could ask about:

- the extent and patterns of mobility that have affected learners in a school;
- the strategies used in school to mitigate the 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.

Comments should be made on any particular strengths or weaknesses of a school's provision identified by the evaluation.

RAISE online includes an adjustment to reflect the pattern of learners' progress when they move schools in the middle of a Key Stage.

14) Funding schools with Service children

Many schools which serve military communities have developed successful strategies and procedures for minimizing the negative effects of mobility and ensuring that the social and emotional needs of children whose parents are deployed to hostile locations are met effectively. Such schools often report that making such provision has a real cost in terms of both staff time and the provision of additional materials for frequently changing pupil populations. Schools also indicate that they believe they could make even better provision for Service children if the resources available to them were increased to recognise the particular needs of Service children.

In a small number of English local authorities with significant Service populations, after consultation with Schools' Forums, specific funding has been devolved to schools through the appropriate formulae to enable them better to meet the needs of Service children. DCSF and, indeed, the House of Commons Defence Committee (with particular reference to SEN) in its report 'Educating Service Children' (2006) have stated clearly that funding priorities should continue to be determined at local authority level.

Some authorities that do provide specifically for Service children have expressed concern that this at the expense of other community needs which other authorities are able to meet in their areas because they have no significant Service community for which to provide. The view has been expressed by some that, as it is central Government which decides where Services communities are located, it should be central Government which should recognise the additional needs manifested by the Service community within local authority contexts.

Within the current framework, it is vital that schools wanting to pursue this issue should ensure it is discussed in their local Schools' Forums. In addition to this, between February 2008 and late 2009, DCSF is conducting a review of the Dedicated Schools Grant Formula. Further information about how to contribute to this review is available at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/dsgformulareview/.

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 Service children – both in terms of provision which is made and provision which could be made if the resources were available. Any information should be emailed to Olivia Denson (Head of CEAS) at: enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk or posted to:

Mrs O Denson
Head of CEAS
Trenchard Lines
Upavon
Pewsey
Wiltshire SN9 6BE

SERVICE CHILDREN IN STATE SCHOOLS
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Name	Post / Organisation
Mike Curtis	Headteacher, Carterton Primary (Oxfordshire) Chair
Olivia Denson	Head of Service, CEAS – MOD Vice Chair
Jeremy Watt	Deputy Head of Service, CEAS - MOD
Clare Howe	DFES, School Admissions Team
Ian Morrison	DFES, School Admissions Team
Adam Lassman	DFES, Promoting Parenting with Local Authorities Team
Lt Col Steve Richardson	Assistant Director, SPPol Fams - MOD
Tina Ellicott	SPPol Fams SCS C2 - MOD
Richard Parker	Assistant Director Children's Services, Wiltshire LEA
Norman Hoare	Headteacher, St Georges School (Hertfordshire)
Grahame Shepherd	Headteacher, Le Cateau Primary School (North Yorkshire)
Coryn Bell	Assistant Headteacher, The Priory LSST (Lincolnshire)
Alex Bostock	Headteacher, Clarendon School (Wiltshire)
Janice Oakley	Headteacher, Brookwood Primary (Surrey)
Hilary Alcock	Headteacher, Buntingsdale School (Shropshire)
Tadeusz Zaranko	Headteacher, Risedale Community College (North Yorkshire)
Helen Williams	Headteacher, Waterbeach Community Primary Cambridgeshire)
Amanda Rowley	Headteacher, Wavell School (Hampshire)
Tom Nielsen - Marsh	Assistant Education Officer, 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
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools & Families
E2L	
EMAG	Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant
EP	Educational Psychologist
HIVE	Services' Local Information Centre
LEA	Local Education 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
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	SEN Coordinator
SP POL	Service Personnel - Policy
SSAFA	Soldiers', Sailors' & Airmen's Families Association
Tri-Service	The Armed Forces (Army, Navy & RAF)
UWO	Unit Welfare Officer

Useful contacts

Organisation	Website	Address	Telephone
Army	www.army.mod.uk		
Army Families' Federation (AFF)	www.aff.org.uk	AFF Trenchard Lines Upavon Pewsey Wilts SN9 6BE	01980 615525
Army Welfare Service (AWS)	www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support	The Army Welfare Information Service, HQ Land Forces, Louisburg Block, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury SP2 0AG.	01722 436569
Boarding School Association (BSA)	www.boarding.org.uk	The Boarding Schools' Association Grosvenor Gardens House 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens London, SW1W 0BS England	020 7798 1580
Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)	www.ceas.mod.uk	CEAS Trenchard Lines Upavon Pewsey Wilts SN9 6BE	01980 618244
HIVE	www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceFor/ServiceCommunity/Hive	HIVE UK & Overseas HQ Land Command Louisburg Building Erskine Barracks Salisbury Wiltshire SP2 0AG	01722 437980
Navy	www.royal-navy.mod.uk		
Naval Personnel and Families Service / Royal Marines Welfare (NPFS / RMW)	www.rncom.mod.uk/templates/NPFS	Swiftsure Block HMS NELSON HM Naval Base Portsmouth Hampshire PO1 3HH	02392 583806
Navy Families Federation (NFF)	www.nff.org.uk	NFF Castaway House 311 Twyford Avenue Portsmouth Hampshire PO2 8RN	023 9265 4374
Royal Air Force (RAF)	www.raf.mod.uk		
Royal Air Force Families Federation (RAF FF)	www.raf-families-federation.org.uk	The RAF Families Federation 13-15 St Georges Road Wittering Peterborough PE8 6DL	01780 781650
State Boarding School Association (SBSA)	www.sbsa.org.uk	The Boarding Schools' Association Grosvenor Gardens House 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens London, SW1W 0BS	020 7798 1580

		England	
Service Children's Education (SCE)	www.sceschools.com	Enquiries HQ Service Children's Education Agency Wegberg Military Complex BFPO 40 (via London, UK)	
School Admissions Code	www.dcsf.gov.uk/sacode		
School Admission Appeals Code	www.dcsf.gov.uk/sacode		
Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Federation (SSAFA)	www.ssafa.org.uk	SSAFA Forces Help 19 Queen Elizabeth Street London SE1 2LP	0845 1300 975
Teachernet	www.teachernet.org.uk		